

*Constanța Vintilă, Giulia Calvi  
Mária Pakucs-Willcocks  
Nicoleta Roman, Michał Wasiucionek*

*Luxury, Fashion  
and Other  
Political Bagatelles  
in Southeastern Europe*

*16<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>  
Centuries*



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Translated into English by  
Iuliu Rațiu and James Christian Brown

 HUMANITAS  
BUCUREȘTI

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## Contents

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## *Introduction*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**T**his volume aims to make the results of the project *Luxury, Fashion and Social Status in Early Modern South-Eastern Europe (LuxFass)*, ERC-2014-CoG no. 646489, financed by the European Research Council and hosted by the New Europe College, Bucharest, accessible to wider audiences. For this reason, we have decided to tell stories of people, objects, and places we explored while researching Southeastern Europe in the early modern era. Each of the stories collected here is informed by prolonged inquiry into primary and secondary sources in various libraries, museums, and archives. The academic endeavour of our team members is presented in detail on the project website (<http://luxfass.nec.ro/>).

Keeping up with the ebbs and flows of fashion has over time been a faithful indicator of wealth and social status. During the eighteenth century, elites from Southeastern Europe embraced Ottoman fashion: long *entaris* (listed as *anteri*) and furry cassocks, Morocco leather slippers and grey *başlıks* (named *işlıcs*), silk and thread embroidered *şalvari*, *seraser* dresses and velvet jackets. However, across the arch of the Carpathians from Moldavia and Wallachia, in Transylvania, other norms were in place: following the Peace of Karlowitz (1699), the principality acquired a new status, a new master, and new clothing preferences. Noble and merchant elites turned to Buda and Vienna for inspiration, even though the Ottoman heritage still permeated their taste, conduct, and language. Moreover, in addition to imported “oriental” goods, the Greek Merchant Companies of Sibiu (Hermannstadt) and Braşov (Kronstadt) brought along a specific economic language, a series of financial practices, and a

lifestyle that can be documented until the end of the nineteenth century. Under the generic label of “Greeks”, merchants straddled the routes of Southeastern Europe, from Istanbul (Constantinople) or Țarigrad) to Vienna and from Edirne to Leipzig. Encouraged by a growing demand for their goods, they built commercial networks, set up business ventures, constructed new residences and, in turn, became a class of consumers themselves. Wherever they settled, these merchants created communities resembling the ones they had left behind and which they could call home; they also strived to acquire a variety of familiar goods and foodstuffs. Thus, they founded places of worship (synagogues and Catholic, Protestant, Greek or Serbian churches) and schools to meet their spiritual and social needs. During their travels through Southeastern Europe, merchants discovered architectural styles, ornaments, dishes, holidays and customs belonging to a shared heritage. In fact, this common heritage closely reflected the transformations of various historical contexts and of their social and political circumstances. Indeed, this part of the continent provides multiple stories, multiple traditions, and multiple modernities, bringing together similarities and differences worthy of investigation.

Under the communist regimes, official historiographies often presented Balkan societies in black and white, conjuring a vision of a neatly divided world, where a privileged upper class of wealthy people exploited a lower class of backward peasants. The “Ottoman Yoke” left its mark on society and was held responsible for a good part of the cultural and economic gaps and lags in the region. However, as the authors of the contributions to this volume argue, the social dynamics of Southeastern Europe were much more than that. The social categories were diverse and relations among them largely depended on the cultural, social, and economic context. For instance, as we will show throughout this work, the class of wealthy merchants was present in almost all urban centres in Southeastern Europe. The archives kept, for instance, by Braşov and Sibiu confirm their presence. Written in Romanian, Greek, German, Latin, Hungarian, Italian or French, these documents display the cultural, ethnic, and social diversity of the groups contributing to the increase in consumption of luxury and mass consumer goods in Southeastern Europe. All merchant companies had strong ties with the towns and cities with which they did

business and from where they brought back not only goods but also valuable information. Whether they were writing to their families or to their business partners, merchants sent daily letters across the region, thus connecting Istanbul to Serres, Edirne, Bucharest, Iaşi, Braşov, Sibiu, Zemun (Zelim), Belgrade, Venice, Trieste, Vienna, Graz, or Leipzig.

According to economic historian Jan de Vries, early modern households changed significantly once the price of certain goods became accessible to a wider public. Spices, coffee, tea, cotton, clothing, and books, still unaffordable in the seventeenth century, became part of daily consumption during the eighteenth century. Their widespread accessibility reshaped the world, which adapted to new tastes and fashions, and contributed to the transformation of societies. We can infer that the same principles were at work in our region as well, and the increased exposure to new lifestyles and ideas led to the formation of modern states in Southeastern Europe.

In December 1837, Mihail Kogălniceanu sent a letter from Berlin to his sisters in Iaşi, in which he defined civilization as follows: “*La vraie civilisation consiste dans l’amour de la patrie et de son prochain, dans le respect pour les lois, dans l’abolition de l’esclavage, qui subsiste encore dans notre pays, à notre honte, dans l’égalité des personnes, sans distinction de rang et de naissance.*”<sup>1</sup> One of the most important politicians in the Danubian Principalities, schooled in Berlin and Lunéville, Kogălniceanu saw the link between external changes and the need for profound transformations in the structure of society. Changing clothes and tastes would be in vain without the establishment of institutions capable of contributing to the education of the spirit. Ideas, however, travel together with people, who carry along not only goods and objects but also the seeds of change.

The main topics of our book – luxury, fashion, and social status – held considerable appeal for researchers from near and far who attended our many conferences and workshops and drew in the wider public eager to know the results of our investigations. Those interested in studying

1. “True civilization lies in the love for country and for its future, in the respect for law, in the abolition of slavery, which in our country, unfortunately, still exists, in the equality of all inhabitants, regardless of rank and origin.”



further any of these topics are kindly invited to consult the lists of recommended reading at the end of each of the seven parts of this volume, where they can also find references to the academic articles published by the members of the LuxFass project in prestigious scholarly journals.

PART I

*Sources of consumption*

*Introduction to sources of consumption*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**B**efore analysing consumption, let us focus briefly on some of the documentary sources we have employed in our research. The authors set out to find new sources, not only because their integration into the historiographical corpus is necessary, but also due to their reflecting the particularities of the region. The historical evidence which we worked with surpasses the scope of this album; thus, we have included merely the most important examples. The reference list, therefore, is open-ended and new examples can be added at any time. Moreover, we have approached our sources with an eye to their ability to convey relevant information regarding people, habits, consumption, clothing, or culinary preferences. For instance, there is not a single surviving clothing album in any of the archives of the former Romanian principalities, even though they may have been circulating among the elites. Perhaps the impetus for making and preserving such albums was lacking; however, today we can see graphic representations of the inhabitants of Southeastern Europe thanks to foreign lithographers, miniaturists, illustrators, and engravers. The Moldavian, the Wallachian, the Greek, the Armenian, the Bulgarian, the Tatar, and the Serbian figure prominently in the works of costume illustrators. Their faces, clothes, and habits caused so much interest that many scholars and illustrators embarked on difficult journeys across empires to portray them in novel ways. The *Travelogues* database of the Genadius Library in Athens registers a significant number of albums depicting



Left, “Wealthy man from Wallachia, probably a Greek”, watercolour, 1809 — Right, the same “wealthy man from Wallachia”, in similar clothing, cca 1829 (Gennadius Library – the American School of Classical Studies at Athens).

costumes and illustrations from travel narratives. When we examine the illustrations, we notice that some images were taken from one source to another, readjusted, and reinterpreted. Thus, the illustrations may have been circulating individually and made their way into different albums and narratives. Take, for example, a drawing depicting a “wealthy man from Wallachia” who was presented with the same garment in two different postures, once in an album from 1809 (*Costumes. A collection of 89 original Drawings, in watercolours, of Public Officers and others in Turkey*) and a second time in an album from 1829 (*Album containing 77 original watercolour drawings of Greek and other Oriental costumes*).

As Michał Wasiucionek shows, Southeastern European medieval and premodern art did include portraits and costume representations in its

*Silk and lace dress, embroidered with gilded silver thread, which belonged to Pascalina, the wife of the logothete Luca Stroici, from the end of the seventeenth century (National Museum of Bucovina, Suceava, inv. no. E 6173).*



repertoire. However, Giulia Calvi illustrates that not only the Danubian principalities, but also other territories in Southeastern Europe, became known mostly thanks to remarkable Italian scholars and lithographers. Thanks to foreign artists, the Moldavian, the Wallachian, the Greek, the Armenian, the Bulgarian, the Tatar, and the Serbian were thus memorialised. Naturally, these illustrations were created according to the canons and ideas of the time. Focusing on the most important album creators, Giulia Calvi eloquently points out the problematic nature of such an enterprise and the stereotypes they reflected.

With the advent of the concept of global history of consumption, explored by Maxine Berg and other researchers from the University of Warwick, the objects and goods mentioned in registers, inventories, and censuses acquired new meanings, connecting a plethora of regions, social classes, and cultural groups. The archives of Southeastern Europe hold a significant number of documents, many of them still unpublished, which highlight the dynamism of this region with regards to the development of consumption. Some of these objects are now part of museum collections, becoming invaluable pieces in the reconstruction of past eras. In this work, we highlight these objects and their background to illustrate our stories. It is worth offering an example to emphasise the importance of objects in the study of consumption and to showcase the role of archaeologists, curators, and restorers in bringing them to life. For instance, historians have written about Luca Stroici, the grand logothete of Moldavia, while

archaeologists have brought back to light information about his wife, Pascalina. The dress and the bodice with which the gentlewoman was buried at the Church of Saint Nicholas in Probota Monastery were recently discovered and are kept today at the National Museum of Bucovina. Made of silk and lace, embroidered with gilded silver threads, the dress has been carefully and delicately reconstructed. The bodice was also made of silk and bears witness both to the exquisite quality of the textiles used and the patient work of restoration that has given voice to the story of the garment.

In this book, we refer to these objects and their histories in order to illustrate the stories we tell. The role of our team has also been to offer new meanings to some objects that have been exhibited in museums as trophies of the past with no reference to their culture of origin. The challenge we faced was to reconnect the artifacts with the places and communities where they originated from, to gather the evidence, and to explain certain behaviours, emotions, or preferences.

In addition to these artifacts, museum collections also contain a considerable number of images illustrating local elites, which are invaluable resources for the research of the development of consumption in South-eastern European societies. The mobility of painters contributed to the spread of the taste for the art of portraiture and stimulated the development of interest in genealogy as a way of reconstructing the ancestry of a nation. Their art was further disseminated via the newspapers of the time, along with a series of novelties that visually transformed the Southeastern European territories.

### *Ottoman costume albums*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK

**D**uring his stay in Bitlis in 1655, former grand vizier Melek Ahmed Pasha had to settle a contentious dispute over a book. A Muslim had acquired a precious manuscript of *The Book of Kings* (*Şahname*), one of the most famous achievements of Persian literature and much loved by the Ottomans too. However, the buyer took issue with the lavish

illustrations accompanying the text because “painting was forbidden according to his faith; that is why he took a Turkish knife and scraped off the eyes of those depicted, as if he wanted to poke out their eyes; he thus pierced all the pages. Over the throats of others, he drew lines, as if to strangle them.” He subsequently refused to pay for the book, claiming that the images were forbidden, forcing the desperate bookseller to appeal to Melek Ahmed Pasha for reimbursement. The governor reacted swiftly: he reprimanded the buyer, ordered him stripped naked and whipped seventy times. He then forced him to pay the previously agreed-on price of 16,000 *kurus* (a considerable sum) and banished him from the city.

There is a widespread perception that Islam is opposed to figural representations, on religious grounds, and has maintained a general ban on illustrations from the beginnings of Muslim culture to the present day. From this point of view, the buyer’s behaviour would conform to the stereotypical view of Islam’s relationship with images; however, this is clearly not the point of the story. The bookseller and Melek Ahmed Pasha were both pious Muslims and so was Evliya Çelebi, the Ottoman traveller who narrated the episode. However, they had little sympathy for the act of defacing the miniatures. In fact, the rebellious buyer was a member of the revivalist Kadizadeli movement, which condemned “innovations” and called for a return to the fundamental precepts of Muslim law from Muhammad’s time. The supporters of the movement remained a minority within the larger culture and were perceived by most Ottomans as fanatical and disorderly. In his tirade against the Kadizadeli, Ottoman intellectual Kâtib Çelebi blamed them for advocating oppression and deemed their ideas “unacceptable.” Moreover, illustrations abounded in the Ottoman world, primarily in the form of miniatures accompanying manuscripts, which remained, next to calligraphy, a highly prized form of visual art throughout the medieval and early modern period. Painted manuscripts were much appreciated luxury objects and their considerable number belies Islam’s supposed virulent and uniform iconoclasm. At the same time, the manuscript miniatures and costume albums provide a comprehensive glimpse into the ways in which Ottoman painters and their clientele (both Muslim and Christian) regarded social status, wealth, and identity in the diverse world to which they belonged.



For the Ottomans, the miniature constituted one of the established forms of artistic expression, with models provided by a rich tradition of painting flourishing in Persia during the Timurid dynasty, until the beginning of the sixteenth century. Bihzad is the most famous representative of Persian miniature painting. The growing interest in miniatures was a consequence of the Ottoman expansion eastwards, following conflicts with Safavid Persia. The conquest of Tabriz and Baghdad in the first half of the sixteenth century led to the capture of numerous illuminated manuscripts and to the migration of artists to the luxury workshops of Constantinople, where they developed a new visual language. In addition to military conquests, gift exchanges between sultans and Safavid shahs facilitated the circulation of these manuscripts. During the sixteenth century, masterfully written manuscripts illustrated by renowned artists became prized collectors' items and the Ottoman elite invested considerable resources in commissioning or buying works of art. By the end of the century, the well-known scholar and perennially disgruntled official Gelibolu Mustafa Ali wrote a treatise on this art form and argued that many ignorant collectors "lose a lot of money every day because of their craze for purchasing works of calligraphy; so much so that every newly minted painter is able to sell them sketches scribbled late at night and pretend they are Mani's drawings. Not only do they buy from scribes with no name or fame, who have forged the signature of Mir 'Ali, but they also spend a considerable number of aspers on miniatures and illuminated manuscripts and have thus squandered many thousands of dinars every year on buying whatever they could lay their hands on."

During the sixteenth century, miniatures accompanied luxury manuscripts, commissioned by the sultan or by the members of the Ottoman ruling elite, who particularly favoured canonical literary works (such as the *Şahname*) and illustrated histories of the world or of the Ottoman Empire. The imperial workshop (*nakkaşhane*) was the main site where these massive and richly decorated manuscripts were made exclusively for the sultan's library and for a high-ranking and wealthy clientele. Therefore, even if the works were not intended exclusively for the Topkapı Palace, they were created for a small but politically very influential group. Favourite topics concerned the history of the Ottoman Empire, but we



Left, an image of an Ottoman official carrying an imperial document in an Ottoman costume album. [Recueil des costumes turcs et de fleurs], n. d. (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris). Right, a depiction of the same subject in a European costume album. [Costumes de la Cour du Grand Seigneur], 1630 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris).

also find a first history of the Spanish conquest of America (*Tarih-i Hind-i Gharbi*, 1583), offered to Sultan Murad III, or the so-called *kıyafetnames*, which described the Ottoman sultans and their character based on physiognomic analysis.

In the first decades of the seventeenth century, the production of large, illuminated manuscripts slowed down and that of the great illustrated historical narratives stopped altogether. Historians have interpreted this as a decline of Ottoman artistic traditions, but in fact the change reflects a change in consumer taste and in the social milieu in which miniature paintings were produced. While during the sixteenth century illustrations adorned lavish massive volumes produced by the imperial workshops, during the seventeenth century miniatures appeared in the form of single-leaf paintings produced in relatively large numbers by artists whom Turkish

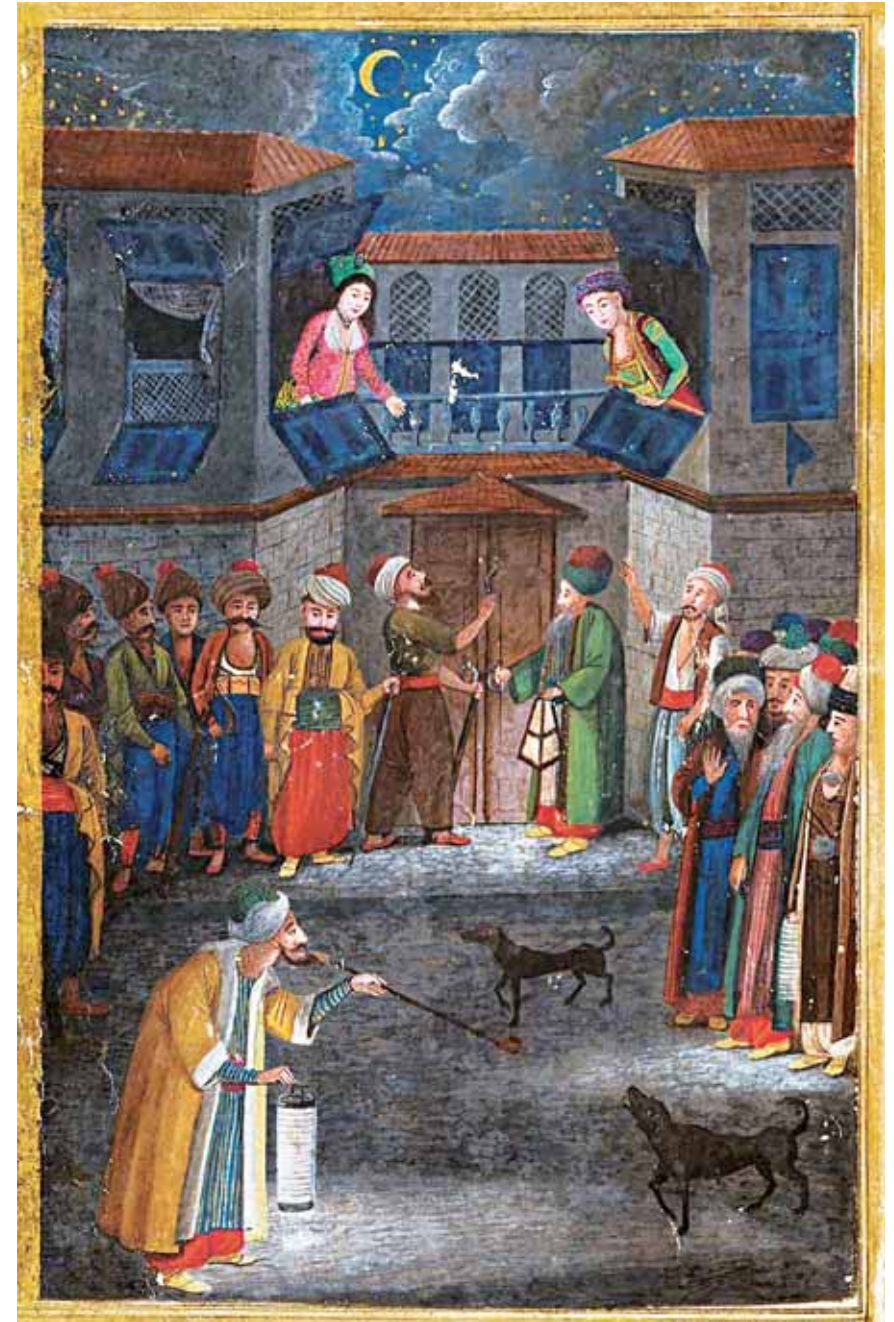


art historian Metin And called “bazaar painters”, as they addressed a wider and more diverse audience. Of course, the distinction is not a hard and fast one, but the dissociation of miniatures from books reduced their price and made them accessible to a less affluent clientele. At the same time, the visual language also changed: sixteenth-century Ottoman miniatures presented an official hierarchical vision of the court, populated with men in the service of the sultan; by contrast, female figures and ordinary people, outside the circle of power, started to appear only a century later. Moreover, the single-leaf format allowed for personalised arrangements within various collections, thus subverting social hierarchies. In turn, this led to the proliferation of the *muraqqa* albums, comprised of individual illustrations and specimens of calligraphy arranged according to the owner’s taste.

Among the *muraqqa* collections, costume albums occupied an important place. They contained depictions of Ottomans and foreigners, ranging from sultans to dishevelled drunks. Although these albums appeared as a reaction to the changing preferences of the Ottoman public, they also developed simultaneously with those printed by European artists such as Cesare Vecellio or Nicolas de Nicolay. Ottoman artists did not use the printing press to reproduce images, but multiplied them by a specific pressing technique, obtaining relatively large numbers of copies. Additionally, as opposed to European printed albums, the Ottoman ones were painted by hand and, because of that, much admired by Western artists. The fact that such collections of illustrations were bought by European diplomats and travellers to the Ottoman lands demonstrates that we cannot speak of an impermeability of cultural areas, but, on the contrary, of intense artistic exchanges, which took place despite religious and political fractures.

Even though the creators of the illustrations made in the seventeenth century remain largely unnamed, we do know those who made the albums, and we can understand their vision by following the way they arranged the graphic representations. Indeed, as researchers Gwendolyn Collaço and Natalie Rothman have pointed out, Peter Mundy, an employee of the British East India Company in the Ottoman Empire at the end of

*People in front of a brothel. Miniature by Fazil Enderuni, Hubanname ve Zenanname, 1793 (Library of University of Istanbul, T5502).*



first decade of the seventeenth century, was the owner of an album designed to complement his own travel accounts. Unlike him, other foreign travellers used the images for diplomatic purposes, as documents to help them distinguish the dignitaries of the Sultan's court or to emphasise their role as mediators between Venetian diplomats and Ottoman officials. These albums' various uses show us that the illustrations should not be understood as direct representations of Ottoman society. On the one hand, each owner of such an album had his own ideas on what a visual guide to the Ottoman world should look like; on the other hand, the Ottomans' rich material culture and clothing style did not match the simplistic representations found in the images of these albums. Given the fact that they do not provide an accurate reflection of the social and material realities of the time, these works should be considered rather as attempts to capture the fluid fabric of society in a series of static images.

During the eighteenth century, the famous artists Levni and Buhari helped revive interest in the miniatures created at the Ottoman court. The latter made a well-known album with illustrations of the lavish ceremonies that accompanied the circumcision of Ahmed III's sons in 1720, but without falling back on the rigid and hieratic forms of the late sixteenth century. The artists strove to respond to the public's curiosity about scenes from daily life and individual characters. These preferences are also reflected in the numerous illustrated copies of the five poems that make up *Hamse-i Atai*, with extensive representations of everyday events, anecdotes, and portrayals of the poet Atai in unusual places, such as the tavern. Moreover, the attempt to overcome the limits of self-perception is evident in the eagerness to present to the public the world beyond the borders of the empire and people from distant lands. For instance, the two parts of *Hubanname ve Zenanname* ("The Book of Men and Women") by Enderuni Fazil showcased descriptions of men's and women's clothing from around the world, including America and Europe, together with representations of people from various Ottoman provinces. In addition to various individual characters, the artist also touched upon subjects that the court painters of the sixteenth century would not have dared even to dream of illustrating – a birth scene in a luxurious house in Constantinople, a brothel, or public baths for women –, thus giving us a broad perspective on the private lives of Ottoman subjects.

## *Costume Albums and Ottoman and Balkan Practices*

GIULIA CALVI

Starting with the Renaissance, printed "clothing collections" brought a wealth of additional information regarding local, national, or religious identity. These collections, ranging between the more flexible representations arising from *habitus* (clothing) and the specificity of traditional costumes, enjoyed considerable success among publishers and booksellers. In the form of engravings of various sizes, these illustrations were often detached from their albums and sold separately. Thus, the engravings soon became decorative elements, were gathered into collections, and aroused curiosity. While 216 such collections circulated in Europe between 1520 and 1610, production intensified visibly after 1550, especially in Paris and Venice, two cities with notable publishing activity.

Even though collections of this kind contain a captivating and exotic component, the multiplication of images, their wide circulation, and the constant reshuffling of models lead to a blurring of the notion of originality. With their emphasis on both texts and images, these collections have become valuable resources for anthropological analysis or, more precisely, for the anthropology of gender representations in early modern Europe. This 'mix and match' of representations gave rise to a considerable consensus over time, underlying the importance of iconography. On the one hand, this process helped define the characteristics of European women and men in contrast to the appearance of people living elsewhere; on the other, it led to a better configuration of similarities and specificity in relation to the area of origin: north or south, east or west, urban or rural. At the same time, these illustrations served as indicators of social class, religious affiliation, and lifestyle. Therefore, costume albums can be analysed from the point of view of their ability to bring together and make known the important components of belonging, which is constructed along with the identification of differences. The key quality of these collections – diverse in terms of the organization of the material, the coherence of the content, and the relative importance of the written text – lies perhaps in their common intent to represent broadly speaking the "other", non-Western peoples, who thus became "represented" *de facto*. Through images, literature, and geographical, anthropological, and clinical investigations,



the West defined and imposed its representation of the peoples of the world for centuries to come. In the following pages, we will focus on some well-known authors who contributed constantly to the creation of graphic collections of costumes: Nicolas de Nicolay, Cesare Vecellio, Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, and Giulio Ferrario.

*The sixteenth century: Nicolas de Nicolay* Nicolas de Nicolay (1517-1583) was the author of *Les quatre premiers livres de navigations et pérégrinations orientales*, published in 1567-1568. In 1551, the French king, Henry II, ordered him to accompany ambassador Gabriel d'Aramon, his envoy to the Court of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. Nicolas de Nicolay's unofficial mission was to carefully observe the places he visited and, if circumstances allowed, to spy on behalf of the French crown. After his return to France in 1552, Nicolas de Nicolay was appointed the king's geographer (*géographe ordinaire du Roi*).

His *Les quatre premiers livres de navigations et pérégrinations orientales* was published in Lyon between 1567 and 1568. Balkan costumes are presented in books III and IV. These images, later disseminated across Europe, would help build the image of the Levant and generate well-known stereotypes. As Nicolay's books were translated and printed in Italy (1576, 1577, 1580), Germany (1572, 1576), Flanders (1576), and England (1585), Italian, Flemish, and French graphic artists copied his drawings. Nicolay describes the ethnic and religious minorities of the Ottoman Empire, often converted to Islam and thus hiding their origins under the guise of Ottoman clothing and customs. He therefore introduced a new, dynamic, and innovative dimension, which was generally missing from albums of this kind. Circulating throughout Europe, Nicolay's *Livres* initiated a process of "othering", and rapidly produced a selective aesthetic and a particular taste for certain images, clothes, and gestures, thus serving to consolidate Western iconography from the point of view of its capacity to represent the complex structure of Ottoman society.

Nicolas de Nicolay focused on contemporary authors who claimed to have had direct knowledge of how the Sublime Porte functioned due to the fact that they had been Christian slaves in the *Serail*. We know that he borrowed passages from the work of the Dalmatian Luigi Bassano and the



"Turkish Gentlewoman in the City" (left) and "Turkish Woman at Home" (right), in [Recueil de costumes turcs]: [dessin] / [d'après Nicolas de Nicolay], sixteenth-seventeenth centuries (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris).

Genovese Giovanni Antonio Menavino, who had been kidnapped and held captive for several years. He also enlisted the help of Zaferaga (or Cafer Agha, in Turkish), a eunuch from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) who had lived in the *Serail* since adolescence. "As soon as he understood my desire to draw women's costumes," writes Nicolay, "Zaferaga brought in two Turkish prostitutes to dress up for me in rich garments acquired from the bazaar, *bezestan*, where one can buy all sorts of clothes. These are the women I drew in the following illustrations." The gaze of the Ragusan eunuch together with his choice of women and ornaments left their mark on Nicolay's perception and representation of the female slave elite in the sultan's harem. The lack of direct visual experience produced imagined identities since the eye was deceived by disguise and imitation. Thus, Nicolay's vision of the Orient was shaped by Zaferaga's interpretation and cultural mediation.

Regarding Book III, the Italian Cesare Vecellio and the Flemish Abraham de Bruyn, among others, later reproduced the two images of Christian boys sent to the High Porte – *azamoglani* (*acem ođlan* in Turkish), who came from peasant families in the western part of the empire. Another engraving often reproduced in European costume depicts the fighters known as *delly* (*deli* in Turkish), who stood out for their courage. Many of them were unpaid Serbian warriors, incorporated into the Ottoman army. Nicolay describes them in a long text, with reference to classical sources (especially Herodotus' remarks regarding the Illyrians) and his personal experience. Their physical appearance and imposing clothes construct a type of aggressive masculinity that is often found in the representations of the inhabitants of the Balkans. These *delis*, Nicolay writes, came mainly from Bosnia and Serbia, being found as far as the borders of Greece, on the one hand, and of Austria and Hungary, on the other. The Turks called them so because *deli* meant *hot tempered*, but they called themselves *zataznic*, "which in their language means 'defiant', because each of them had to fight ten men single-handed in order to acquire the name and the status of *deli* or *zataznic*."

When he accompanied the French ambassador d'Aramont to the house of a pasha in Edirne, Nicolay met a *deli*. He invited him to the house where the ambassador was staying and offered him money in exchange for posing in his strange costume: "On his head he wore a long hat, after the Polish or Georgian fashion, which hung on one shoulder, and was made of a leopard skin with many spots; above it, in front, to be even more frightening, he had attached the tail of an eagle and the two wings, with gilded clasps."

A few days later, as the army was heading for Transylvania, Nicolay saw the Serbian warrior once again, riding a beautiful Turkish horse "with the saddle blanket made out of the skin of a huge lion, with the front paws attached to the horse's chest and the other two hanging behind." With the help of a translator, Nicolay asked him about his religion and origins; the warrior replied that he was from Serbia and that he had been born a Christian. He hid his faith, however, and followed the Islamic one. He then recited in Greek and in "Sclavonic" the Christian Sunday prayers. When asked why he dressed so strangely and why he wore those huge

wings he replied that he wanted to look more frightening in front of his enemies. In the fourth book, Nicolay describes Ragusa and Rumelia, a region he calls "Thracia", after Herodotus, while the short chapter on the Macedonians is part of the section dedicated to Greece. These are the only references to the Balkan region, but they are comprised of comprehensive texts and a series of illustrations: two depict a Ragusan merchant and a young messenger delivering letters on foot to and from Constantinople, and another five portray women from the Greek and Jewish minorities in Edirne. There are also illustrations of a Turkish prostitute, of a middle-class Turkish woman, and of a woman from Macedonia. Nicolay provides information about Ragusa and its inhabitants using the available contemporary sources, and focuses mainly on the modern city, which he represents through men's clothing. In the rich port, only men are noteworthy: some dress like the Venetians, others like the merchant and the messenger illustrated by the author. They speak "Sclavonian" and "a sort of Italian, rougher than Venetian." Women are mentioned only in the text, since Nicolay does not portray them: "Their women are not beautiful at all; they dress quite simply, wearing on their heads a veil-like covering, made of a fine linen cloth. Noble women wear a white silk veil, and their legs are covered to the heels. They rarely leave the house, but they gladly appear at the window to watch the passers-by. Girls, however, are kept far from the eyes of the world, so no one sees them."

Unlike Ragusa, Rumelia, and the former Ottoman capital Edirne (Adrianople) are, like Macedonia, described with the aid of women's fashion. On the other hand, male figures from Thrace and Macedonia are presented exclusively using long quotations from classical authors, especially from Herodotus. The recourse to ancient sources indicates the absence of direct experience: Renaissance ethnography described these regions by reviving stereotypes about promiscuity, polygamy, and lawlessness taken from Herodotus, who had regarded all the populations living in the Caucasus and beyond the northern border of ancient Greece as barbarians. Nonetheless, Nicolay drew townswomen: Jewish, Greek, and Turkish, whom he saw with his own eyes. For example, the women from Macedonia are wearing modern clothes. "From the following drawing, we can see what the clothing of Macedonian women looks like," Nicolay



comments and this costume would become a veritable reference point in similar sixteenth-century albums, being copied by Boissard, De Bruyn, Bertelli, and Vecellio.

An interesting asymmetry regarding the Balkan minorities in the Ottoman Empire emerges from Nicolay's work. The illustrations, especially those from the cities of Ragusa and Edirne, bring new information about the inhabitants, who are dressed according to their ethnicity and gender, while the text itself is based on other texts, especially the works of classical authors and contemporary Venetian writers, but also anecdotes collected from the author's personal experience. By 1590, Nicolay's work had been translated into four languages and printed in seven editions throughout Western Europe. No wonder, then, that his drawings of the costumes of the Ottoman Empire gave shape to the first coherent iconography of the Balkans.

*The seventeenth century: Cesare Vecellio (1521–1601)* The author of the most important albums depicting costumes of the late Renaissance, *Habiti antichi e moderni di diverse parti del mondo* (1590) [Ancient and Modern Costumes from Different Parts of the World] and *Habiti antichi e moderni di tutto il mondo* (1598) [Ancient and Modern Costumes from the Whole World], Cesare Vecellio was a member of the renowned Vecellio family and a second cousin of the great Titian. He travelled with him to Augsburg, where Titian painted the portrait of Emperor Charles V. Furthermore, Cesare survived the plague of 1575, to which Titian fell victim, and reached the age of 80.

Comparing the two editions of "Ancient and Modern Costumes", from 1590 and 1598, we see that the distribution of clothes in the Balkans changes. In the first volume, they are part of a broad category of costumes existing on the European continent. In the second, they are included under the title *Habiti d'Ungheria* ("Costumes of Hungary") in a section comprising nine images: six male and three female characters. The "Costumes of Hungary" belong to territories that are not defined as comprising one distinct geographical and cultural unit, but rather as separate areas, belonging to different political and religious systems, in a region where Christianity and Islam coexist. The maps printed at that time in Venice show the Balkans within the same coordinates. Consistent with the trends imposed by the political and historical writings of Renaissance Venice, Vecellio's

text does not separate Catholicism from Orthodoxy and Islam but insists on including all three in the European landscape. While in other albums the illustrations of Southeastern European clothing were disparate or depicted them alongside Turkish, Armenian, or Greek costumes, Vecellio constructed the only coherent set of images and texts about the Balkans, which he presented almost identically in both editions. That of 1598 contains an additional image, showing the prince of Transylvania – probably Sigismund Báthory –, dressed in Western armour, which indeed opens the series "Hungarian Costumes". By introducing a clear hierarchical structure in the second edition, Vecellio aligned the Balkans with the European world, as religious and secular leaders (doges, popes, emperors, kings and princes, both from Europe and from the Orient) open the series of illustrations representing peoples from the four corners of the known world. Women are missing from this dynastic creation (except for the half-naked queens of the New World, who appear in several drawings), in contrast to the images of women's costumes as symbols of civic identity which opened each section of the book in the first edition.

The colourful and richly adorned silk mantle of the Prince of Transylvania resembles the fabric, style, and colours adopted by the main ethnic groups in the Kingdom of Hungary, Magyars and Croats, and offers a compelling image of dynastic union thanks to the visual symbolism of the beautiful garment. Noblemen from Hungary and Croatia come next in this hierarchy of clothing. "There are many, many cities" and the clothes on display resemble the Croatian dress: a black or coloured small woollen hat and fine silk floor-length garments. Climbing down the social ladder, Croatian men dress almost as Magyars and Poles do. According to Vecellio, the Croats are "very Christian" (*cristianissimi*), even though they are under Ottoman rule. The colour of clothing is a distinguishing feature of all social classes. In contrast to the prevailing black of Western European fashion, trending under Spanish influence, Croats and Hungarians preferred colourful clothes, especially red. "Hungarian men wear long clothes, especially red ones. All have buttons surrounded by a braided edge, either made of gilded silk or crystal. They are not in the habit of wearing gloves but keep their hands in the long sleeves of their clothes. They shave their heads and grow beards and moustaches. They are a nation of warriors;



Dalmatian or true Slav (left) and Dalmatian Woman (right), in Caesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi, et moderni di tutto il mondo: Di nuovo accresciuti di molte figure, Venice, 1598, p. 341–342* (Google Books).

that is why they wear high boots with iron soles.” Their innate penchant for fighting is constantly mentioned in travel diaries up until the nineteenth century. This unconstrained society of aggressive men, often associated with a lack of civilization during the eighteenth century, is successively captured in Vecellio’s work through a series of male portraits. The following image, representing a “true Slav or Dalmatian,” perfectly illustrates the topos of aggression, savagery, and brute physical force, as well as the rejection of the colour black. “Tall, robust, and strong men are born in this country, but they are harsh in word and deed. They like colours and they wear black very rarely when they are in mourning. Noblemen also dress in coloured silk, velvet, and damask. They carry a curved Turkish-style sword on them, and many have maces. They are Catholics and pious, carry weapons, and show perseverance.”

Vecellio’s perspective is specific to a Venetian who describes and draws costumes from the *stato da mar*, namely the territories controlled by Venice in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. These are the areas where the soldiers for the *Serenissima*’s<sup>1</sup> army and fleet came from and the approach is influenced by the logic of imperial domination: the Dalmatians in the service of Venice were considered pious Christians, who fought for the triumph of the true faith in the Mediterranean region. In the 1590 edition, Venice’s dominion over Dalmatia is reflected by both the costumes of the noblewomen from the Venetian territories and outposts and by the simple attire of the common women. “The wives of officials sent to govern other cities are assigned the titles of their spouses and are called *podestaresse*<sup>2</sup>, *capitane*<sup>3</sup> and so on [...]. For this reason, women dress with great pomp, according to the title and the position held, and wear numerous ornaments. The dresses are made of silk of various colours, woven with gold and silver threads. They adorn their blond hair (natural or dyed) with many pearls and other jewellery [...]. They leave the house accompanied by other noble women from the cities where they are sent, and, thus dressed, go to church or to public celebrations.”

Clothing is a marker of power. The exquisite garments donned by noblewomen and by the local elites, following the latest Venetian trends, did not come under the sumptuary laws of the metropolis and constituted an essential element in the construction of authority. Venetian women in Dalmatia embody the fundamental identification of the chosen garment with imperial domination. The ordinary local women, “tall, healthy, and hardworking”, with their simple, wide, and colourful garments (as they did not wear bodices), are quite different in appearance from the nobility, but nevertheless very graceful in their *ghellero* – “an ethereal garment made of fine wool, satin, or damask, with sleeves have way down the arm”. Like their husbands, these women are very pious. Those who live on the island of Cres come to Venice every year to celebrate Ascension Day wearing thin silk veils, long and colourful wool dresses, linen aprons, and thin shirts (*camicie*) without ruffles.

1. Venice acquired this name during the Renaissance.
2. Mrs. Governor (Italian).
3. Mrs. Captain (Italian).

Nobody had drawn a portrait of the leader of the Uskoks before, a gang “of cruel, bold, and fierce men,” subjects of the Habsburgs; they lived in Senj, a mountainous area of Dalmatia, and were “so agile and quick that they crossed the ridges as fast as black goats.” The Uskoks made their living looting and attacking the Ottomans and, occasionally, Venice, whenever plundering was unsuccessful or tensions with the Serenissima escalated. “Their clothes resemble those of the Slavs, longer at the back and shorter at the front. On their head they wear a small velvet hat with a wonderful shape: at the back it descends to the nape of the neck and in the front, it is lifted up and cut on both sides.”

The last illustration in Vecellio’s book IX depicts a young woman from Ragusa. The text of the first edition was considerably shortened, eliminating all references to the history and geographical position of the city, to its commercial prosperity, to the Slavic language, to its status of a maritime republic or to the customs of its inhabitants, some of whom dressed according to Venetian fashion, some according to their own tastes. In the second edition, a brief mention of the women’s lack of beauty (which coincides with Nicolay’s impression) is followed by the description of their headdress, jewellery, and dress, and of their long black mantle. The text from 1590 mentions that the young woman is the bride of a local nobleman which explains the lack of colour and the Venetian style lace (*buratto*).

The representation of the young woman from Ragusa wearing a black mantle brought a different perspective on the particular clothing habits of the place, in contrast to the widely circulated engravings of the Ragusan merchant and messenger from Nicolay’s book IV. Here, the Venetian influence is manifested via the fashion adopted by the nobles and those who had close ties with the Serenissima. *Giovanetta ragusea* expresses the point of view of the Venetian artist, as does the representation of the inhabitants of Dalmatia, *dalmatino* and *dalmatina*. They were all Southern Slavs who had retained their Christian identity under Ottoman rule; they were connected to Venice through war, migration, and political and social networks established within a relationship of colonial or semi-colonial dependence. They liked bright colours, and women rejected both the colour black and bodices, while men wore gold and crystal buttons and small fur-trimmed hats and carried curved swords and daggers. Their style and dress were similar to those of the other Slavs, from Dalmatia,



“Captain of the Uskoks” (left) and “Young Woman of Ragusa” in Caesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi, et moderni di tutto il mondo: Di nuovo accresciuti di molte figure*, Venice, 1598, p. 414–415 (Google Books).

Croatia, and Bosnia to Poland or Russia. While Vecellio included them in a separate chapter, he did not reproduce Nicolay’s engravings and it is quite possible that he sketched them from life. However, while Nicolay’s drawings became classic images of the Balkans, constantly selected, and reproduced by northern European engravers, Vecellio’s characters did not contribute significantly to the consolidation of Balkan iconography and did not circulate outside Venice or Italy for long. Nonetheless, the illustration of the young Dalmatian woman, alone or with her husband, had a different destiny and a surprising afterlife. In 1758, Zandira, a local woman, became the protagonist of Carlo Goldoni’s play *La Dalmatina* and two centuries later, in 1944, when communist partisans fought against foreign occupation, Tito “praised the military importance” of the Dalmatians as heroes of the resistance.



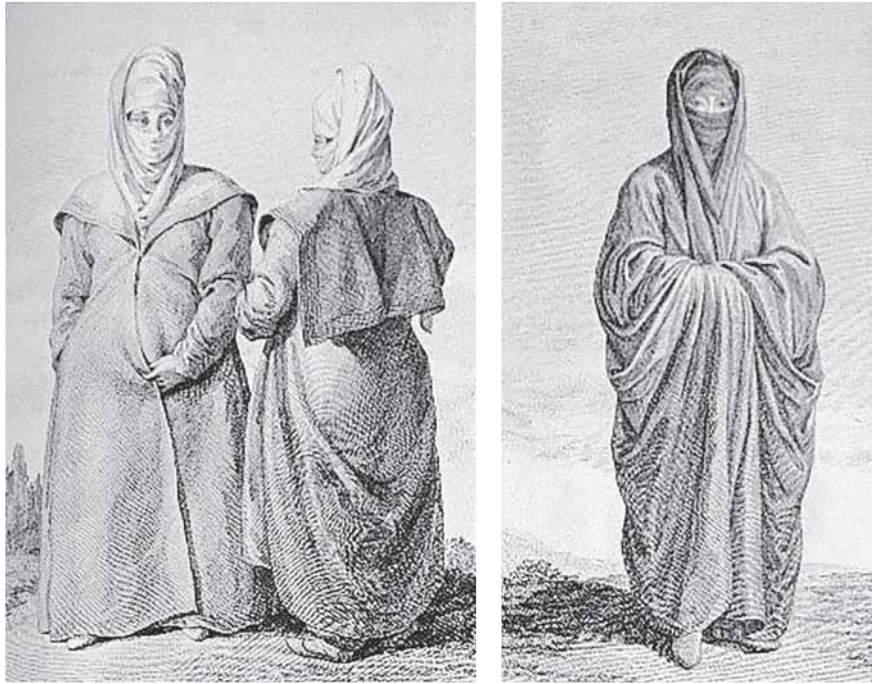
*The eighteenth century: Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson (1740–1807)* A rare elephant folio, Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson's *Tableau général de l'Empire Othoman*, was published in Paris by the renowned publishing house Didot. The first volume appeared in 1787 and the second one in 1790, while his son published the third in 1820 after d'Ohsson's death. Ignatius Mouradgea was born in Constantinople; his mother was French and his father was Armenian. His father worked as an interpreter for the Swedish diplomatic mission and the son followed in his footsteps, becoming a dragoman. Living in this cosmopolitan environment, the father and son were true cultural mediators; they spoke several foreign languages and were well positioned in the hierarchy of the Sublime Porte, thus being integrated into the political networks of the empire. Ignatius added d'Ohsson to his name in 1787, when Gustav III, the king of Sweden, granted him a noble title as a reward for his services to the crown. In 1784, Ignatius Mouradgea left for Paris to publish his work. The publication of the first two volumes must have been the editorial event of the day: the work was printed by François Didot "the younger," a representative figure of the luxury book trade in Paris, famous for the beauty of his prints. The financial support of the aristocratic public made possible the publication of a deluxe elephant folio edition, illustrated with 233 engravings, 41 of which are full-page or double-page foldouts. The illustrations were made by a team of 28 artists (painters, illustrators, and engravers), under the coordination of Charles Nicolas Cochin (1715–1791), an iconic figure in the art world of eighteenth-century Paris. Recent research has brought to light the Ottoman and Persian sources of the artwork and shown how the paintings and drawings Mouradgea brought from Constantinople were adapted to the French style. Moreover, Armenian sources show that Mouradgea stayed temporarily at the San Lazzaro monastery in Venice, where he worked with Armenian artists.

D'Ohsson's project is unique in that it encapsulates contributions by Ottoman and French creators, artisans, and authors in the realization of his *Tableau général* based on Ottoman sources. Officials at the imperial palace gave him information about the Serail, the sultan, and his court. He owes the details on the sultanas, the *kadıns*, and the Imperial harem

to the slaves in the Serail. The work has two parts: the first part analyses Muslim jurisprudence, and the second part, never completed, presents the history of the Ottoman Empire. D'Ohsson died in 1807, after the publication of the first two volumes of his monumental work, over three hundred pages each. In 1820, his son edited the 500-page third volume on Civil and Penal Law. The volumes contain numerous illustrations depicting civilian, military, and court costumes, male and female alike. The detailed presentation of Islamic Law is interspersed with comments on morality, social practices, and descriptions of Ottoman society from the author's own experience. In the second volume, the section on morality includes two books: the first is titled *De la nourriture*, while the second is called *Du vêtement*. The author examines in turn topics such as pure and impure meats, forbidden and legal drinks, opium, coffee, tobacco and perfume, clothing, sumptuary laws regarding clothing and the body, interior decorations, clothing styles, colours, and carriages.

"Apart from the Ulema and the few pious individuals among the laity, all rich families wear clothes made from silk and the most expensive fabrics. Materials brought from India are the most sought-after. Their variety is impressive, regarding not only price but also quality. They are of a single colour, with stripes or flowers, of silk or woven with gold or silver thread. The latter are only for women. Men never wear garments with gold or silver thread, except for the servants of the elite and certain court officials, on special occasions. Among the fabrics brought from India, we should mention the *shawls*, woven from extremely fine wool and very expensive. They are rectangular in shape and are embroidered all over with threads of the thinnest wool, but of different colours. The largest shawls, which measured 12 feet in length and 4 in width, could pass through a ring: men and women alike use them as sashes, in all seasons. In winter, men, whether riding or on foot, cover their heads with them to protect themselves from the bad weather. Umbrellas are not known there, and carriages are reserved for women. They [women] use India shawls to cover their heads and shoulders and to protect themselves from the cold. Some also make themselves winter clothes from shawls. Ladies of high standing prefer those made from the most expensive muslin and embroidered fabrics. The common people wear ordinary shawls, made locally."





“Muslim Woman with a Veil”, “Egyptian Woman with a Veil”, in Ignatius Mouradgea d’Ohsson, *Tableau général de l’Empire Othoman*, Paris, 1790, tome 2 (Library of the Romanian Academy).

As a Catholic Armenian close to the circles of power, d’Ohsson highlighted the importance of Christian minorities in organising get-togethers following the European lifestyle, which allowed elite members and officials of the Court to transcend religious norms in their interactions: “Families of a certain standing enjoy social gatherings at home. Many families live completely in the European way: their beds, their tables, relations between girls and boys, games, and all that concerns civil life, stand in stark contrast to the way of living of the dominant population. Those who have good connections at court can easily invite young officers to their parties, at night and incognito; in this way, young Muslims, freed of their prejudices and protected by the discretion of their hosts, may enjoy the pleasures of life. They drink wine; they sing at the table, forget the utterly



“Woman from Europe Wearing a Shawl”, “Woman from Europe Wearing a Headscarf”, in Ignatius Mouradgea d’Ohsson, *Tableau général de l’Empire Othoman*, Paris, 1790, tome 2 (Library of the Romanian Academy).

severe Muslim mores, and get closer to the habits of Christians. In this pleasant forgetfulness, they sometimes allow themselves to dance the *Georgina*, a bizarre dance where people resort to mime, and their gestures, faces, and posture become ridiculous. They move their tongues, eyes, heads, feet, and hands as if they were separate parts of their bodies.”

Mouradgea d’Ohsson’s work aims to present the Ottoman society in a way that emphasises the modesty, diligence, tolerance, and lack of ostentation of its members, thus avoiding the stereotypes that Western travellers generally attributed to the inhabitants of this “non-communicative” empire. “Religious prejudices have raised a barrier between the Empire and Europe,” he wrote, and these “ghosts,” haunting many books, have been mistaken for the customs, traditions, religion, and laws of the Ottomans. Reforms

in education, constant diplomatic contacts with the West, and “a handful of young Muslims from good families” educated in Europe to form a new elite open to progress would eventually transform “culture and public administration.” These are his conclusions. An Enlightenment intellectual, d’Ohsson hoped that an enlightened sultan would modernise society from above.

The illustrations that accompany the text are significant and constitute a substantial part of the work. D’Ohsson insists that Ottoman painters made all the images, facing many difficulties and in great secrecy. Because of a long iconoclastic tradition, there were no important painters, certainly not comparable with artists from Italy, France, or the Netherlands. He encountered many difficulties, and it took a long time to convince artists to work for him: to draw the illustrations, they had to work in their own homes or in d’Ohsson’s house, in silence and in secret. These drawings may not be masterpieces, he notes, but they are faithful representations of costumes and everyday objects, and also of Ottoman customs and public ceremonies. All the illustrations were engraved in Paris, but Cochin, charged with the artistic presentation of the edition, criticised the Ottoman drawings, finding them “too short, their heads too big, done without taste, without effect, and offering an extremely unpleasant perspective.” As a result, he decided to modify the original images and, at great expense, hired a French painter to retouch them; they were later redrawn for the French engraver. In the end, the 233 black and white prints retained their essentially sober character, even after the intense labour of decoding and interpreting the Ottoman tradition of visual art that was invested in their making.

*The nineteenth century: Giulio Ferrario (1767–1847)* Giulio Ferrario was the author of a monumental collection of world history, *Il costume antico e moderno* (*The ancient and modern costume*), printed in Milan in twenty-one volumes between 1817 and 1834, in parallel Italian and French editions.

Born in Milan in 1767, Ferrario was an erudite clergyman who was for a long time in charge of the famous Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense (Biblioteca di Brera). The historical context in which he completed his work was the period immediately following the French Revolution, including the rise of Napoleon’s empire, but also its decline, and the extension of

Habsburg rule over the Kingdom of Italy and Illyria. In addition, the transformations of the Ottoman Empire and the European lands under its domination caused by the increasingly aggressive military policy of the Tsarist Empire influenced his work. Ferrario lived under the French domination of Italy and saw its demise in 1814, when he became a loyal subject of the Austrian monarch, Emperor Francis I, to whom he dedicated his masterpiece. He died in Milan in 1847.

His cultural inclinations and body of work brought Ferrario renown in the intellectual circles of Milan, the capital of the Kingdom of Italy under Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1802 he began working at the Biblioteca di Brera, and in 1838 he became the director of the institution. Owing to his various responsibilities regarding this “place of knowledge” over a period of many years, Ferrario had access to the library’s important rare book collections, and he gathered around him a group of scholars and artists who shared his interests. The Biblioteca di Brera was – and still is – part of an institutional complex that includes the Accademia and the Pinacoteca di Brera, where artists of the time studied and where many of the images included in its impressive collection of costume albums were made. Ferrario had a passion for theatre and opera and published a work in several volumes dedicated to ancient and modern theatre in Italy (1830). He founded and ran the magazine *I Teatri*, where he published articles on music and choreography. At the same time, he edited *Il costume antico e moderno*, a collection that sought to promote knowledge about exotic, foreign cultures, in an encyclopaedic format which combined erudition with the pleasure of discovering new things. Grateful for the support he had received from numerous public and private libraries, scholars and collectors, Ferrario thus presents the purpose of his enterprise: “We have gathered in a single work information from rare and extremely expensive books, to be useful to our students [...] we hope that the fine arts will also benefit from our approach, because artists will no longer have to look in vain for ideal costumes.” He makes it clear from the start that the volumes constitute a selection of information taken from rare sources by various authors in order to make knowledge available to an informed audience. There is no reference made to personal experience, travel, or direct observation. In fact, part of a long-standing Italian tradition dating back the Renaissance, *Il costume antico e*

*moderno* is a perfect example of the increasingly popular field of world history and armchair travel literature.

A group of Milanese artists designed and engraved the hand-coloured prints in each volume, “representing figures that have been diligently gathered from the best works on statues, coins, and bas-reliefs, and from the most highly appreciated travel journals,” and not from their own fancy. This monumental work became a model of erudite compilation in the nineteenth century and was reprinted seven times by the 1840s. In Florence a cheap *in quarto* edition was put on the market as early as 1823.

The much-needed funds for printing the work were largely provided by the 211 “associates” who placed orders for the entire work. Emperor Francis I opened the list of subscribers and was followed by thirteen members of European royal houses and aristocrats. The catalogue of associates provides useful information on the distribution of copies across Europe: subscribers could choose between hand coloured or black and white editions. Numerous public libraries in Italy, but also in Berlin, Leipzig, London, Mannheim, Munich, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Vienna placed orders to purchase the collection. Among the subscribers, there were also booksellers, printers, merchants, traders, painters, engravers, and members of various professional categories, such as engineers, architects, lawyers, civil servants, and clergymen.

Ferrario’s 21-volume work builds upon the tradition of early modern costume books printed in Europe and in some non-western countries. Within this long-standing tradition, his encyclopaedic collection was part of a growing publishing trend of the nineteenth century, in which travel literature was becoming increasingly popular. Publishers were interested in establishing a canon of the modern travel literature of the last half century, and for this to be possible, previously unpublished, or untranslated journals, travel narratives, and letters, some with sketches and watercolours, had to be made accessible.

The volume on the Ottoman Empire is the fourth of nine dealing with Europe of which two, in the wake of the Philhellenism of the time, are dedicated to Greece. The first part of the volume provides a rather factual synthesis of the history of the Ottoman Empire, while the second part offers an ethnographic overview of civil society, with a focus on material

culture. Clothes for men and women, dancing and music, coffee drinking and smoking, together with domestic interiors, rituals, and devotional practices are all described in detail. The book’s last section is dedicated to the “modern Slavs” and is largely based on the Venetian *abbé* Alberto Fortis’s classic journey across Dalmatia, *Viaggio in Dalmazia*, 1774; Louis François Cassas’s *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l’Istrie et de la Dalmatie*, 1802; François Pouqueville’s *Voyage en Morée, à Constantinople, en Albanie et dans plusieurs autres parties de l’Empire Ottoman*, 1805; and the Carniolan physician Balthazar Hacquet’s *L’Illyrie et la Dalmatie*, 1815, which comprised his ethnographic observations on the Southern Slavs translated from German into French. The peculiar orientalisising gaze in the work of these authors projects a fascination with manliness and “primitivism” that Maria Todorova has labelled “Balkanism.”

In *Il costume antico e modern*, coffee and tobacco open the section on civil customs. Christian and Muslims alike drink coffee; women and men alike smoke tobacco, brought by foreign merchants to Constantinople. The wealthy use silver and golden pipes decorated with precious stones, while the common people smoke clay pipes or the *narghile*, of Persian origin. The chewing of tobacco had also started to spread among the elites who enjoyed a locally grown variety called *rapé*. Foreign tobacco powder was considered worthless, except that from Corfu, which the Venetians sold in large quantities. In the past, consumption of coffee, tobacco, and opium had been strictly regulated following Islamic law, but later, these commodities had come to be consumed by many people, including the Sultan himself. Women preferred small bites of electuaries without opium, but with moss that smelled nice and went well with coffee. They also enjoyed chewing mastic, an aromatic resin from *lentiscus*, which grew in the islands of the Archipelago, especially in Chios. They believed that it was good for the gums, the stomach, and toothache and that it could stop bleeding, which made it popular among women. They chewed on it a lot and, as it increased the flow of saliva, they turned this into a pastime. The Ottomans had adopted from the Arabs a great love of perfume, the use of which was strictly regulated for ministers and officials at the court. Guests and foreign ambassadors were greeted with a ceremonial offer of coffee, tobacco, and perfume.





*Giulio Ferrario, Il costume antico e moderno, vol. 4, Milano, 1827, il. 60 (Private collection, Kohli Library, Berlin).*

As far as clothing was concerned, consumption and fashion could not eschew sumptuary legislation obeying religious tenets. Ferrario's text articulates this tension between religious norms and luxury with a keen focus on men's clothing and the turban as the main distinguishing features of ethnicity and religious belief. Clothing could also be charged with political significance and wearing a Persian cap, or a European hat unleashed violent reactions, especially in times of popular uprisings. Overall, the main rule for the Ottomans, according to Ferrario, was to show neither pomp, nor negligence. They could wear black and white, but not red and

yellow. Gold and silver fabrics were prohibited. Notwithstanding the changes that luxury required, Ottomans both in the capital and the provinces of the Empire kept the long Oriental kaftan and changed only the shape and ornamentation of their turbans. "The inhabitants of Constantinople and those of the European provinces usually wear turbans of white muslin. Those living in Syria, the Arabs and Egyptians use a striped cloth or a simple coloured one. The same fashion applies to people living in Bursa, Caramania, Adana, Bosnia and Albania. The non-Muslim subjects are immediately visible as their headgear is very different. They are

only allowed to wear a high sheepskin black busby called *calpach* or to cover their head with a piece of dark cloth. The Greek inhabitants of the Archipelago wear a red or white woollen beret. A Muslim should never dress in a foreign fashion; a dress, and more so, headgear that does not conform to native custom would cover him with shame and opprobrium and would yield to a suspicion of apostasy.”

Shoes were further distinguishing features: of yellow Moroccan leather for Muslims, and dark blue for the *ulema*, while non-Muslim subjects were obliged to wear black ones. Europeans who were permitted to wear Muslim dress could sport yellow shoes, but they could not don a turban, as this was a distinguishing feature of the Muslim population. Instead, they wore a cap of marten or sable fur. Some European travellers dressed in Oriental clothes risked wearing a turban, but, if spotted, they could experience some hostility. All Muslims shaved their heads and wore a *fez*, with the turban placed on top. Men shaved their hair off to avoid appearing effeminate.

In Constantinople, fur clothes could be worn by members of each social class: “In winter the artisan, the soldier, and the peasant want [a fur] of lamb, sheep, cat, or squirrel. The urban dweller is happy with fox and hare; the rich and the great have a wardrobe stacked with sable, marten, white fox, ermine, and miniver. In summer, one wears a large cloak – the *feredjé* (Turkish *ferece*) – with a lining of camel or goat wool. Changing clothes depends on the sultan’s will. Black fox is reserved for His Imperial Highness. Women are much freer to use fur, as only money and taste decide what they can wear. Therefore, in winter they show the most beautiful fur coats and adorn their dresses with a border of fur around the skirt. A proverb says that it is expensive to dress a woman, but it is incomparably more so to dress an Ottoman lady.” The freedom of Muslim women to choose their clothes included the use of gold and precious stones used to adorn women’s daggers. Ferrario states that this indulgent attitude towards women’s attire is a compensation for their subordinate position. Married women have “a master rather than a husband and they cannot see any other men except by peeping through a hole in their window blinds.”

Whereas in Europe fans were part of women’s attire and were used in public, in Ottoman society men and women used fans mostly in private.

Round and made from peacock feathers or parchment, fans were decorated with golden flowers and had ivory or ebony handles. Men had plain ones. Servants and slaves would fan their masters and waft flyswatters in front of the sultan and his ministers.

Non-Muslim women, especially Greeks, enjoyed greater freedom and could dress according to European fashion in private. Greek homes were spaces where interethnic socialising was encouraged, where Europeans met and mixed with the locals, and where they listened to music and danced: “Beyond the *romeca* that girls are taught to dance at home, in Greek households a foreigner will admire the French, English, and German contredanses.” The chapter on music also comments on the mixing of ethnicities and religious minorities during private dancing. Despite prohibitions, the Ottomans loved music: it was part of their Persian cultural inheritance. Ferrario’s text and the images used in the volume were largely based on the materials published in Ignatius Mouradgea d’Ohsson’s impressive work *Tableau général de l’Empire Othoman*.

*Customs accounts –  
sources for the history  
of trade and consumption*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

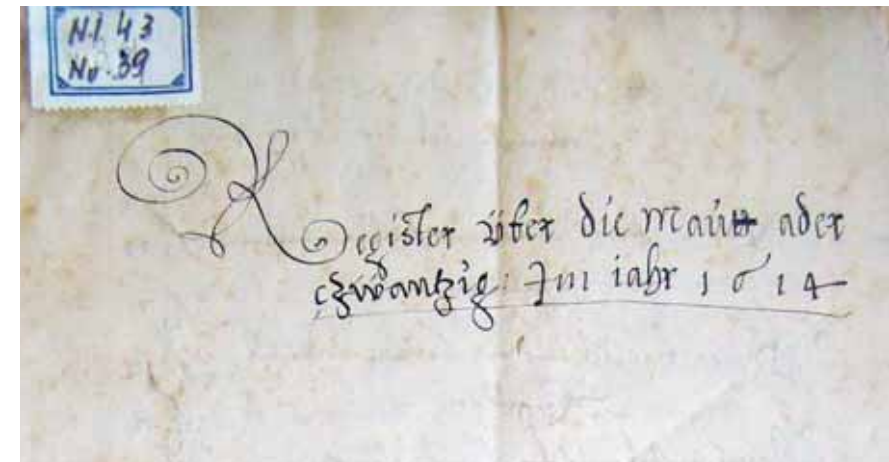
**T**he archives of Braşov and Sibiu, the two Saxon towns in southern Transylvania, house some of the oldest documentary fonds regarding trade in Southeastern Europe from the Middle Ages. They contain documents detailing the commercial privileges granted to the city of Braşov in 1369, correspondence with Wallachian princes concerning issues of trade and merchants, and, starting with 1500, customs records. For historians, the latter sources are a goldmine in that they not only show daily trade exchanges, but also reveal the names and preoccupations of individuals who otherwise might have remained unknown. In particular, the Sibiu archive holds an impressive collection of customs accounts from 1500 to 1692, for the years when central authorities leased the customs



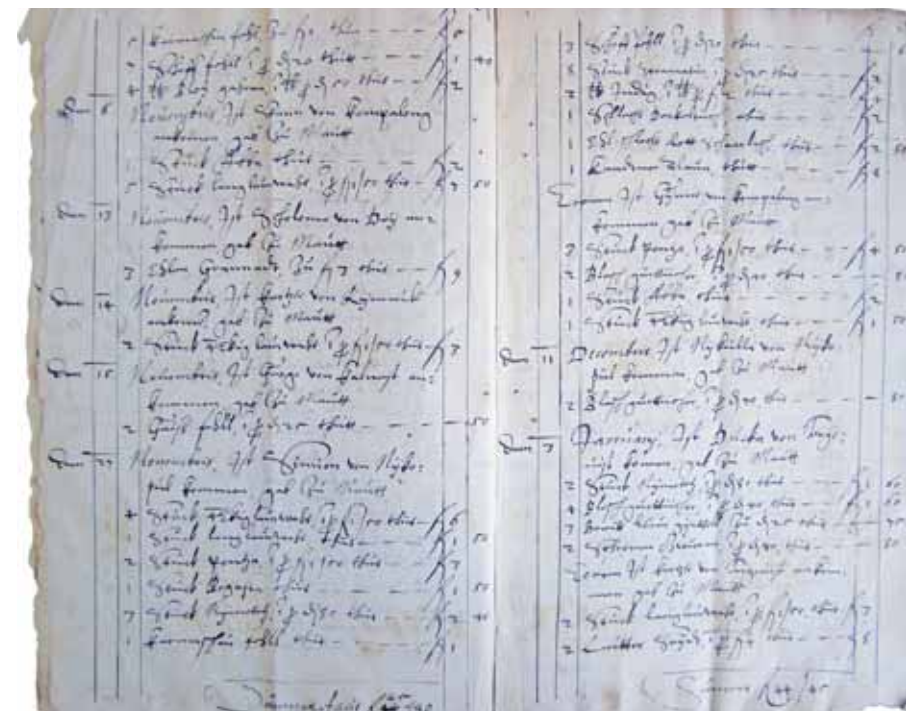
income to the town. Good archival practices and a fortunate lack of destructive events has allowed the preservation of these records in Sibiu, in the longest series of customs accounts in our region.

Customs registers had separate sections for income and expenditure. The style of entries changed over the centuries, but for the most part records mention the date when the merchant arrived at the customs, his name and place of origin (either his hometown or his last stopover in Wallachia), and details about the merchandise (type, quantity, and price).

Historians primarily use this treasure trove to analyse the quantity of imported goods, the monthly and yearly shipments, and to investigate the various types of merchandise (linen, condiments and spices, leather, clothing, etc.). Indirectly, however, customs records show the circulation of people and goods, trace the geographical dissemination of trade, and explain such phenomena as cultural transfers and exchanges. Trade along land routes leading from the Balkans towards Central Europe and passing through the Romanian principalities made locals familiar with what other parts of the continent considered luxury goods, such as cotton, Persian silk, or spices, and eventually lead to the creation of a demand market which can be clearly documented. For instance, in Saxon towns, local merchants made easy profits by taking over Turkish goods from Balkan merchants and by redistributing spices. Furthermore, craftsmen and artisans, representatives of the urban middle class, were also accustomed to consuming Oriental goods and loudly demanded equal access to them. For goods imported from the Ottoman Empire, the so-called “Turkish goods”, the 5% tax or *vigesima* (twentieth) was levied in kind. Consequently, the customs office created its own stock of spices and fabrics, to be later sold to the town’s inhabitants. For instance, while records from 1542, 1543, and 1546 do not mention the names of the merchants or the origin of the shipments, they do indicate both the quantity of in-kind merchandise levied as tax and the names of local buyers who purchased goods from the customs house. The list of buyers shows that the elite of Sibiu and the members of the town council, the actual administrator of the customs, bought most of the Turkish spices and fabrics. Furthermore, in the 1546, the whole Council took about 17 *funts* (around 8 kg) of saffron from the



Customs register (1614) of the city of Sibiu (cover), f. 3. (Romanian National Archives, Sibiu County, Sibiu City Magistrate Fond, inv. 197, customs records, no. 43).





customs stock without payment. However, by 1550, the customs office's clientele was more diverse: in addition to politicians and their spouses, who purchased many of the goods, records mention craftsmen's wives and weavers who bought large quantities of cotton and silk threads, unprocessed silk, taffeta, handkerchiefs, and headscarves, but also cinnamon. Customs registers also document the ways in which trends and local preferences changed over time, which fabrics were fashionable, which lost their appeal, and which were popular at any given moment. Most importantly, though, Transylvanian customs records echo the fluctuations in the spice trade during the great geographical discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as well as the revival of the Levant trade and its eventual demise in favour of Dutch and English maritime supremacy during the seventeenth century. Southeastern Europe was always part of the global exchange routes of goods and ideas.

### *Lists and more lists...*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

The archives of Iași, Brașov, Sibiu, and Bucharest hold diverse sources from the eighteenth century that are waiting for historians to analyse them and introduce them to scholarship. It is roughly in this period that boyar households began to keep detailed records of their possessions and expenses. It was usually a logothete or a bailiff or an overseer (*vătaf*) who wrote down both the income and the expenses incurred. Written for the benefit of their owners, these account books reflect the situation of a boyar household spanning a period of several years, providing information about the balance of income and expenditure, about the revenue of the estates, and about the necessities of daily life. For an agrarian economy, account books proved to be extremely useful. A boyar's domain had to be closely monitored and carefully managed to produce the surplus necessary to be invested in the purchase of other goods. Keeping a permanent record of costs, earnings, and investments

increased the profitability of the property. Moreover, a detailed record of expenses helped avoiding wasteful spending or acquisition of unnecessary commodities. Such an account book was kept for grand treasurer Toader Palade's household over a period of two years, from January 1750 to January 1752. The historian Mihai Mîrza has published an edition of this record, giving us the opportunity to discover its value and relevance to the topic. The overseer Mihalache Niță made daily entries listing all the expenses of the boyar, of his family, and of servants within the household.

Account books, unfortunately underused by Romanian researchers, are a valuable source of information. For instance, here is another Moldavian account book, which remains unpublished: "Logothete Șerban's account of honourable former grand treasurer Ioan Canta's house expenses, starting on January 1, 1777" (*Sama lui Șerban logofăt pentru cheltuiala casei dumisale Ioan Canta biv vel vistier, care începe la 1 ianuarie 1777*). Logothete Șerban similarly records the income and expenses of a boyar's house in Iași. There are probably dozens of such account books in the archives across Southeastern Europe and their analysis may shed new light on the world of domestic life, with its ebbs and flows. On its own, an item of expenditure may not tell us much; but when found repeatedly in the account books of several households over a period of several years, it may help us to formulate hypotheses about consumption, fashion, luxury, and social interactions.

Expense lists are also well-documented resources for studying the eighteenth century. Boyars in rural areas could not always visit the large general stores that mushroomed in some towns and cities. They would mail their orders to well-known merchants or to commercial houses to obtain the goods they needed. Constantin Hagi Popp was the owner of such a famous commercial house in Sibiu. Oltenian boyars placed orders with him on a regular basis for gunpowder, flower seeds, exotic fruit, heavy fabrics, puppies and hounds, wigs, shoes, medicine, wine, tableware, sweets, carriages, horses, tea, coffee, tobacco, rosemary, oil, and many more items. For example, the order of *sluger*<sup>1</sup> Hamza Jianu, one of Hagi Popp's main customers, comprised the following items:

1. *Sluger* = a minor boyar rank, responsible for providing meat for the princely court.

“Goods I asked my nephew Costandin to buy for me, August 29, 1775:

2 saltshakers to be made of silver

1 good ring

1 garnet ring for Costache

1 similar ring for Grigorașco

1 good table, for 12 people

12 napkins

1 box of trays

1 box of plates

15 cubits cloth. Swords.

Hamza Jianu“.

Hamza Jianu lived in Caracal (a small town in southern Wallachia), where he made his fortune. He bought the garnet rings for his younger relatives, Costache and Grigorașcu, and the other items for the house, ordered on behalf of his wife. Lists of this kind, mailed to Sibiu or Bucharest, to Iași or Craiova (an important city in Oltenia), are countless. These expense lists emphasise both consumption and taste. Indeed, the ordered goods did not travel alone, but were accompanied by information regarding their qualities, the ways in which they should be used, and, most importantly, what was fashionable in other corners of the region. Many of these lists, published in part by Nicolae Iorga, showcase the Oltenian boyars' preference for Viennese fashion. Luckily for them, the merchant Hagi Popp was quick to meet their demands by sending them merchandise *en vogue* in Vienna (or, as it was known then throughout the region, *Beci/Beč*). Consequently, the boyars would become accustomed to the thought that Vienna was a beacon of latest fashion trends and would frequently emphasise in their letters that the requested goods “should be fashionable in Beci.” Thanks to these lists, for instance, we learn that rosemary was not yet known in 1780. Dumitrana Știrbei ask for “rosemary which grows around the garden” for seasoning food. Hagi Popp, however, sent her black raisins so the boyar lady had to place another order. Such misunderstandings were quite common, especially since the description of goods was often based on hearsay, personal impressions, or articles published in foreign magazines.

Another category of list consists of inventories of all kinds, made in a variety of circumstances and for different purposes. Estate inventories were usually drawn up following the decease of the owner. A proper catalogue of the estate was necessary so that the heirs could claim their share of inheritance, regardless of whether the deceased had left a written will. Sometimes, the value of possession was assessed by the head of the merchants' guild, while at other times it was a priest or a logothete who entered them in a ledger, briefly describing their quality, value, and condition of preservation. Each item had its quality at the time of the inventory jotted down next to it: good, bad, shabby, used, pawned, or on loan. These details helped descendants assess the goods in the context of their inheritance.

Merchants themselves also made lists. Renting commercial property in towns and cities, they needed a clear inventory of their merchandise, whether put on display for sale or stored away in trunks. A lot of goods were preserved in boxes and coffers, well hidden in the sanctuaries of churches and in the basements of monasteries, before being brought out for sale. Keeping a systematic inventory was thus necessary to avoid possible conflicts between merchants and those storing their goods. Furthermore, traders needed detailed lists so they could recover their property if they were robbed, quite a common occurrence in a society dominated by insecurity and violence. Finally, there was a risk of force majeure: plagues and fires, floods and invasions, a plethora of events that could put one's livelihood at risk. The inventorying of goods and the existence a written document increased the chance of recovering lost property, in part at least, and offered the possibility of claiming compensation.

Here is an example of what could be found in a trunk: “What I stored in trunks May 10, 1786. The large green box,” writes Constantin, a linendraper (*bogasier*). His trunk contained: “2 carpets, 1 sword, 2 oil lamps, 1 large silver spoon, 1 large silver tray, 1 silver sugar cup, 2 silver cups with spoons, 1 incense burner, 1 watering can, 2 silver candle holders, 1 silver candlestick, 2 knife sets with their spoons, 2 spoons and *șam*<sup>1</sup> for the table, 6 coffee cups, 4 silver trays, another 5 for the table, 6 tombac knives, 4 broken silver

1. *Șamalagea* (from Turkish *Şam alacası*) fabric used to make tablecloths and bed sheets.





Left: Entari, late eighteenth century - early nineteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology, inv. no. 34-4224 (Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu). Right: Entari, late eighteenth century – early nineteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology, inv. no. 34-7569. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

spoons, 2 sets of silver knives, 2 silver shelves.” In addition, there were cubits of various cloths, cubits of napkins and towels, bedding, white curtains, sable, squirrel, fox furs, all arranged in silver boxes and coffers.

Other items were shipped to Iași: “What was in the trunk that I sent to Eși, bales, clothes.” Among these, the draper wrote down “2 long coats

Left: Entari, late eighteenth century - early nineteenth century (National Museum of History, Romania). Right: Entari, early nineteenth century (Belgrade City Museum, Serbia, inv. no. UPE 1482).

(*biniș*), 1 *anteri*, 1 *kaftan*, 1 pair of trousers with slippers, 1 overcoat (*cübbe*, rendered as *giubea*,) with sable, 1 black shawl, 7 dresses of Măriuța’s, Măriuța’s marten fur, my marten *cübbe*, the good *biniș* with squirrel, Măriuța’s *cübbe* with ermine, Măriuța’s *cübbe* with mink, squirrel pelts and furs” and many more. Linendraper Constantin needed a thorough inventory



of both his merchandise and his personal belongings as he was moving his business from Bucharest to Iași. This working hypothesis derives from analysing the inventory kept in the Library of the Romanian Academy, Historical Documents Collection. The shortcomings of these lists are related to the way in which they have been preserved: the lists are often scattered, and the researcher needs a stroke of luck and a lot of patience to find different pieces of the puzzle in a huge mass of documents. Constantin's list offers precise details about the goods put in storage or sent to Iași; it also mentions Măriuța and her beautiful clothes, packed in the trunk to be shipped away. There are also many things we do not know about linen-drafter Constantin: What made him leave? What kind of trade was he in? As the inventory shows, he was not exclusively in the fine lining textile trade, as his professional name would suggest. Indeed, he was selling other fabrics, as well as other types of goods. We do not know his customers, nor do we know how he sold his goods: as payment for his merchandise, did he accept only money, or did he get other products that he would later resell? We have no information about his status in the merchants' guild and neither do we know the relations he had with other merchants. We can only find the answers by putting together various documents, belonging to different people but referring to the same type of activity.

### *Portraits and painters*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**P**ortraiture is one of the most important visual sources that can be used to identify the specifics of consumption and fashion trends in any given period. While the lists discussed above help to clarify various economic aspects related to fashion and consumption, visual sources enable us to appreciate both the type and colouring of the clothing favoured at a given time. In her book *Clothing Art*, fashion historian Aileen Ribeiro argues that art offers relevant details regarding “the complexity of clothes, their function, the social status, the identity or the ambitions of a certain social group,” information that is not so readily available from written sources, be they lists or customs registers, or narrative accounts.

In Southeastern Europe, portraits were markers of social status, being part of a self-fashioning identity. Here, a mural art developed under the influence of Byzantine culture that adorned the interiors of churches. Votive paintings, following a model set by the eastern Roman Empire, represented founders and their families as a religious and commemorative act. Pârvu Mutu, an icon painter active in late-seventeenth-century Wallachia, executed an impressive work of this type, depicting numerous members of the Cantacuzino family. It may be seen in the church of the Three Hierarchs in the village Filipeștii de Pădure, Prahova County, and is one of the most well-known collective portraits of the time. However, few of these portraits descended from church and monastery walls to embellish their patrons' mansions and palaces. In contrast to artists working on ecclesiastical commissions, trained portraitists rarely travelled to Southeastern Europe. Furthermore, the region lacked a fine arts tradition, and institutions designed to train painters, illustrators, engravers, or lithographers were established only during the nineteenth century.

In 1742, the painter Jean-Étienne Liotard visited Iași, invited by the Phanariot Prince Constantin Mavrocordat. A nobleman, Markos Antonios Katsaitis met him on 9 October at the Moldavian court: “Monsieur Liotard came to greet me, the famous painter from Geneva, who had arrived by coach from Constantinople a few days before me, being summoned by the prince to paint his portrait, those of the ladies – his mother and his wife –, and those of the young princes and princesses.”

*Jean-Étienne Liotard, Ecaterina Mavrocordat, 1742-1743 (BPK/Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin/Volker-H. Schneider).*





Jean-Étienne Liotard would remain at the court for almost ten months and executed numerous commissions placed by the Moldavian elite. His portrait of the prince's beautiful wife, Ecaterina Mavrocordat, continues to impress the viewer to this day.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the portrait became part of the self-identification strategy of the elites eager to prove their social standing. Portraiture, genealogy, social conduct, consumption trends - all legitimised a claim to national consciousness and social hierarchy. Michael Töpler, Ludwik Stawski, Ion Balomir, Josef August Schöffft, Niccolò Livaditti, Giovanni Schiavoni, Anton Chládek, Pavel Đurković, Miklós Barabás, and Constantin Rosenthal were some of the painters who portrayed the Wallachian, Moldavian, and Balkan elites, as they traversed imperial boundaries to earn a living from their art.

The painter Miklós Barabás recounted the story of his arrival in Wallachia in 1831. Unable to find employment in Sibiu, the artist eventually took his friends' advice to move to Bucharest: "The boyars kept telling me to go to Bucharest, where I could make a good living with my art." Since many Wallachian boyars sojourned in Mehadia (a small spa town in Transylvania) and other resorts during the summer to take advantage of the medicinal baths, Barabás was advised to cross the Carpathians in wintertime, when the social elite of the principality returned to their homes. However, he soon found out that life in Bucharest was not easy for an immigrant painter. First, he had to find a place to stay, eventually managing to rent an apartment "with two large rooms, one with three windows to the street, on the first floor." Barabás's initial plan was to stay at *Hanul lui Manuc* (Manuc's Inn), the most famous caravanserai in South-eastern Europe, but he gave up due to filth and unsanitary conditions: "Manuc's Inn was so bad that I did not dare to lodge there." However, the accommodation he found with the help of the apothecary Raimondi was in no better shape either: the wind blew through windows which could not be closed properly, so he had to glue them shut with paper to protect against inclement weather. The next step was to learn the language of the locals to be able to get by. Barabás spoke Romanian well and, knowing he would leave for Bucharest, which was under Russian occupation in

*Miklós Barabás, Self-portrait, 1841 (Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, FK1890).*







Miklós Barabás, Overview of Bucharest. 1832 (Private collection, Budapest).



1831, he learned French and Italian, languages spoken by Russian officers and the Wallachian elite.

At times, the arrival of a portrait painter was advertised in the papers, praising his craft to prospective clients. When Ludwik Stawski arrived in Iași in 1830, he published an advertisement in the *Albina românească* gazette; printed in the issue of 22 May that year, it stated the following: “The undersigned has the honour to inform lovers of the art of painting that during his stay in this capital he is willing to employ his mastery, well-known in many cities of Austria, to execute portraits. The most correct representation of features and blending of colours will satisfy any true connoisseur. His residence is next to the Church of St. John the Baptist. Stawski the portrait painter.” Born in Poland, Ludwik Stawski made it to Iași at the age of twenty-four, following studies in a number of European cities, as was customary for artists of that time. Considered a portrait painter, Stawski would diligently depict Moldavian boyars and would also attend to the artistic education of their children.

Returning to the Wallachian experience of the painter Miklós Barabás, it is worth mentioning that no matter how well-known he had been elsewhere, he still had to be properly introduced so that boyars would open their doors to him. Waiting for commissions from prospective clients, the painter turned to drawing lessons to make ends meet: “I had my meals with the Raimondi family and, in exchange for my morning coffee, lunch, and dinner gave drawing lessons to their younger daughter, Cecilia, while their older daughter was taking music lessons.” When he was not tutoring, he would visit the boyar families he had met in Sibiu to secure the orders he had been promised. However, while the boyars “welcomed him happily and served him fruit conserve (*dulceață*)”, they failed to commission a single work. This was until a chance meeting with *aga* (officer) Iancu Filipescu, in the house of the apothecary, helped him to gain entry to Bucharest elite circles. His presence at the ball given in honour of Tsar Nicholas I on 6 December 1831, and the few words exchanged with Governor Pavel Kiseleff, further improved his fortune, and brought him numerous commissions, money, and fame.

The painter’s memoirs contribute to a better understanding of Wallachian society during the transitional period of the Organic Regulation, a period characterised by profound changes in the established patterns. His portrayal of boyar Constantin Cantacuzino is particularly memorable



Miklós Barabás, Arab man (Dervish), 1843 (Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, 9800).

in this respect; as Barabás recounted: “I was on good terms with Cantacuzino, whose beautiful black beard fell victim to European fashion. This boyar’s face was of rare beauty and my soul ached when he had to shave his beard because it did not match his French suit at all.” Around 1820, *kaymakam* Constantin Cantacuzino sat for a portrait by Pavel Đurković, another painter hoping to make a living from his art in Bucharest.

Miklós Barabás’s words perfectly describe the handsome young man, dressed in Ottoman garb, who went on to make a brilliant career on the





local political scene. “The face of rare beauty” made a lasting impression on the painter. Examined closely, the 1843 portrait of an Arab man seems to be inspired by his Wallachian friend, Constantin Cantacuzino. The black beard, the features of the face, and the red clothes could carry us back in time to the 1820 painting.

As for the Serbian painter, Pavel Đurković, he was born in 1772 in the Serbian town of Baja, then part of the Habsburg Empire. After leaving his hometown, Đurković travelled across Europe, making a living off his trade. Numerous portraits he executed for Wallachian, Serbian, and Russian elites allow us to analyse similarities and differences in their sartorial preferences. His paintings, on display at the National Museum in Belgrade and formerly also at the National Art Museum in Bucharest, suggestively render the Ottoman costumes worn by representatives of high social circles at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

*Portraits of the bourgeoisie:  
painter Giuseppe Tominz (1790–1866)*

GIULIA CALVI

**B**orn in Gorizia in 1790, Giuseppe Tominz studied in Rome between 1809 and 1818. Archduchess Marianna of Austria, sister of Emperor Franz I, appreciated the young painter’s style and encouraged him to go to the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. In Rome, he joined the German community of the Nazarenes in the confraternity of the Lukasbrüder.

After returning to Gorizia, Tominz painted a portrait of Emperor Francis I. He was primarily recognised as a portraitist and his work was favoured by the elite, including the wealthy bourgeoisie. To meet the demands of a growing and cultured clientele, Tominz moved to Trieste in 1825, where he lived for the next thirty years. In 1830, he organised a personal exhibition, with forty portraits on display, which was a great success and established him as the portraitist of the wealthy merchant class of the city, who had moved there from the Habsburg Empire, from the Balkans, and from Greece. His portrait of the Brucker family, included

*Pavel Đurković, Constantin Cantacuzino, c. 1820 (Wikimedia).*





Giuseppe Tominz, The de Brucker Family, 1830 (Revoltella Museum, Trieste).

in the 1830 exhibition, was one of his most successful works, and is a good example of the Biedermeier style.

Tominz's ability to grasp psychological features and details of everyday life, furniture, clothing, and jewellery, make his paintings very pleasing, and at the same time they hold up a mirror to the fashion preferences of the urban elites. He would ask his clients to pose for a very short time, usually three hours, and then completed the portrait by adding landscapes or domestic interiors in the background. This "photographic" technique made him very popular among the bourgeois entrepreneurs who hated wasting time posing in an artist's studio. In his later years, Tominz began to lose his sight and he moved back to his native town of Gorizia in 1855. His son Augusto tried to help him but did not possess the same refined talent as his father. Tominz passed away in 1866. Today, his works are on display in the Revoltella Museum, Trieste, and the National Gallery of Slovenia, Ljubljana.

## Nineteenth-century magazines and consumption

NICOLETA ROMAN

In Southeastern Europe, the printed press made a relatively late appearance. For instance, in Wallachia and Moldavia, the first newspapers were printed in the 1830s. Even so, the nexus of press and consumption can be easily identified since local elites followed the latest fashion trends by reading foreign magazines, especially those published in France. Parisian fashion had always enjoyed considerable popularity and merchants quickly grasped the crucial role advertisement and illustration played in stimulating and modelling consumption patterns.

*Gallerie des modes et costumes français dessinés d'après nature, gravés par les plus célèbres artistes en ce genre, et colorés avec le plus grand soin par Madame le Beau*, published between 1778 and 1787, was one of the first magazines to include illustrations of clothes, accessories, and hairstyles. Other noteworthy fashion publications in this pioneering period were *Cabinet des modes, ou les Modes nouvelles*, published regularly from 1785 (with two issues each month during its first year, and in subsequent years three issues monthly), and *Journal des dames et des modes*, first published in 1797. The latter found unexpected success in other European cities, where several imitations of it started to appear. Even though this popular publication ended its run in 1839, several trade magazines continued to be printed in France, such as *Journal des Demoiselles*, *Petit Courrier des Dames*, *Le Moniteur de la Mode* or *Le Follet*. Their influence in Europe is far from negligible: *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (1786–1825) appeared in Weimar, with the "aim of refining taste standards in Germany and not slavishly imitating fashion from abroad," while *Journal für Fabrik, Manufaktur, Handlung und Mode* (1791–1808) sold sample materials together with its issues, so the clientele could choose what they liked from what merchants had available in stock. The first Romanian periodicals also included what we might call "society columns", containing pertinent references to the fashion of the time. Examples can be found in *Curierul românesc* (with its supplement *Curier de ambe sexe*), run by Ion Heliade Rădulescu, and in Gheorghe Asachi's *Albina românească*, both of which were published from 1829.



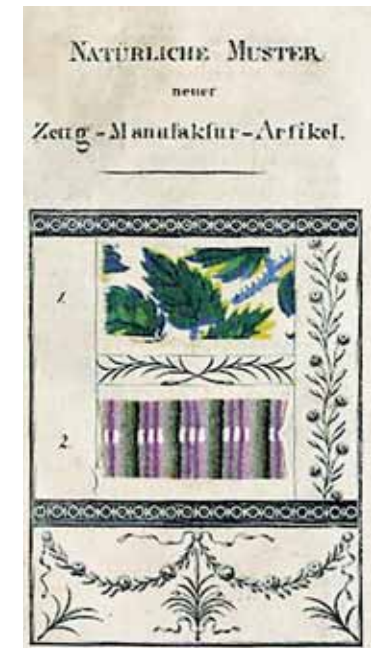


Monogramiste RGAI, Young girl from the lower nobility, dressed in the latest fashion from European magazines, 1830, drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

Nonetheless, the Romanian columnists focused more on fashion trends *per se* rather than on price and consumption. To gather information regarding these latter aspects, we need to consult other French publications specialising on the economic side of things, such as *Journal économique, ou Mémoires, notes et avis sur les arts, l'agriculture, le commerce* (1751). This type of publications evolved together with the fashion press and, around 1858, turned into free supplements of the magazines dealing with fashion and daily life. Moreover, in *La Mode: revue des modes, galerie des moeurs, album des salons*, published in Paris, we find data regarding consump-

tion in Wallachia. For instance, we learn that in 1831, a Jewish merchant from Bucharest bought fifty women's coats *en circassienne*<sup>1</sup>; the note is part of an analysis regarding the influence of oriental elements on French materials and the boom in the German textile industry. Two years later, in 1833, the editors of the magazine, now called *La Mode: revue du monde élégant*, noting the growing numbers of readers in Wallachia and their positive response to subscriptions that had been organised, wrote that: "The Turks are more French than many people born in France."

1. A particularly delicate variant of cashmere (Fr.). The term also refers to the cut of the garment, inspired by a dress *à la Polonoise*. Such a piece of garment has the margins lined with fur, bands, and tassels.



Journal für Fabrik, Manufaktur, Handlung und Mode, October 1800 issue, p. 335 – left and November issue, p. 436 – right (Digital Library of the University of Heidelberg).

Advertisements for various products start to be printed in the 1840s; many were placed on the back pages of newspapers of general interest or in dedicated journals, following the Western model, such as *Cantor de avis și comers*.

In 1836, *Curierul românesc* published some data regarding the port of Brăila, showing for instance that in the month of August there were "38 ships, out of which 26 Turkish, 7 Greek, 2 Russian, 1 Romanian, 1 French and 1 English. Of these, 31 vessels were empty, while the others were carrying a part or full cargo of sugar fabrics, iron, various jams, groceries, and other types of merchandise, and they returned loaded with products of the country." Although sporadic, such reports offer valuable data

# MAGASIE ENGLEZA

E. GRANT & COMP.

Casă de Comision și de vânzare cu ridicata și cu amănuntul.

## MARFURI SOSITE AKUM

Къмпъши де пинъ де Irlanda де фелсриțe прѣдъри.  
Stofe pentru mobile.

Kase de fer de la celebrul fabrikant Engles  
Mordean & C.

Бъичи, скасне, mese pentru grădină, de fer  
Adevărată bere Englezăskă, Pale, Ale.

Съизнъри Englezăști estine, pentru toaletă și  
întri bășingъри dsmestice.

Съ меалъ де фелсриțe фелсри și koloare.

Model de moară de măcinat kă brațele saș  
kă kaii.

Model de kasă și de magasie de fer gal-  
vanizat.

Çiment de Portland, Çiment Roman de în-  
tărităsingat în toate zidirile șape a le auză de  
săpătorul efekt al xmezeliu.

Mare alegere de arme de lăks și de vînat  
de toate prѣdъrile.

regarding economic relations with other countries, whose evolution can be tracked over time. Equally useful is the *Cantor de avis și comers*, which turns out to be a bulletin board for all those interested in selling or buying things, or in looking for work or accommodation in the capital of Wallachia. In 1841, the journal advertised that Petru Picolu's shop was selling "various good hats, made out of rabbit fur and silk, for men and children." Starting with the 1850s, the number of such ads in the printed press grew constantly and they became more reliable and to the point, following Western patterns – that is, they mentioned the name and address of the business and succinctly described the goods advertised. Even so, the price of the merchandise was generally missing, thus inviting potential customers to stop by the shop in order to learn the cost. Newspapers were gradually spreading across the Principalities, and consumption and fashion were becoming more aligned with the major European centres.

The advertisement announces the availability of "Irish fabric shirts at various prices. Furniture fabrics. Iron case boxes from the famous English manufacturer Mordean & C. Iron benches, chairs, garden tables, Real English beer, *pale ale*. Cheap English soaps for toilette and household use. Ink of various kinds and colours. Model of a grinding mill [turned] by hand or horses. Model galvanised iron case box and safe. Portland cement, Roman cement to be used in all buildings, to protect them from the destructive effect of moisture. Great choice of luxury and hunting weapons at all prices."

*Advertisement for the English store owned by Effingham Grant in Bucharest, in the newspaper Românul (The Romanian), 1858 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History).*



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PART II

*On the road:  
Travellers, merchants, consumers*

*Travelling through early modern Southeastern Europe*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK

**O**n 19 August 1630, the night of his twentieth birthday, a young man named Evliya had a dream, in which he prayed together with the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. At the end of the prayer, overwhelmed with emotion, Evliya kissed the Prophet’s hand with the intention of asking for a blessing. However, intimidated by the select company, he misspoke and asked instead for a life of *seyahat* – travel. Muhammad smiled and said he would grant the young man both his blessing and a life of travel. Upon waking up, Evliya was still perplexed about the meaning of his vision and decided to consult Ibrahim Efendi, a well-known dream interpreter in Istanbul. After listening to his story, Ibrahim Efendi told Evliya that his dream was a good omen: “You will travel the world and you will cross many lands. Your journey will be sealed with a good ending.”

The dream turned out to be prophetic and Evliya bin Dervish Mehmed Zilli, known as Evliya Çelebi, would spend most of his life on the move. The son of the sultan’s jeweller and a member of the Ottoman military class, he would travel across most of what then constituted the vast empire, stretching from the Red Sea all the way to what now southern Slovakia is. Travelling in the service of the sultan, he also got to know the neighbouring



countries in times of both peace and war. For instance, he took part in several diplomatic missions to Persia, visited Vienna, and fought alongside the Crimean Tatars against the Habsburg armies in Hungary. However, it seems that wanderlust and curiosity rather than official duty drove him along in his travels. Five decades after he had had the dream that defined his life, he settled in Cairo, where he spent his time taking short trips and writing an account of his itinerant life. He died around 1683.

Evliya Çelebi's ten-volume memoir is one of the most fascinating travel narratives of the early modern period. The work is comprised of detailed descriptions of the places he visited, personal anecdotes, scenes from the family life of his uncle and patron, the grand vizier Melek Ahmed Pasha and other events which together make up the rich tapestry of the Ottoman Empire during the seventeenth century. By nature, he was not a rigorous scholar like his contemporary Katip Çelebi; he was rather a narrator who relied on personal experience and did not hesitate to resort to exaggerations or inventions to please his readers. For instance, he claims that during the Habsburg-Ottoman war in Hungary (1663–1664) the band of Tatars he accompanied reached Amsterdam, the “capital of the Flemish kings,” where the Tatars plundered and burned, taking many prisoners. Obviously, this is a story of his own making. Nonetheless, in other sections Çelebi reflected realities as they were, showed interest in local landmarks, customs, and legends, which he described, together with expressions in the various languages that the subjects of the sultan spoke. While in Shkodër, he jotted down a number of words in Albanian, which he considered an unusual language. In addition to a few basic expressions, such as greetings and “thank you,” he also inserted insults, noting that “when dervishes travel, they should know such expressions in order to avoid trouble.” A pious Muslim, Çelebi paid attention to other religions as well, and described with excitement the elaborate ceremonies performed by Christians in Jerusalem during the “Red Egg Festival”, as he called Easter. Taken together, his detailed, albeit not always accurate, descriptions show both the fascinating diversity of the Ottoman world and the realities of travel in the early modern world.

Given the lack of modern infrastructure and means of communication, we might be tempted to believe that long-distance expeditions were rare,

and that life took place within the confines of local communities. This assumption is partially correct. Indeed, while most people did not stray much from their birthplace, some of them travelled far and wide. In fact, the pre-modern period is characterised by a phenomenon that economic historians call “the first globalization”, when long-distance trade and the expansion of empires made possible connections between different regions of the world. The geographical horizon expanded, and people's mobility increased together with the distribution of goods. The circulation of silver proves this fact: extracted from the Spanish mines in Peru, the silver passed through Europe, the Ottoman Empire, and India, eventually reaching China. The movement of merchants, sailors, soldiers, and imperial officials led to an increase in commercial exchanges, which, in turn, facilitated other types of travel, such as religious pilgrimage or tourism.

Even though until recently Southeastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire were not taken into account in this narrative of soft globalization, they were very much part and parcel of the great trade routes. Cities such as Constantinople, Cairo, and Aleppo, later joined by Izmir/Smyrna, were crucial nodes of global trade and important passageways between Europe and the Levant, each boasting active merchant communities with a constant flow of travellers. The Ottomans were also cognizant of the broadening of the world's geographical horizons during the early modern period: as early as 1513, Grand Admiral (*kapudan paşa*) Piri Reis drew up a world map including the newly discovered continent later to be known as America. In fact, at that time, the Ottoman navy fought the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. Similarly, non-Muslims from Southeastern Europe wielded some influence. During the last decades of the seventeenth century, Konstantinos Gerakis (Phaulkon), born as a Venetian subject on the island of Cephalonia, gained considerable influence as a royal favourite at the Siamese court, managing the king's trade affairs and clashing with representatives of the Dutch East India Company.

Even so, travel remained a constant challenge and was time consuming. Depending on the weather and road conditions, it took a merchant between 37 and 50 days to travel the distance from Lviv to Constantinople by land, passing through Moldavia, Wallachia, and Edirne. Another important route, from Istanbul via Thessaloniki to the ports on the Albanian

coast, took about twenty days. Moreover, only the wealthy had the financial means needed to cover the expenses for such a long journey. In addition to accommodation and food, the security of both merchants and merchandise further raised the price tag of the trip, as bandits and robbers were numerous in the Ottoman territories, especially during the last decades of the sixteenth century. Population growth left a considerable number of men without land and forced them to leave their native villages in search of jobs; many became mercenaries or pirates, posing a threat to travellers, who had to protect themselves. Under these circumstances, trade caravans offered travellers increased protection.

The Ottoman authorities also sought to improve infrastructure and increase the safety of travellers. Given the revenues brought in by trade, maintaining public order and road safety were the priorities of the Porte. At the same time, the sultan's image as a protector of his subjects and a guarantor of justice had to be preserved. The imperial documents sent to the provinces contained orders regarding measures against brigands and gave local representatives the power to guard the most important routes. The sultan and senior officials championed the improvement of road infrastructure to expand trade routes and increase the comfort and safety of travel. Numerous bridges were built over the rivers crossing the Balkans, such as the Arslanagić Bridge in Trebinje, completed in 1574 and financed by Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, a native of the area, or the famous bridge in Mostar. Furthermore, travellers could seek safety and comfort along the way by staying at roadside caravanserais. These were usually pious foundations built and maintained thanks to the charitable donations of influential people, with permanent staff to take care of the building. The services offered varied greatly; some caravanserais provided shelter only, and guests had to bring their own sleeping mats. No one could enter or leave the place after midnight when the gates closed, and the administrator made sure that all the guests were safe. These inns were appreciated by some travellers, while others preferred private homes, as Edmund Brown did when he travelled to the Balkans in the 1670s.

The alternative to land routes was to travel by boat, which significantly reduced travel time and was more convenient to transport bulk cargo



*Arslanagić Bridge (constructed 1574), Trebinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Photo: Michał Wasiucionek).*

over long distances. Due to the high costs of land travel, even when the route was shorter, sea travel played a crucial role at the time. For example, an important part of the distance between Lviv and Istanbul could be covered by sea, with layovers in ports such as Kili and Akkerman. Expenses accounted for a quarter of the cost of land travel and this sea route to the capital of the empire reduced travel time by a third. Consequently, sea transport flourished along the coasts of Southeastern Europe with important ports on the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The little town of Perast in the bay of Kotor (today in Montenegro) was an important seaport, with 60 vessels for a population of only 600 inhabitants. The much larger and better-known Dubrovnik (Ragusa) boasted an impressive mercantile fleet of 180 vessels by the end of the sixteenth century. By the eighteenth century, the Greek islands became the dominant trading force in the eastern Mediterranean, rivalling the Habsburg Empire in terms of the quantity of goods traded.



Nonetheless, sea travel had its disadvantages, which led many, including Evliya Çelebi, to choose the slower land routes. In 1640, early into his travels, he was caught in a storm on the Black Sea on the way to Trabzon. As the ship began to sink, over 700 passengers and crew made a run for their lives: “Now another squall struck and tore the ship in two. The passengers and prisoners in the hold all rushed out in a panic. Some made amends, asking one another to forgive their debts. Some of the crew began to strip their clothes off. Everyone tried to find a plank, a gourd, a cask or barrel, anything to hold onto.” He spent several days as a castaway before he managed to get on dry land in Rumelia, making a solemn vow never to board a ship on the Black Sea again. Suffice it to say that his traumatic experience was not unique. In 1582, a Polish-Lithuanian nobleman, Prince Krzysztof Radziwiłł (also known as Sierotka – “Orphan”) set out on a two-year-long journey to Egypt and Palestine. As a wealthy man, Radziwiłł took the so-called “Grand Tour”<sup>1</sup> – visiting Jerusalem, the pyramids of Giza, Alexandria and Crete. From Egypt, he collected an impressive number of “curiosities”, including exotic animals and two Egyptian mummies, which he knew were bought by European travellers as collectors’ items and medicine for different ailments. However, the mummies never made it to Poland-Lithuania because on route to Venice the vessel was caught in a terrible storm. A Catholic priest on board considered that the curious cargo brought bad luck and divine wrath upon the ship and, as a result, both mummies were thrown overboard and ended up at the bottom of the Mediterranean rather than in Radziwiłł’s collection.

In addition to inclement weather, piracy, oftentimes triggered by religious conflict between Christian and Ottoman states, further jeopardized maritime routes. With a burgeoning maritime trade and religious-political tensions on the rise in the Mediterranean, sea captains and their sailors sought any opportunity to make a profit and turned themselves into state-sanctioned *corsairs*.

Pirates from the North African provinces of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli mainly pursued Christian ships, while in return, vessels manned by mem-

1. In the sixteenth century, it became fashionable for young aristocrats to visit famous places in order to complete their education.

bers of the Hospitaller religious order based on Malta attacked Ottoman cargo ships. In the Adriatic, Serbian refugees under Habsburg protection, known as *uskoks*, attacked both Venetian and Ottoman ships, eventually prompting the Republic of San Marco to go to war against the Habsburgs. Indeed, piracy constituted a profitable venture, driven equally by religious fervour and economic gains. Even when Ottoman and Venetian authorities sought to crack down on pirates, the measures were largely inefficient, with some local officials preferring to turn a blind eye or even encouraging such activities. In 1624, the Venetian town of Perast was thoroughly pillaged by North African corsairs with support from the Ottoman garrison of Herceg Novi, located a mere ten kilometres away.

The Black Sea during the sixteenth century was far less dangerous, but it was not to remain so for long, because, starting with the first decades of the seventeenth century, Zaporozhian Cossacks and Crimean Tatars made it their stomping ground. In fact, throughout the early modern period, the scale of the Black Sea slave trade was surpassed only by the better known trans-Atlantic slave trade. Taking all these factors into account, it is not surprising that many travellers preferred the longer and more expensive land routes. So did the Venetian authorities, who chose to send their correspondence to Constantinople overland, despite the Republic’s close connection with the sea.

Whichever route one took, however, the issues of identity and paperwork still remained. Islamic law divided the world between the “Abode of Islam” and the “Abode of War” (*dar al-harb*) inhabited by “enemy infidels” (*harbi küffar*) with no legal protection of their life and property. The latter were always at risk of being killed, enslaved, or robbed of their possessions. Despite this rather bleak picture of constant war and violence, the sultan or another Muslim could grant protection to “infidels” either in the form of *ahdname* (known also as capitulations) granted to foreign courts by the sultan or in the form of individual safe-conducts which conferred on the bearer the status of “protected foreigner” (*müstemin*) and allowed them to enter the Ottoman Empire. In theory, this facility was granted to foreign residents for a period of up to one year, after which they became subjects of the sultan. However, the rule was not strictly



Vincenzo Chilone, *Battle between the vessels of Marko Ivanović and Hacı İbrahim in 1756* (Maritime Museum, Kotor, Montenegro).

enforced, and many foreigners continued to live in the Ottoman lands while retaining their protected status.

Individual safe-conducts complemented collective arrangements, and families and communities with close Ottoman ties acquired large collections of such documents. The town of Perast, mentioned above for its fleet and influence in the Adriatic, is a case in point. The Visković

and Zloković families, Venetian subjects, had economic interests in the Ottoman Empire and lived within close proximity of Ottoman territories. Even though the town of Risan was only two kilometres away from the port, the entrance to Kotor Bay was dominated by the Ottoman fortress of Herceg Novi. In order to keep in touch with the outside world, navigators from Perast often asked the sultan for *amans* and



these documents can be found today in the impressive collection of the city's museum.

The inhabitants of Ragusa requested the granting of similar safe-conducts. Although the republic paid tribute to the sultan, its status sparked controversy with the Ottoman authorities in Bosnia and the Balkans. As a result, Ragusan merchants asked the Sublime Porte for individual *amans* to show to Ottoman officials. For instance, in 1630, two merchants received an imperial document informing the pashas of Bosnia, local kadis, garrison commanders, and other officials that the Ragusan merchants Niccolò Dimitrie and Niccolò Fornari were subjects of the sultan and, as such, enjoyed freedom of movement and trade and had the right to dress in Muslim garments, despite legal prohibitions on adopting Muslim clothes without converting. Interestingly, the document does not provide other details beside the names of the two merchants. In the event of a legal dispute, it was meant to strengthen the oral testimony of the bearer and po-

tentially intimidate the adversary. However, the fact that the sultan himself had to intervene quite frequently in disputes with local authorities demonstrates that not everyone was intimidated by the imperial writ and that some officials on the ground adopted a more restrictive vision on the matter.

Even if these obstacles were quite significant, they did not impede the movement of people and goods in Southeastern Europe, both across the sultan's "well-protected domains" and beyond the imperial borders. Contrary to cliché, during the pre-modern era, the region was not an amalgama-



*Aman granted to a captain of Perast (Perast Town Museum, Montenegro).*

tion of static and autarchic communities; rather it was an area with a rich network of bustling maritime and land routes. Whether motivated by the search for profit, religious zeal, official duty, or, like Evliya Çelebi, curiosity, merchants, officials, and other travellers circulated constantly in this part of the world.

### *All roads lead to Istanbul: Johann Reissner's Journey (1753)*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

**I**stanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, was more than a centre of power (and indeed of intrigue for the thrones of the Romanian principalities). In its markets could be found goods imported from all corners of the world, especially spices and fabrics from Asia. Istanbulites bought and sold merchandise on a large scale and business opportunities were endless.

Despite its place on the outskirts of empire, away from the capital, Transylvania had close political and commercial ties with Istanbul during its 170 years of Ottoman suzerainty. Turkish goods, mainly silk, cotton, Moroccan leather, and spices were highly sought after in the rich Saxon towns where commerce was booming. While customs records, found in the archives of Braşov and Sibiu, mention the merchants' names and the goods they brought in through the Bran and Rothenturm (Turnu Roşu) customs, evidence about commercial trips to Istanbul is scarce. However, an expense list drawn by Johann Reissner in 1753 reveals the main aspects of such a journey. As its title suggests, the list details the expenses incurred in transporting mercury to Istanbul. Reissner departed from Istanbul on 2 June 1753 and crossed the Danube at Tutrakan; he passed through Bucharest on 19 June, and after mandatory quarantine at the Transylvanian border, he reached Alba-Iulia on 1 August. From there, he drove his freight carts to Bran, where he arrived on 15 August, and then recrossed the Carpathian Mountains to Câmpulung. Reissner fell sick in Câmpulung, where he was forced to remain between 20 and 25 August, so he arrived in Bucharest again only on 30 August. He then crossed the Danube back



Handwritten ledger with columns for descriptions, amounts, and totals. Includes a circular stamp: "BIBLIOTHECA MUSEI HISTORICO-ETHNOGRAPHICI ROMANAE" and a signature "Johann Reissner" at the bottom.

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to Tutrakan on 6 September: he needed four carts and no less than 40 horses to transport the mercury barrels. Finally, the convoy reached its destination by early October. Bringing the mercury from Transylvania to Constantinople had involved the usual expenses for such a venture. In addition to customs fees when crossing the Danube and when entering and exiting Transylvania, the carters' wages and food, and fodder for the horses, Reissner noted down other types of payments, such as tips and gifts, especially sums of money given as *bona mano*, which smoothed out the transport operations. He had also given sums of money to Ottoman officials and to his Turkish translator, bought customs recommendation letters both from the Ottoman authorities and from the prince of Wallachia, Matei Ghica, and generously tipped the quarantine officials, possibly to shorten his waiting period. Gifts to lower-ranking public servants to make his passage easier consisted of packs of coffee, which Reissner purchased from Istanbul in June (three *okka* of "Egyptian" coffee). Reissner also paid occasionally for his personal protection, and that of his men and his merchandise, when crossing the mountains in Bulgaria or during his stay at the Tutrakan customs post. Last but not least, he had to cover his medical expenses during the five days he spent in Câmpulung.

Johann Reissner's itinerary shows that the journey from Constantinople to Alba Iulia took about six weeks, while the return trip was almost two weeks longer, mainly due to delays and the heavy load.

*"Things that go on the road"*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

Journeys require prior preparation. Luggage, documents, travel plans, hiring help and transportation, choosing stopovers, and assessing potential perils along the way – these and many more were on the minds of those who dared to venture out on Balkan roads. Travelling within the borders of a certain region might seem easier, but even then, there were dangers to

Johann Reissner's list of travel expenses (1753) (Romanian National Archives, Sibiu County, Fond Acte fasciculare, pach. C, no. 10).



avoid, from closed roads to brigands, and from poorly heated inns to lack of food. Unpleasant experiences prompted travellers to plan accordingly and to pack the supplies necessary to arrive at their destination safely.

By analysing archival documents, I have tried to establish as accurately as possible the contents of a travel bag or chest prepared for such a journey. For instance, Hristache Marișeanu, leaving his rural estate for the capital city (Bucharest), packed only a handful of items: “2 shirts, 2 pairs of stockings, 5 kerchiefs, 1 set of razors.” Arriving at his host, on the Outer Market Road (today Calea Moșilor), “across from the Church with Saints” (today the Church of Sts. Anne and Joachim, in the Oborul Vechi district), he realised that he had lost his bag on the way. Hristache Marișeanu was not concerned about losing the objects it had contained so much as about the “documents, registers, deeds, contracts regarding debts and other financial documents”. Having come to Bucharest to sort out various matters for himself and others, equipped with “an order Prince Caragea” and a Greek calendar, Hristache Marișeanu now found himself in “great trouble,” which he tried to solve by placing an advertisement in the paper *Vestitorul românesc* (The Romanian Herald) on 18 April 1844), offering a 250 lei reward to the person who would have mercy on him and keep the items of clothing and the toiletries but give back the documents. Marișeanu had not packed much more than a change of clothes and the essential shaving razor, given that he did not expect to have to spend too much time away from home in the capital.

Conversely, a long journey away from familiar territory required preparations of a different kind. When he left for Istanbul, *comis*<sup>1</sup> Ionică Tăutu packed a little bit of everything that might be necessary on a trip of several weeks: clothes – “12 short shirts”, 2 head caps, “2 *șacșiri* [pairs of Turkish trousers (*çakşır*)] of shawl”, “11 pairs of socks (*colțuni*)”, „6 pairs of trousers”, one long coat (*biniș*) and one overcoat (*giubea*), a furred vest (*cașaveică*, from Ukrainian *kacavejka*) and a furred overcoat (*conțeș* from Polish *kontusz*), 3 pairs of slippers and 2 pairs of boots, a coat (*libadea*) of shawl and 2 rain coats – and items of hygiene – 6 handkerchiefs, 6 table towels, 3 face towels). He also made sure he had something to sleep on, which

1. *Comis*: a boyar rank and office, involving supervision of the princely stables.



Travel chest (exterior and interior), Cluj-Napoca, 1762 (Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 5962. Photo: Jonatán Urbán, Dávid Kovács).







“Manuc’s Inn in Bucharest”, engraving by Eugène Cicéri after Michel Bouquet’s drawing, in *Album valaque: Vues et costumes pittoresques de la Valachie*, Paris, 1843 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

amounted to four pillows and twelve pillowcases; he packed no other bedding items, meaning he could sleep on his coat, under his cart or under the starry sky when he was far away from a proper inn. He also prepared “three pairs of table knives,” perhaps the handiest and most useful tools under the circumstances. Here we have a selective, but not over-restrictive, list of the “things that go on the road,” belonging to a state official travelling to Istanbul in the fall of 1824.

Moldavian and Wallachian boyars’ journeys to the imperial capital merit a separate study, which would reveal details hitherto unknown. Based on a series of unpublished documents, the historian Petronel Zahariuc has reconstructed the journey of Moldavian officials accompanying



“Mail Coach in Moldavia”, in William Macmichael, *Journey from Moscow to Constantinople in the Years 1817, 1818*, London, 1819 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

the boyar Ioniță Sandu Sturza to Istanbul. Sturza left his home country as a logothete and returned as its ruling prince. The expenses of the trip were significant and so were the changes in boyars’ clothes. The boyars set out for Istanbul dressed “à la légère”, in Moldavian shoes (*ciubote*) and wide leggings (*șalvar*), but they had to change their attire for their return to Iași and invest in an image befitting the princely court. Ioniță Sandu Sturza had not expected to become ruler of the principality when he left for Istanbul; however, once there, he had good reason to purchase new garments to match his new status. Accordingly, he borrowed and invested a considerable sum of money in the lavish attire he needed to wear on his return to Iași to match his new position. He also had to take care of



the clothes worn by the boyars in his suite on their return to Moldavia. The expense books of such trips reveal the important role that Istanbul fashion played in the lives of Moldavian and Wallachian boyars.

On rough, muddy, or dusty roads, with rest areas scarce and far between, clean shirts and changes of other clothing become indispensable. “I took a bath, a habit we had been deprived of for *twenty-seven months* [emphasis added]; during all this time, we had neither bathed, nor washed with water, and now our clothes were in tatters,” wrote Paul of Aleppo around the middle of the seventeenth century.

Two centuries later, when he set out on a journey, the boyar Iancu Otetelișanu, from Bucharest, always included soap on his travel checklist. In his notes, we find significant details about the ways in which the boyars travelled. *Conașu*, “the little master,” as he was called in the account book of the house, prepared for days on end before setting out towards a faraway destination, rather than simply to his country house at Măgurele (Ilfov county). In addition to the usual supplies (“2 cans of sardines, matches for the road, soap for the road, cord for the road, blanket for the road, loaf of bread for the road, lemons for the road”), the boyar needed a passport, which he purchased for 16 *lei* and 35 *sfanți*<sup>1</sup>, and a carriage, which he hired for six days.

### *A Greek merchant from Sibiu and his customers at the end of the seventeenth century*

MĂRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

**K**ozma Potsis (also known as Boczi, Buczi, or Kis), a so-called “Greek” merchant from Tarnovo, who opened shop in Sibiu during the second half of the seventeenth century, developed several businesses and built a network of partners, agents, and creditors that stretched from Rumelia to Poland and southern Germany. Kozma wore many hats: as a merchant importing Cordovan leather and fabrics from the Ottoman Empire, and the acquisition agent of Prince Mihail Apafi and of his wife;

1. Sfanț = Austrian silver coin (from Zwanzig).



Debt register of Kozma Potsis, “Greek” merchant settled in Sibiu, 1688 (Romanian National Archives, Sibiu County; Fond Acte fasciculare, C36).

as elected judge of the Sibiu Greek company; and as business partner of merchants from Vienna, Wrocław, and Nürnberg. Part of the economic elite of the principality of Transylvania, Kozma became an influential figure thanks to the connections he created both at the princely court and with leading Transylvanian noblemen. When he died in 1694, Kozma left behind many unfinished business transactions and unpaid debts. His demise was addressed in the Transylvanian Diet and the prince summoned all his creditors to go to Sibiu to try to recoup what they were owed. Baron István Apor had loaned Kozma 500 guilders and consequently took over with a strong hand the operation of liquidating the assets left behind by the Greek. Furthermore, the authorities investigated the other “Greek”

## *Peddlers and hawkers*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

merchants from Sibiu, even those who did not have direct business ties to Kozma. They also searched his shop looking for his account books, but they only found details about the debts owed to Kozma by his customers in Sibiu and nothing regarding his more important business transactions. Nonetheless, to historians, the record of Kozma's local clientele is a gold mine.

Kozma's ledger is incomplete since the exact dates of transactions are sometimes missing. The earliest entry was made in 1688, only six years before the merchant's death. Moreover, entries were not made in a chronological order; rather, they were grouped around clients and their families. In total, there are recorded 121 individuals who bought goods on credit or borrowed various sums of money from Kozma. They are customers from all walks of life: the political elite of Sibiu, including the royal judge and his family, members of the local council, the pharmacist, craftsmen, but also servants (mostly buying on behalf of their masters, but also sometimes for themselves), housemaids, apprentices, and villagers from the Mărginimea Sibiului area. Village customers generally belonged to the more prosperous segment of the community, mainly priests and their families. For instance, the priests of Amlaș and Roșia and the priest and postmaster of Săcădate had bought silk fabrics and spices on credit.

It is worth mentioning that in some cases, Kozma did not know his clients by name, but identified them by trade, physical traits, or and even their neighbours; thus, among his clientele, we find "a German tailor", another tailor "with a red beard", "the brandy seller", or Janos "who lives outside the city".

But what was Kozma selling to his customers? Fabrics, first and foremost: fine English woollen cloth (*fajlondis*), silk and taffeta of various colours, velvet; then spices such as saffron, ginger, cloves, and pepper, and also coffee. Other goods sold on credit included sable tail fur (used for collars and hats), cotton or silk handkerchiefs, and gloves. The wives and daughters of noble people and of priests bought colourful and flowery taffetas and silk fabrics. However, most of the debts incurred were in cash: Kozma was owed over 2000 guilders in cash and around 1200 guilders in goods. In the end, Kozma's ledger reveals the intricate small world of consumers congregating around a merchant's shop in Sibiu at the end of the seventeenth century.

**I** itinerant merchants had a crucial role in the development of the taste for consumption. Various peddlers, hawkers, and sellers walked around villages and towns, selling a variety of goods and trinkets: new or used, of good or questionable quality, local or brought from the markets of Istanbul, Venice, Leipzig, Vienna, or Trieste. The trade names of these merchants, stemming from their main merchandise, were borrowed from the neighbouring empires. They thrived once demand and number of eager customers were on the rise. The *boccegiiii*, for instance, kept their knickknacks in bundles (*boccea*) and lured young girls with flashy objects; the *coropcarii* transported their merchandise in a *coropca*, a rectangular box that they carried around on their backs, while the *marchitani* (from Polish *markietan*) and *mămulari* (from Turkish *mameleği*) sold their trinkets on the street, advertising their presence in a loud voice. The *cercelari* (from Turkish *čerçiği*) traded in small jewellery items and haberdashery: earrings, colourful glass beads, yarn, needles, combs, and many more. The *telali* (from Turkish *tellâl*) were "official" auctioneers. Over time, they also started selling old clothes brought for auction and thus turned themselves into merchants of second-hand goods.

However, itinerant merchants did not lead easy lives. Away from home for weeks on end, travelling the unsafe roads of the Balkans, and barely sleeping at all for fear of being robbed, these merchants were oftentimes an easy prey. A police report from Bucharest, dated March 28, 1800, recounts the story of Ioan, a peddler. Ioan left home to sell his goods around the country at the end of January. For five weeks he travelled around in his wagon, selling ribbons, beads, artificial flowers, yarn, linen, shoes, socks, resin, knives, and other trinkets, staying overnight wherever he could. One evening he arrived in the village of Ulmeni, Ilfov County, and was allowed to stay overnight in the house of a local named Staico. He left the wagon in the courtyard, tied his horse in the stable, and had dinner with the host, along with two shepherds who were also spending their night there. The shepherds slept in the stable, while Ioan drifted off by the hearth inside





*Jewellery box decorated with a female silhouette surrounded by flowers, eighteenth-nineteenth centuries (inv. no. FE 8722, © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).*

the house, next to Staico, his wife, and their children. By morning, however, the shepherds were gone, together with a few bundles of Ioan's merchandise, and on top of that, the pockets of his belt had been cut open and his hard-earned money had disappeared. He filed a complaint with the police captain in Oltenița, and was able to recover his stolen goods from the thieves, who were captured by a posse a few days later. However, getting his money back would prove somewhat harder. At first, Staico and his family maintained that there had been almost nothing in the belt anyway. They then pressed him to swear that he had had 61 thalers there, and that he was not accusing them without cause. Finally, through the mediation of the police, Ioan and Staico reached an agreement: Ioan agreed to accept 35 thalers, which Staico swore he had found in the belt.

## *Shopping in the city: “Greek” shops in Sibiu at the end of the eighteenth century*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

Printer and editor Martin Hochmeister from Sibiu compiled and published the first calendar of the city in 1790. It contained useful information for both locals and visitors: vignettes about the history of Transylvania, the genealogy of the House of Austria, information about current political and economic events (such as currency exchange rates and the circulation of postal services), the topography of Sibiu, the names of its streets, and the names and addresses of its craftsmen.

Hochmeister's calendar also included a “merchants” section, which listed twelve shops, situated in the Main Square and the Small Square, owned among others by several merchants from the Balkans. They were part of the so-called Greek Company, the officially recognised association of foreign merchants who paid fees that allowed them to trade wholesale in Sibiu. Next to Brașov, Sibiu was an important commercial centre in Southeastern Europe and therefore attracted many foreign merchants. Coming from the Balkans, these were called “Greeks” because they were Orthodox Christians and spoke Greek, the *lingua franca* of Christian merchants in the Ottoman Empire. After many decades of rejections and limitations, they were allowed to trade in Sibiu in the seventeenth century, competing directly with local Saxon merchants. The goods brought in by the Greeks from the Ottoman Empire were in great demand in Transylvanian markets, in cities and small towns alike.

The authorities of Sibiu and those of the Habsburg administration kept the association of the Greeks under strict supervision and constantly registered foreign merchants in order to check if they were trading lawfully and in accordance with the fees they paid. Fortunately, the Sibiu archives house nominal lists of Balkan merchants who did business there, and the brief descriptions of each merchant's activity provide us with information regarding the scale of their businesses and the places where their shops were located. Foreign merchants, “Greek, Albanian, or Romanian” rented shops in the Main Square and the Small Square. The vast majority of them traded goods brought in from the Ottoman Empire (cotton,



Josef Lanzedelli, Fair in Transylvania, ca. 1818-1823, adapted after Franz Neuhauser the Young (1789), engraving (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

leather), from Venice (silk, glass, jewellery, candied fruit) and from Leipzig (Western goods, English and Polish cloth). The merchants who did not join the Greek association were not allowed to sell retail (*all minuta*), and nor were they allowed to rent retail property. The few Armenian merchants present on the list of foreign traders sold their merchandise from vending

stalls situated outside of the city centre. Merchants' widows were allowed to continue the family business and were granted similar privileges to those of their late husbands.

Among the merchants we find the names of some businessmen who traded in Wallachia: Ioan Marcu, Hagi Constantin Popp, and Manicatu



Safranu (Manole Saffransi); on the list, they are registered as wholesalers of Turkish and Venetian goods (mainly cotton and Cordovan leather). In order to maximise profits, often they would become ad-hoc business partners. Such a contract, drafted in Romanian using Latin script in 1783, during the mandatory quarantine at Lazaret, on arrival in Transylvania from Wallachia, reads as follows:

We, who sign our names below, we gave our contract into the honest hands of Barbu Stirbei, former cup-bearer, to be known that he had pawned 2,069 gold coins to *kir hagi* Constantin Popp in Venetian, imperial and Dutch coins ... and thus being that we met at the lazaretto, where *kir* Enaki Tzingo was also present, we made such an arrangement, that I, Enaki Tzingo together with *kir* Zamfiraki Hagi Gergi took seven hundred Venetian gold coins and six hundred imperial gold coins from the pawned money with an interest of 6 percent per annum... and when Stirbei cup-bearer would want his money back from us, he should let us know in writing six months in advance, so we can change the money in the currency we received it. 1 November 1783, at the lazaretto of Lotrioara, Zamfiraki Hagi Gergi payer, Johan Tsinko payer.

In Sibiu, merchants rented shops from wealthy families who owned houses in the town centre. Thus, Ioan Mavrodin, George Vilera, and the Albanian Pascale set up shop on the ground floor of the Jesuit House at no. 3 in the Small Square, today the parish house of the Catholic church to which it is attached, while Toma Vilera and Dumitru Cozma were doing business from the vaults of the Reissenfels' residence at no. 1 in the Main Square. Customers usually bought on credit and their purchases were entered in ledgers.

“Greek” merchants competed with their local counterparts, which led the latter to form their own trading company in order to offset the growing market share of foreigners in the trade in imported goods. Store inventories show that Saxon merchants used different trading routes and brought their wares mainly from Nürnberg and Vienna. For example, Johann Christoph Storch's goods inventory from September 1788 includes various

pharmaceutical and chemical products (aloe, gold powder, borax), spices, dried fruit, chocolate, but also many books: Bibles with golden letters, religious pamphlets, and Latin classics.

### *A Vlach merchant from Braşov and the cross-border commercial network*

CONSTANŢA VINTILĂ

One of the most important trading houses of the second half of the eighteenth century was founded by Mihail Țumbru, a Vlach merchant settled in Braşov. The commercial archives of the Greek merchant communities in Sibiu and Braşov were thoroughly researched by Dumitru Limona, who compiled an inventory of their commercial activity and in later studies made use of the data concerning Mihail Țumbru. Starting from the information provided by Limona, I shall chart the roots of the Vlach merchant's success, exploring the trade network he helped built across the Balkan region and as far as Vienna.

Mihail Țumbru (Ciumbri) was born in Satište, in Macedonia, around 1753. Before settling in Braşov, he seems to have been a sort of itinerant merchant, peddling his goods at large fairs throughout the region, and returning to home to Macedonia at the conclusion of each trip. As an Ottoman subject, he had to pay annual taxes to the Sublime Porte, but he was also free to trade in the Habsburg Empire, under the terms of the Ottoman-Habsburg Treaty of Passarowitz (1718).

A register covering the years 1774–1779 (Mihail Țumbru was 26 years old in 1779) details his and his partners' commercial activities. Hagi Trandafir Gheorghe Dosiu, born in the same village, was one of his most important collaborators and together they traded in silk, socks, cotton yarn, cloth, lining fabrics, soap, and various textiles. Hagi Trandafir settled in Belgrade, and he and Țumbru met each other at local fairs and markets in Bucharest, Timișoara, Iași, Sibiu, Târnovo, Pest, Vienna, Leipzig, and Sliven. As his business grew and profits increased, Țumbru started to ship his merchandise to various fairs, increasingly delegating





*Village near Larisa. Edward Dodwell, Views in Greece from Drawings. London: Rodwell and Martin, 1821 (Digital Library of the University of Heidelberg).*



conduct of commerce to his associates. Thus, he kept 150 pieces of cotton fabric in Nicu Lalu's warehouse in Timișoara, 31 saddle blankets in Atanasie Pelinga's storehouse in Sibiu, 200 pieces of hemp burlap with Mitacu in Iași, and 100 pieces of hemp burlap with Constantin Teodoru Veriotul in Bucharest. He also had kept some wares, such as cotton, silk, cat and lamb pelts, stored in Târnovo, Osijek, and Serres.

In Brașov, he sold his goods on credit to customers and entered the customers in his account book according to their places of residence within the city: he sold black and red silk to a haberdasher woman living on Ropers' Street and yellow Morocco leather (*sahtiyan*, listed mostly as *saftian*) to the cobbler Gheorghe Cresvem on the New Street; the blanket merchant (*cioltar*) Paul Schipen on the Black Street would buy black silk, while the chenille maker Mihali Mic and the blanket merchant Cristian would also acquire impressive quantities of silk. Silk was brought in from Macedonia and was known as "melenikotic silk" (from Melnik) or "veriotic silk" (from Veroia). The fabric was further differentiated according to colour (blue, orange, black, red) or finishes (washed, embroidered etc.). Țumbru partnered with Nicolae Stamu from Sibiu to import cotton from Serres and *kemha* silk from Chios and to sell lemons, saffron, and spices. In addition to trade in goods, Țumbru also acted as a financier, extending credit and handling currency and bills of exchange.

In 1780, Mihail Țumbru moved to Brașov at the encouragement of his trade partner Gheorghe Ioan Marcu, who asked him to become "a Transylvanian". Once settled in the city, Țumbru married Paraschiva, the daughter of the merchant Ioan Boghici. Their marriage apparently took place in October that year, when "the bride's garments" to the value of 201.20 florins were received from Vienna, from the merchant Gheorghe Turunța. After switching his allegiance from one empire to another, Țumbru, together with his father-in-law and *postelnic*<sup>1</sup> Stan Jianu, engaged in large-scale trade, selling wool, wax, cotton, and buckthorn and offering his financial services. Every day, he sent and received dozens of letters to and from his partners and employees in Istanbul, Vienna, Pest, Zemun, Venice, Graz, and Trieste. When it came to profit, the nationality or re-

1. Postelnic = a minor boyar rank with administrative duties.

*Monogramist RGAI, Merchant or inhabitant of Bucharest, 1830, drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*



ligion of his business partners was apparently irrelevant, and among his partners we find Armenians, Turks, Germans, Italians, Vlachs, Bulgarians, Moldavians and Wallachians.

Mihail Țumbru led a moderate, even frugal, life. From an expense note, written on 4 October, 1783, we find out that he lived on the Black Street in Brașov, where he paid both a neighbourhood tax (3.20 florins) and a state tax (24.58 florins). That year, he had his house repainted and a fireplace set up in one of the rooms. He did not spend much on clothes; the only acquisitions in his register are a pair of boots and a pair of stockings, together with a bill from a tailor who mended his coat. He did not spend much on food either: a few chickens and geese, or fish roe and octopus for fasting times.

His son, Ioan, was born that year, but unfortunately passed away in infancy. This did not alter Țumbru's modest lifestyle; rather than buying new clothes, he preferred to have his old garments repaired, what furniture he acquired was second hand, cheaply bought at an auction.

He supervised his employees closely; their fixed-term contracts of employment also spelled out the rules of conduct he expected from his subordinates. For instance, on 9 February, 1783 he hired Ioanache Gheorghiu for a period of one year with a salary of seventy florins. The agreement

stipulated that Gheorghiu should behave in an honest manner and should neither gamble nor patronise coffee houses. For violating the rules, he would lose his job and, consequently, his livelihood. From their correspondence, we find out that Țumbru kept a close eye on his employee and subjected him to strict training, reproaching Gheorghiu for some decisions while also offering advice and recommendations.

Țumbru's death in 1805 with no direct descendants triggered an intense quarrel over his inheritance. For the subsequent twenty-six year, his widow Paraschiva and his sister Agni, herself married to the merchant Ioan Dimitriu, fought in court over the estate and the archive of the Țumbru trade house moved around from Braşov to Cluj, from Cluj to Vienna, and back again.

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*Weddings and consumption in Wallachia*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

When it comes to investigating consumption, weddings constitute a veritable treasure trove to historians. Dowry lists, expense accounts, correspondence – they all introduce us to the feverish atmosphere of wedding preparations and the purchases that these entailed.

On this occasion, dowry chests were filled with expensive items and luxury objects, the bride and groom donned lavish clothes, and appetising dishes were prepared for the wedding feast. Among the rituals of any wedding ceremony, the exchange of gifts played an essential part. Godparents and in-laws received gifts from the bride’s family, mostly consisting of shirts and towels. In turn, the bride received a series of gifts from the groom and his kin: engagement and wedding gifts, along with so-called “Monday gifts”, given after the consummation of the marriage as a reward for the bride’s virginity. The gifts were put in full display for all guests to see and appreciate the social status of both families.

Three unpublished documents, discovered in the Romanian archives, help us reconstruct the atmosphere surrounding such event. Two of them refer to the wedding of a young woman named Ilinca (in this case the preparations were made by her brother) and the third tells us the story of a young man called Costache. The documents do not provide all the information that we might like – we do not know the name of Ilinca’s groom, nor of Costache’s bride – but, nevertheless, the two stories com-



Dowry chest, 1848 (ASTRA National Museum Complex, Sibiu. inv. no. 1816 L. Photo: Silviu Popa).

Inlaid wooden box, painted and fitted with a mirror, originating from the island of Skyros, eighteenth–nineteenth centuries (Benaki Museum, Athens inv. no. ΓΕ 8719. © 2020).



plement each other. Moreover, the two events happened around the same time: Ilinca married somewhere near Iași in the summer of 1779, while Costache married in the vicinity of Bucharest in the spring of 1782.

Ilinca did not have a dowry ready-prepared, because she was an orphan, under the tutelage of her brother. When an agreement with the groom's parents was reached, the brother began to assemble her dowry, writing down in detail the items he bought, the visits he paid to the merchants for the composition of her wardrobe, the prices and the amounts spent. He recorded everything in a register titled "Account (*izvod*) of what we bought for the wedding of our sister, Ilinca." The clothes were not bought ready to wear and had to be sent to the tailor to add laces, ribbons, or cloth lining (*astar*) or to the furrier to attach the pelt lining of the *giubea*. In addition, he bought head kerchiefs, called *basmale* or *buiamale* (from Turkish *boyama*), blouses and silk fabrics, "2 *ghermeșuturi*" (from Turkish *geremsüd*) and other mixed cotton-silk fabrics, known as *cutnii* (from Turkish *kutni*).

The traditional wedding dress was not yet white, nor did it have the symbolism acquired in the Victorian era. It had to be expensive and sumptuous in order to underline the social prestige of the two families that the marriage bound together. For instance, a wedding dress from the end of the eighteenth century, to be found in the collections of the National Museum of Romanian History, is made of blue cotton, embroidered with silver threads; the sleeves and the skirt are hemmed with fine white lace, which accentuates the elegance of the dress.

Usually, purchased cotton and silk fabric were sent to the quilter to make the bed mattress as well as pillows and silk embroidered pillowcases. In addition to bedding, the dowry list mentioned a carpet, a mirror, and a silver-encased icon. The tableware included tin and brass vessels, together with six cups or *fincans*, sent to the goldsmith to plate them with gold. A horse and carriage were also prepared. Special attention was paid to the carriage, which needed to be "made up" by a painter using cinnabar, to colour them red, and then gilded, matted, and fitted with lattices. Aunt Catrina helped make all these purchases in Iași, for which she was rewarded with *bacșiș*. Finally, everything was loaded in a mail carriage rented for the purpose - "1 *leu* rent for bringing the dowry in it from Iași".



Iași, the most important city of Moldavia, had shops, merchants, and craftsmen who offered goods and services to all, according to the size of their purse. Ilinca belonged to the Moldavian boyarhood and lived in a nearby market town. Although a bride-to-be, Ilinca was upstaged by her brother, who had taken charge of the compilation of the dowry and the choice of ornaments for the wedding day. The market overflowed with consumer goods: new things, but also older ones, fabrics, laces, jewellery, carriages, dyes, spoons, threads, knives, *fincans*, carpets, mattresses, pillows, barks, and harnesses. Furthermore, Iași boasted skilled craftsmen, who could transform any item, adapting it to the customer's wishes. The document is preserved in the Historical Documents fonds of the Library of the Romanian Academy and is dated 20 June 1779.

While Ilinca remained in the shadow of her brother, Costache of Wallachia found himself in the shadow of his father, who drew up a "list of expenses at my son's wedding, when he married the daughter of *vornic*<sup>1</sup> Matei Fălcoianu." This time, the father bought on behalf of the bride and groom, bringing "fabric for trousers", "clean *geremsüd* for an *anteri*", "6 cubits of fine striped fabric (*çitari*) for the groom", "12 cubits of velvet for the bride's *giubea*", "15 cubits fabric for a *biniș*", "6 cubits of *çitari* for the bride", "an *ișlic* (Turkish *başlık*) for the groom", "a turban" and few cubits of striped silk for lining the garments. They were all sent to the tailor to make the clothes and decorate them with the ornaments that had been bought: flowers, laces, sequins, and silver wrapped threads (*sırma*). Expensive jewellery complemented the lavishness of the clothes: two diamond rings, a diamond brooch, diamond earrings, and a large *left* (a kind of necklace, from Modern Greek *leftó*). A muslin handkerchief (Romanian *gevreă*; Turkish *çevre*), embroidered with gold thread and sequins, completed the bride's wardrobe. The document belongs to the Historical Documents fonds of the Library of the Romanian Academy, and bears the date 4 May 4, 1782.

Weddings were social events where families, large or small, reaffirmed their importance. As they involved public participation, weddings constituted the perfect opportunity to emphasise social position. The bride and groom

1. Vornic = a boyar rank involving administrative duties.



Wedding dress, late eighteenth – early nineteenth century, front and back (National Museum of History, Romania, inv. no. 53057).

wore the most luxurious fabrics and jewellery, rode in gilded carriages, pulled by the most expensive horses, whose harnesses were decorated with precious stones, gold, and silver. Just as clothes were specifically made for this event, so were the dishes cooked exclusively for the wedding reception.

Ilinca's brother drew up another shopping list for the wedding feast. This time around, the two families contributed equally, so keeping tabs on the expenses was important. As such, Ilinca's brother kept as accurate as possible a record, in order to be reimbursed for half of the expenses by his future brother-in-law. There are three main items at the top of the list: sugar, coffee, and spices. The social identity of the family was accurately reflected in the way they prepared for the feast. As Suraiya Faroqhi argues in *Subjects of the Sultan*, certain consumer goods were markers of social prestige. Desserts (drowned in sugar), coffee, and spices indicated wealth.



Incense burner and bowls (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century Merchant House Museum, Ploiești, inv. no. 34–8993, 34–11472, 34–11473, 34–11474, 34–11475. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

Returning to the shopping list, we find out that sugar was bought for specific purposes: “2 okkas and 100 drams [approx. 2.9 kg] sugar bought from Roman and made into rose jam”; “2 okkas and 500 drams [approx. 4.14 kg] sugar and lemons from Iași, made into marmalade”; “3 okkas [approx. 3.87 kg] sugar to make vodka and for coffee.” The guests were served rose jam (*rhodozahar*, Modern Greek *rodhozáhari*), lemon jam, and sweet anise-flavoured vodka. Usually, a boyar’s pantry contained jams made from local fruit (apples, pears, plums) sweetened with honey. Following Ottoman and Balkan trends, local elites favoured rose and lemon jams. On the outskirts of empires, the elites bought expensive fine products on credit in order to showcase their status. Sugar was one such fine

product. Brought from Lviv, Venice, or Istanbul, sugar is mentioned in shopping lists and lists of prices and customs tariffs under different categories: “fine sugar”, “regular sugar”, “Venetian crystal sugar”, “Turkish crystal sugar”, “Turkish sugar”, “good sugar”, “second hand sugar”, and even “third hand sugar”. Sugar was transported in boxes, in barrels, or in the form of loaves. There is not much information available about how sugar was used on a daily basis, but its price suggests that it was largely unaffordable. In fact, traders complained about the difficulties of selling certain goods, including sugar: “Coffee and sugar; right now, no one asks whether you have them or not and many shopkeepers cannot sell them,” wrote Tudor Mihail, a merchant from Craiova, on 13 July, 1800.

Bought and sold in large quantities, coffee came in two varieties: “French coffee” and “Emen coffee.” In the early nineteenth century, it was no longer considered a luxury product among the elites of South-eastern Europe, as it was consumed in the numerous cafes in the cities, both in the Ottoman Empire and beyond its borders. However, even though drinking coffee had become part of a social ritual among boyars, it was still not accessible to all. “I bought you *one okka of good Emen coffee* [emphasis added],” wrote Catinca Racoviță to her sister Nastasia. At weddings, good coffee would be offered only to certain guests, while everyone else would get a hot chickpea mix (“4 and a half okka of chickpeas” and “half an okka *leblebi*” – a kind of roasted chickpeas).

Two more okka (approx. 1.3 kg) of sweets and an okka of *condite* (candies, from the Italian *condito*) were offered at the wedding table. Sweets and preserves were not served every day. At the wedding, cakes and sweet drinks were prepared in large quantities following various recipes. The shopping list includes spices, natural colourings, and exotic fruit: cinnamon, cloves, anise, saffron, inkberry, pinkish raisins and small raisins, shelled and unshelled almonds, dates, and much more. The lamb, sheep, and chicken meats bought for the occasion would be filled with pine nuts and seasoned with pepper. In this period, as Mária Pakucs-Willcocks has shown, pepper was no longer a rarity, as it had been in medieval times, but was among the various spices the rich habitually used to season their meals. Even so, pepper was not selling well: “Pepper is 2 *lei* an okka, but as hard as I tried, I could not sell much,” wrote the same





*Samovar belonging to Lajos Kossuth, cca 1848–1849 (National Museum of History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).*

merchant from Craiova, Tudor Mihail, on 1 August, 1786, although he was the first to admit that the fixed price imposed by authorities had made it considerably less expensive. The use of spices was, after all, a matter of taste and habit, which was formed over time and was influenced by belonging to a certain social class.

All the ingredients mentioned above were used to prepare special dishes for the wedding guests. In turn, each guest brought gifts and money for the new couple, which would eventually come back to them when their children in their turn got married. Social relations were governed by reciprocity and, unlike in Transylvania, in Wallachia and Moldavia there were no restrictions imposed on the celebration of weddings. Boyar weddings, often described in the chronicles of the time, were attended by hundreds of guests and provided an opportunity to display the wealth and influence of a noble family.

### *Transylvanian Saxons' Weddings in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

**T**he Sibiu town council issued the earliest recorded sumptuary law regulating wedding celebrations in 1685. In the preamble to this law, the drafters explained that it was meant to protect the poor and orphans by limiting excessive spending, which caused financial loss and was bad for one's character. The regulation stipulated the duration of weddings, how they were to be held, the permitted dishes, the payment

that could be received by those involved in the smooth running of the party (master of ceremonies, musicians), and the fines for disregarding any aspect of the law. In line with concerns already voiced in the previous century, special attention was given to making the wedding a single-day event. The festive meal had to start at 10 o'clock in the morning and to last until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, while dancing had to end by 8 o'clock in the evening, or else both the organisers and the musicians would be fined. Various other limitations were also imposed: for instance, the flower accessories for the bride and groom had to be made out of natural local flowers, while silk flowers stitched to wire were forbidden. The regulation also imposed specific payments for musicians, cooks, and chefs.

The prescribed menu consisted of cabbage with meat, steak, two other cooked dishes, rice, and bread with cheese (*Käsebrot*). We may note the presence of rice in the usual wedding meal: imported from the Ottoman Empire, rice had been a staple in Transylvanian kitchens since the Middle Ages, mainly due to intense economic exchanges between Braşov and Sibiu and other commercial centres in Southeastern Europe.

During the following century, the wedding provisions in the increasingly detailed sumptuary laws reflected the hierarchical and socio-professional divisions ("classes") of the town's inhabitants. Excesses harmful to the human spirit and the preservation of the social order remained of high concern. Thus, the law of Mediaş from 1767 (*Policeordnung*) linked membership of a social class with the number of guests who might be invited to the wedding and set the limits of a proper menu. Members of the first class, including soldiers, watchmen, low-rank city employees, bakers, and other craftsmen not belonging to a guild, could only invite to their weddings three couples per family in addition to the close relatives. They were allowed to offer a three-course meal: steak, a cake named *Hanklich* (*hencleş*) or roulade, and fruit. At the dance, they were allowed to have only three pairs of dancers, who also had to help prepare and serve the meal.

The second class included guild members who were not yet master craftsmen. They were allowed to invite four couples of friends on each side in addition to the close family, to offer a four-course meal, and have four pairs of young dancers. The four "traditional" courses consisted of





Nicolaus Müller, Party with dance, eighteenth century (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu).

soup, beefsteak or, depending on the season, grilled pork or poultry, desserts such as those mentioned before, and fruit.

Guild master craftsmen, neighbourhood heads<sup>1</sup>, professionals, sons of members of the outer council, and all homeowners with their own income belonged to the third class of citizens and were allowed to invite to their wedding five couples outside their close family. While they were al-

1. Neighbourhoods were forms of social organization specific to Transylvanian Saxon communities.

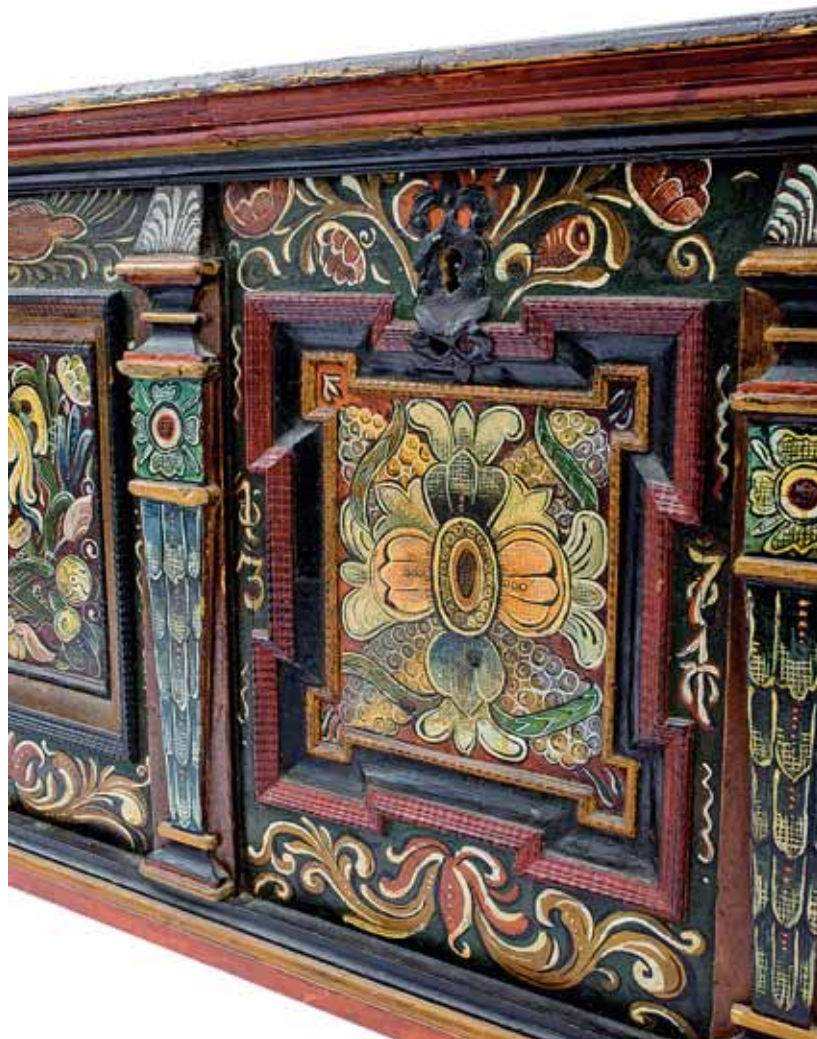
lowed to serve a five-course meal, they were also forbidden to consume more expensive foods, which they could probably have afforded: any type of costly dishes, cakes or sweets made with sugar, coffee, or rose liqueur (*Rosoli*).

The fourth class included the political and economic elite of the city, members of the outer council, and former members of town council. To their close relatives, they could invite six pairs of guests to the wedding. They would serve a six-course meal but, as for the members of the previous class, they could not offer costly dishes to their wedding guests.





Dowry chest, 1731, (ASTRA National Museum Complex, Sibiu inv. no. 2741 L. Photo: Silviu Popa).



The town leaders, that is, the twelve senior members of the outer council and the members of the inner council, were allowed to invite seven pairs of wedding guests in addition to their close relatives. Their menu could extend to an eight-course meal, but without extravagance: no almond pies, no sugar cakes, and only desserts made out of local ingredients were permitted. Finally, they could be entertained by no more than six pairs of dancers. The violation of these rules involved a fine, more specifically a fixed amount of money for each extra pair of guests or dancers and for each extra dish. Party hours and wedding rituals differed from one town to another, but overall, these urban regulations reflect not only the authorities' concern for the preservation of social hierarchy but also regarding the ways in which town-dwellers consumed goods and spent their money.

### *Satin shoes and sahtiyan slippers*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**S**hoes were among the gifts sent by the groom to his bride. Anton Maria del Chiaro, the Italian secretary of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, a participant and observer of many boyar weddings, described the shoes as follow: they were made of white satin, adorned with pearls and embroidered with flowers, open in the middle, with buckles and fine buttons, Turkish style, covering the foot to the sole. Secretary Del Chiaro described these shoes in his book *Istoria delle moderne rivoluzioni della Valachia* [The history of the modern revolutions in Wallachia], published in 1718 in Venice.

A mural painting preserved at the Mântuleasa Church in Bucharest depicts young women dancing and wearing shoes similar to those in Del Chiaro's description. The merchant Manta, together with Stanca and Maria, his wife and his sister, founded the church in 1734. According to the canons of the time, it was adorned with biblical scenes, so that the parishioners could be guided on the path of a moral life. The dance of the young ladies is one of those scenes, referencing Psalm 150.4: "Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs." The young ladies are represented according to the fashion



of the time: they wear striped silk dresses with silk belts and are adorned with strings of pearls. Their yellow Morocco leather (*sahtıyan*) and satin shoes have high heels and pointed toes. The psaltery player, however, wears Turkish slippers with pointed toes turned upward, while the other musicians have red boots.

Located on the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire, Moldavia and Wallachia were somewhat sheltered from the eyes of the authorities. Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson wrote in *Tableau général de l'Empire Ottoman* that wearing footwear was very clearly regulated, with well-defined differences between Muslims, Christians, and Jews of the empire: "Muslims distinguished themselves from the other subjects of the empire by the colour of their shoes; they all wear yellow Morocco leather shoes, with exception of the ulema, who have adopted a dark blue colour and some categories of soldiers who wear red boots. All non-Muslims wear black shoes." These interdictions were commonly ignored in the Romanian lands, where the boyars' shoes and their ladies' slippers were out of the "hostile eyes" of the Turks, as Anton Maria del Chiaro wrote.

Red boots were fashionable at the time: "A pair of red boots for Anița, in a larger size," the merchant Antonie Nicolanti requests from his godfather, the merchant Hagi Popp from Sibiu. The documents show that sizes were approximate and were adjusted to the feet with the help of lining soles.

The various types of footwear were identified by such terms as *conduri*, *papuci*, *călțuni*, *cizme*, *ciubote*, *opinci*, and *iminei*. Craftsmen who made and sold footwear were called *cizmari*, *pantofari*, *papugii*, *conduragii*, *opincari*, *ciubotari*, or *cavafi*. The materials used included leather, textiles, reeds, and even maize leaves. Competition was quite fierce among both craftsmen and merchants. A document of 1775 sought to impose rules to solve the frequent conflicts between local craftsmen and foreign merchants. The shoemakers (*cizmari*, *papugii*, and *cavafi*) of Bucharest applied to Prince Alexandru Ipsilanti for the right to sell the footwear made in their own workshops without competition from merchants bringing goods from other Ottoman territories. Prince Ipsilanti, invoking an older charter, from the time of Prince Alexandru Ghica (1767), granted them this privilege: "*Davat gospodstvo mi sie povelhnie gospodstva mi*<sup>1</sup> to the local Christian

1. "My Highness grants this charter"



*The dance (hora) of the young ladies. Fresco in the Mântuleasa Church, Bucharest, 1734 (Photo: Constanța Vintilă).*

*cavafi* and *cizmari* and *papugii* from here, from my princely city, Bucharest, so that only they may make boots, slippers, *meși* [from Turkish *mest*], light indoor slippers and every sort of footwear, and that they may sell according to custom, and neither foreigners nor anyone else should be allowed to sell this kind of merchandise made here."

Their competitors were the Turkish *papugii* (slipper makers) and *kavafs* (makers of cheaper footwear) who bought shoes from local craftsmen and sold them as goods brought from the Turkish lands. The prince's decision did little to eliminate the competition between craftsmen and merchants, who continued to bring goods across the Danube, selling them at higher or lower prices, depending on the times and the buyer's means. The intervention of the prince introduced a regulation of prices, establishing a maximum





Leather slippers, imprinted and embroidered with gilded silver threads, early seventeenth century. They were discovered in the grave of *jupânița* Pascalina, the wife of the logothete Luca Stroici, in the church of St Nicholas, Probota monastery (National Museum of Bukovina, Suceava).

Shoes, Romanian workshop, late eighteenth-early nineteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology, inv. no. 3.4-3000. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

Men's Morocco leather boots, embroidered with gold metallic thread, adorned with gilded silver sequins and white glass stones, seventeenth-eighteenth centuries (The National Museum of History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).

Boots, second half of the eighteenth century, from the Ottoman Empire (Applied Arts Museum, Budapest).



"Nalâni" (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Bellu Mansion Museum, Urlați, inv. no. 3.4-954).

"Nanule" (wooden clogs with mother of pearl – Belgrade City Museum, inv. no. UPE bb).

value over which a certain commodity could not be sold. We do not know if the fixed price (*nart*) was respected. Nevertheless, the price lists are an essential source in researching the fashionable and regular footwear sold on the market at any given time. Such a list from 1787 provides details regarding the variety, the quality, the colour and the materials used: boots are "top quality", "second hand" and "third hand"; black, red, and yellow, "sturdy", "male", "female", "for children up to 15 years", "for children up to 12 years", "for children up to 8 years", "with lining" and "without lining." Made in fine leather or satin, the ladies' shoes (*conduri*) had high heels, and were decorated with broderies and precious stones. Men also wore *conduri*, with high heels, but not every day and not every man. Shoes were not made only for practical purposes, but, as historian Giorgio Riello shows in *Shoes: A History from Sandals to Sneakers*, they reflect the preferences and fashion of the time. They are part of the evolution of fashion but are also integrated into the "consumer revolution" which began in eighteenth-century England. We do not yet have enough studies to be able to assess consumption in the eighteenth century in Southeastern Europe. However, we can make a series of observations regarding footwear and consumers, based on archival research.

The expense lists of the grand treasurer Toader Palade (1751–1752) include a lot of footwear bought or ordered for close family members, for



servants in the house, or for those employed on various estates. From the expense books of the Moldavian grand treasurer we learn that his wife, Anița Cantemir, and daughters, Smaranda, Maria, Zoița, Catrina and Ileana, received dozens of pairs of *conduri*, presented as follows: “10 *lei* [to] shoemakers for 10 pairs *conduri* that the princess bought”, “4 *lei* [for] 4 pairs *conduri* bought for the young ladies for Christmas”; “3 *lei* pairs *conduri* for her highness the princess and for the young ladies for Easter”; “5 *lei*, 5 pairs *conduri* for her highness the princess and the young ladies.” Anița Cantemir, daughter of Antioh Cantemir, prince of Moldavia (1696–1700; 1705–1707), was educated and raised in Istanbul. After marrying the boyar Toader Palade, Anița moved to Iași and, whenever she had the opportunity, she mentioned her princely ancestry, insisting on being called “princess” or “her highness.” Her social position was closely linked to the consumption of luxury products to validate her status. In the course of a year, Anița Cantemir and her five daughters bought 29 pairs of *conduri* whose value amounted to 29 *lei*. The boyar Palade himself was the only one for whom “one pair of *conduri*” was bought for 1 *leu* and 30 *bani*. The six boyar ladies wore also other type of shoes: for indoors, they bought or had made *meși* and slippers, sometimes ordered separately, sometimes written down next to other footwear (“a pair of slippers with *meștii*”). For outdoors and for long and hard roads, during autumn and winter, they wore *ciubote* (boots).

*Meși* were a kind of footwear usually made of thin goatskin, known as *sahtıyan*; yellow or red, they appear in the many prints of the period, and were worn over stockings or *colțuni*. *Meși* for slippers were made of felt and were also worn over socks. In visual sources, slippers are often placed at the edge of carpets or next to the sofas on which the boyars and boyaresses rest, enjoying their coffees.

Wooden clogs, known as *nalâni* or *nanule*, are another type of footwear mentioned in the archives and exhibited in museums. Carved in hazelnut or cherry wood, the clogs had velvet or leather uppers and were often decorated with pearls, mother-of-pearl, or semiprecious stones. It is said

“*Woman from Athens*”, in Louis Dupré, *Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople*, Paris, 1825. Turkish slippers remain, as usual, next to the sofa (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).





that the height of the heels depended on the position occupied by the wearer in the social hierarchy. Worn equally by men, women, and children, clogs were used mainly at the baths to protect the feet from water. There is a whole collection of such objects at the Sadberk Hanim Museum in Istanbul. Wooden clogs are also on display at the Belgrade City Museum, the Bucharest City Museum, and other museums in regions where Ottoman influence was significant during the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.

Therefore, when Anița Cantemir had chores around the house, she first put on *colțuni*, then yellow Morocco leather *meși*, after which she put on her slippers. For visits or invitations to the princely court, she replaced the slippers with *conduri*. Her son, Constantin, and her husband, Toader Palade, had quite a large number of slippers and boots: “1 *leu* and 30 *bani*, a pair of slippers for the young gentleman”; “2 *lei* and 90 *bani*, 1 pair boots for the boyar and 1 pair slippers for the young gentleman”. The list is long, including the cost of clothing and footwear for everyone in the house. However, when it comes to the household staff, and the type of shoes that the domestic servants, the gardener, or the stable workers had to receive and the related price, the list does not include details regarding the quality of their footwear. The difference between felt slippers and *meși*, between horse-hide boots and boots lined with sheepskin, between the “princess’s” slippers and those of Anița, “the Gypsy” was in their price. At the boyar’s house old shoes were not thrown away, but repaired; some were re-lined, others were re-soled, and most were repaired.

### *Fabrics and ornaments*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**F**abrics were ubiquitous, as dowry lists, probate inventories, estate catalogues, shopping lists, and shops’ inventory lists testify. They covered the bodies of the rich and the poor, were worn by women, children, and men alike, decorated houses and places of worship, covered beds, benches, and floors. Textiles are also found in the lists of gifts



*Samples of Journal für Fabrik, Manufaktur, Handlung und Mode, Leipzig, 1809 (Digital Library of Heidelberg University).*

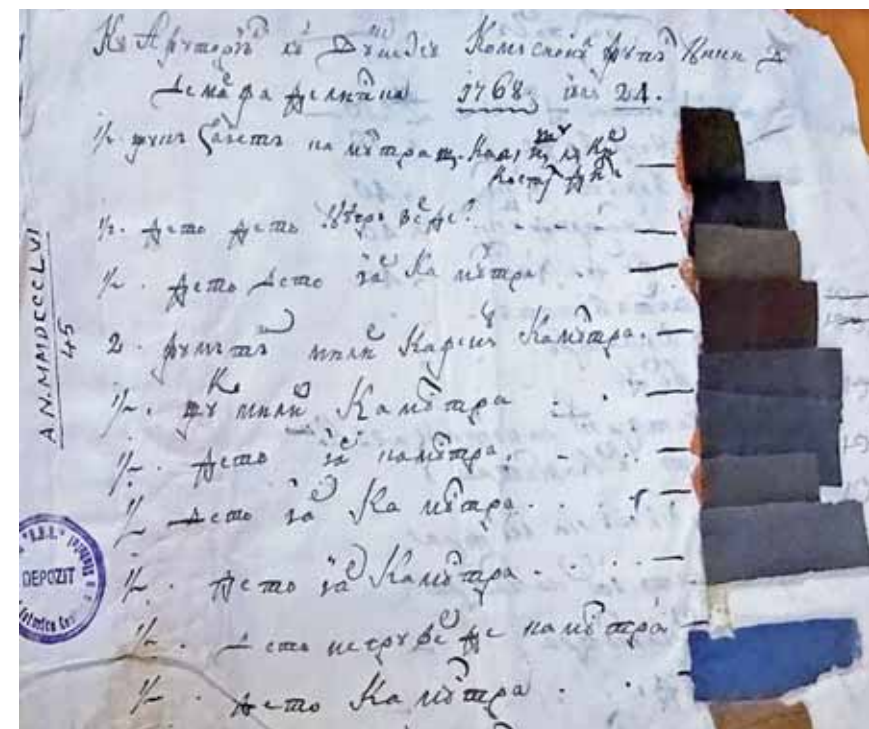
offered by the sultan to the Phanariot princes, by the princes to local boyars, by boyars to other boyars, by masters to their servants of their households. The quality of the thread, the skill of the weaver, the ornaments and decorations showcased differences between the rich and the poor, between boyars and the masses. Writing about the Ottoman Empire, Ignatius

Mouradgea d’Ohsson observed that “wealthy families dressed in silk clothes and clothes made out of the most expensive fabrics,” those from India being the most sought after. Among the fabrics brought from India, shawls made “of an extremely fine wool [were] very expensive.” Textiles emphasised gender differences: if women prized gold- and silver-thread fabrics; men never wore “either gold or silver on their garments.”, wrote d’Ohsson. However, a few exceptions could be noticed: there was gold and silver embroidery on the clothes of the servants of the elite and on some ceremonial garments worn by dignitaries at the sultan’s court.

Many eighteenth-century probate inventories, shopping lists, and expense lists have been preserved in the Romanian lands, making it easy for the interested researcher to identify fabrics and the individuals who wore them. As Selin İpek and Hülya Tezcan demonstrate, *seraser* was the most expensive fabric, used at the sultan’s court for kaftans or in decorations for the throne. The silk fabric was decorated with gold or silver threads to give it weight. *Seraser* clothes are also found in the wardrobes of rich boyars or merchants as the taste for this rich and expensive fabric was introduced by the Phanariot rulers and their entourage.

*Cumaş* was another silk fabric, dyed red or blue. It was expensive but was often used by boyars and boyaresses for *anteris* and dresses. This “oriental silk” was in high demand and was known under different names in merchants’ catalogues: *cumaş* (from Turkish *kumaş*) or *camohas* (from Modern Greek *kamuhás* and Turkish *kemha*). The latter was also called *damasc* or *adamască* (damask), referring to the region where it was woven. *Ghermeşut* (from Turkish *geremsüd*) was another frequent entry, a silk fabric often embroidered with flowers made of gold or silver thread. Mouradgea d’Ohsson claimed that this fabric with gold or silver thread only appeal to the taste of women.

Textiles are often described in the smallest detail. Mentioning the yarns used to make the fabric and the quality of the ornaments added value to the goods, but also made identification easier, given the variety of possible materials. On 31 December 1775, in addition to financial information, the merchant Mihai Țumbru noted in his register details about the processing of oriental silk (*camohas*) – the fabric was bleached and embroidered before being shipped from Trikala to Tîrnovo and from



Merchant Nica’s shopping list, July 24, 1768 (National Archives of Romania, New Acquisitions Fond, MMDCCLVI/45 – detail).

there to Braşov. Lining fabrics went through the same complex process: they were brought to Tîrnovo from Larissa for dyeing before being sent to Braşov. Each stage of their preparation until they reached consumers added to the final price.

Fabrics circulated together with people, connecting different continents and cultures. The young apprentice Tache Merişescu recounts in his memoirs the itinerary of the cotton he traded together with his uncle: Chania, Thessaloniki, Athos, Smyrna, Venice, Alexandria, Galaţi.



## *The history of cotton*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

**A** natural fibre and a product familiar in modern everyday life, cotton has been known in our region since the Middle Ages. The customs tariff from 1413, imposed on Braşov during the reign of Mircea the Elder, voivode of Wallachia, mentioned cotton for the first time, next to spices, as an exotic commodity, coming “from across the sea,” and passing through Wallachia on its way to Transylvania. In customs records of Sibiu and Braşov from the first half of the sixteenth century, unspun cotton, cotton yarns, and cotton textiles were entered under the “Turkish Goods” category.

In other parts of Europe, however, the spread of cotton came about in a different way. Recent scholarship has reconsidered the role of cotton and cotton fabrics imported from India in relation to the exponential development of the English textile industry, of local and international cotton consumption, and of global trade. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, cheap and colourful cotton, imported from India by the famous East India Company, stimulated the growing demand for cotton and cotton textiles, boosted technological innovations, and became an integral part of the industrial revolution. Cotton had become popular due to its qualities: easy to dye with permanent colours, light and comfortable to wear, ease of care, unlike local linen and wool fabrics, which were rougher and harder to maintain.

As medieval documents show, cotton was a well-known and constantly traded commodity in Southeastern Europe. During the Middle Ages, southern Europe sourced its cotton from the Black Sea and the Levant region and, from the sixteenth century onwards, some regions under Ottoman rule, such as Anatolia and the Balkans, produced and exported cotton yarn on their own. Lightweight cotton yarn and fabrics were adopted relatively quickly in Southern Europe, and demand and consumption increased over time. Ottoman textile factories typically produced regular and blue or red dyed cotton yarns, which soon became famous

and much appreciated throughout Central Europe. Medieval documents from Transylvania also mentioned dyed cotton yarns under the name of *arnici*, from the Saxon German *Arnitsch*. During the eighteenth century, Greek merchants settled in Vienna traded large quantities of red cotton yarn. This prompted the Viennese authorities to offer financial incentives to local entrepreneurs in order to produce cotton yarn that could compete with imports from the Ottoman Empire.

Among the cotton fabrics, *bogasiu*, a fine cloth usually used for making underwear or linings, was the best known. Then, *alagea*, obtained from combining cotton and wool, was prized for its alternating stripes and glossy finish. Just as today, cotton cloth was generally used to make bedding, underwear, and shirts.

## *Tulips, tulips...*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**F**loral motifs applied to fabrics and walls or to gold or silver objects are characteristic of the art of the Ottoman world. Indeed, flowers feature highly on numerous documents of the period, twisting around letters, graciously framing the text, blooming on the edges of the page or embracing signatures of princes and metropolitans. Such a beautifully adorned document was issued on November 23, 1754, during the reign of Matei Ghica, to establish in writing the social status of local boyars according to the criteria of income. As he was penning the document, the clerk looked at the flowery garments of the boyars and let his quill slip, embellishing the text by decorating the letters and the corners of the document with red and gold flowers.

That was, of course, a widespread practice at the time and floral decorations, a significant feature in the composition of official documents, were meant to please the eye. As historian Marian Coman argues, documents of this type had an important visual function. Being large in format, they could not even be opened without their audience catching a glimpse



Floral ornament in a document signed by Prince Matei Ghica on November 23, 1754 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Historical Documents Collection, XXXVII/1).

of their illumination. The flowers that adorned them appeared to the audience in their entire splendour, as the herald read the text aloud to boyars and courtiers. In fact, decorative flowers were the most readily available form of ornament and found their way even onto documents not intended for a broader audience. For instance, manuscript no. 2236 in the Library of the Romanian Academy contains a short account of the magical powers of the peony, said to “have great strength.” It was written toward the end of the eighteenth century and the artist accompanied the text with blue flowers decorating capital letters and a vase overflowing with flowers in different stages of bloom. One might think that they would be peonies, which, mixed with various magical potions, could work miracles, healing and giving amazing powers to those who ingested them. However, the blue flowers

sketched by the scribe look more like tulips basking in the spring sun!

Tulips, the favourite flowers of Sultan Ahmed III (1703–1730), were highly prized, intensely cultivated, and frequently drawn, becoming prominent motifs in art and literature. In her book *The Age of Tulips*, Ariel Salzmann shows that during a period of relative calm (1718–1730) in the Ottoman Empire, the fragile flower came to symbolise the “ephemeral pleasures” of life. Different varieties of tulips, considered a symbol of nobility, were cultivated both in Europe and Asia; for instance, in Istanbul



Vase with blue flowers (Library of the Romanian Academy, Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection, Ms. 2236, eighteenth century).

Anonymous, Grand Hatman Mihalache Manu (detail), 1841 (Romanian National Museum of Art – Gallery of Modern Romanian Art).







Interior decoration (detail). Fundenii Doamnei Church, Fundeni, Ilfov County (Photo: Constanța Vintilă).

Exterior decoration (detail). Fundenii Doamnei Church, Fundeni, Ilfov County (Photo: Constanța Vintilă).

they adorned courtyards and gardens of the imperial elite. At the same time, the tulip became an omnipresent decorative theme in architecture and painting and emblazoned on various textiles and objects. In Bucharest, tulips embellish the entrance of Mântuleasa Church and are also among the specific decorations of the Crețulescu Church, built during the peak of the Tulip Age.

As mentioned before, tulips featured on various media, enhancing the air of elegance to velour and silk fabrics. Around 1714–1715, Metropolitan Gideon of Moldavia ordered a *sakkos* made of velour, over which a silk fabric embroidered with gilded silver thread was added. Flowers in warm colours, light blue, pink, different shades of yellow, adorned the bishop's attire. The velvet gown is embroidered with golden tulips that stand out



Interior decoration (detail). Crețulescu Church, Bucharest (Photo: Constanța Vintilă).

throughout the fabric. For years to come, the tulip remained a central decorative motif both in the fashion and in art. Around 1841, the grand *hatman* of Moldavia, Mihalache Manu, commissioned a painting in which he appeared in a beautiful long white shirt adorned with golden tulips.

### *Clothing and shoes for the people*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**C**lothes worn by common people are also recorded in inventories made after death or in dowry lists. Their quality, cut, or colour are different from the wardrobe of the wealthy classes of society. Cheap cotton, linen cloth, or thick woollen fabrics take the place of *seraser*, velvet, or damask.

In the mansions of the boyars, servants received new clothes twice a year, at Easter and at Christmas. Boyar Toader Palade's daily expense account indicates that the clothes and the shoes commonly worn by the boyars and their many servants were usually ordered together: "8 *lei* and 30 *bani* making 5 pairs of *mești* for the *cucoane* (gentlewomen) and one pair of boots for the *cucon* (gentleman) and 11 pairs for the male servants and 8 pairs of shoes and socks for the female servants for Easter." The expenses were carefully listed and reveal the number of clothes and shoes that were purchased annually in a boyar house. All servants are accounted for: poulterers, labourers, water carriers, cooks, gardeners, coach drivers,





*"The Bazaar of Athens", in Edward Dodwell, Views in Greece from Drawings, London, 1821 (Digital Library of the University of Heidelberg).*



swineherds, horse grooms, maids, Gypsy slaves (serving as help around the house), masons, musicians, housekeepers, priests. Wide peasant trousers (*bernevici*), gowns (*entari*), woollen overcoats (*zábune*), girdles, hats, *işlics*, leggings (*cintieni*, from Turkish *çintiyn*), dresses, shirts, Marrocco shoes, slippers, boots, coats, furred woollen overcoats (*dulame*, from Turkish *dolama*), mantles, *şalvars*, and underpants were bought or custom-made for all. The servants' children, especially those doing chores around the house were also mentioned: "1 leu [for] 2 pairs of boots for the children in the kitchen" or "14 lei – 18 cotton sashes for the children for Easter" or "10 lei and 60 bani for 6 sheep pelts for 4 greatcoats (*conteşe*) of the children, that is Ion, Toma, Ciornii and Vasile."

The quality of the fabrics and valuable ornaments make the difference between the boyars' clothes and those of the common folk. For instance, boyar Toader Palade's expense lists mention greatcoats – long mantles made of fur, mostly worn during winter. Boyar Palade's greatcoat was adorned with marten pelt and lined with fox pelt, while the servants' garments were made from regular sheep pelt: "9 sheep pelts for the mantles of cooks and coachmen," reads one entry. Furrier Vasile was later paid to add different coloured margins to children's sheepskin greatcoats. Nonetheless, vestments which explicitly signalled social status were rare, such as *ghiordia* (a long overcoat) and *condurii* (shoes), worn exclusively by boyars. We could also add fezzes: ordered in large numbers

"Entrance to the Tower of the Winds", in Edward Dodwell, *Views in Greece from Drawings*, London, 1821 (Digital Library of the University of Heidelberg).





for both women and men, they only covered the heads of the elites. Boyars chose the attire to be worn by their servants, who hardly had any choice in the matter. In fact, servants worked for clothes. Their “work contracts” show that payment had several components: clothing, food, candles, soap, firewood and money. In his book *The Dress of the People*, John Styles writes about “involuntary consumers”, arguing that common folk wore the clothes that were offered to them. “Involuntary” consumption also involved charitable gifts or donations. Thus, testators left some of their clothes to close relatives, protégés, or to the poor. For instance, *beșleaga* (captain of the messenger guard) Constantin from the Scorțari district, Bucharest, in his will of January 12, 1797 left part of his clothes to his two grandsons, Iancu and Ioniță, who were charged with executing the will: Ianache inherited a silver watch while Ioniță received “a green-black *biniș* and a black marten overcoat [of] satin and a tripped linin-silk *anteri*.” Constantin, as a police captain, was a man of means, as the items of clothing he gave to his granddaughters testify: one received “a mink-lined overcoat”, and the other “an old ermine Tatar overcoat (*tătarcă*) and a furred sleeveless jacket (*tivilichie*).” We also notice the ubiquitous presence of certain garments: the *giubea*, the *tătarcă*, the *tivilichie*, worn by men and women alike; they were adjusted and personalised according to the wearer’s taste.

The very poor did not leave wills, but only those who had something to distribute, some of whom ensured that they would be remembered after death by making provision to this effect in their wills and sharing their clothes between relatives, protégés, and the poor.

### *Pearl necklaces*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**P**earl necklaces (*salba de mărgăritare*) are the most frequent ornaments in the dowry lists compiled for the daughters of boyars and wealthy merchants. A necklace might be made of six or twelve or twenty-four strings of pearls. White pearls were also used to make bracelets and to decorate golden earrings. Easily matched with any piece of garment,



Votive painting: Smaranda Mavrocordat and her stepdaughter Maria (detail). Stavropoleos Church, Bucharest (Photo: Constanța Vintilă).

strings of pearls were an integral part of women’s jewellery, much appreciated throughout Central and Eastern Europe during the eighteenth century. If we look at the portrait of the Mavrocordat family in the narthex of the Stavropoleos Church in Bucharest, we notice strings of pearls displayed on the necks of Smaranda Mavrocordat and her stepdaughter Maria, and on those of Sultana and Ruxandra. Brought in chests from the Phanar district of Constantinople, kept in jewellery boxes, pearls would always accompany the Mavrocordat women, whether on the banks of the Bosphorus, on the banks of Dâmbovița (Bucharest), or on the hill of Copou (Iași).



## *The beautiful Neaga*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**T**oo little has been written about Neaga, wife of the merchant Ionașcu, although her portrait of a discreet beauty, made by the painter Constantin Lecca, is well-known. Neaga and her husband, the merchant Ionașcu, were well-off; after the death of their only daughter, Rada, at the age of eight, the couple turned their entire fortune to build a church, a school, and a hospital. The narthex of the church that they founded in Slatina at the end of the eighteenth century featured, according to custom, the votive portraits of them that Constantin Lecca would subsequently reproduce on canvas, thus giving the couple a place in the story of Romanian art.

In her portrait, Neaga is pictured wearing seven strings of pearls around her neck, along with a further four strings of red coral beads and the indispensable necklace of gold coins. Earrings, made of gold coins like those used for the necklace, emphasise her beauty, while her dress appears to be made of yellow silk, perhaps *geremsüd*, with a girdle closed with gold clasps. A sleeveless jacket with sable fur in front and blue satin on the back completes her outfit.

Her husband, Ionașcu Cupețu, is simply dressed, in the typical garb of the Balkan merchants who traded in grain and fish on both sides of the Danube. An inscription on his tombstone reads: “Ionașcu Ion Cupețu *osmanțiu* but he was also known among merchants as “Sârbu Mazălu”, most likely a sign of his Serbian and Bulgarian descent prior to the family’s settlement on the plains of Oltenia. The complex identity of this merchant holds our attention: an Ottoman subject coming from Rumelia, an Orthodox Christian of perhaps Serbian origin, bound to the lands of Oltenia through building a church, a school, and a hospital. Ionașcu and Neaga remained in Slatina, where their business prospered. In the portrait, Ionașcu wears a yellow silk *anteri* fastened with three small buttons at the collar and a sash (known as *taclit*, from the Turkish *taklid*) around his waist; over the *anteri* he sports a white undercoat (*fermenea*) with a

Constantin Lecca, Neaga, the wife of Ionașcu Cupețu, oil on canvas, unsigned, undated, inv. 1672 (Brașov Art Museum).







Constantin Lecca, Ionașcu Cupețu [merchant] from Slatina, undated (Romanian National Museum of Art – Gallery of Modern Romanian Art).

pearl in lieu of the button. Over the undercoat, the merchant wears a blue felt *giubea*, trimmed with marten fur.

In Zemun, we may catch a glimpse of another merchant family and admire the clothes they donned. In a portrait painted by Pavel Đurković in 1817, Jelisaveta Vasiljević wears twelve strings of pearls and a European white dress with a lowcut neckline. Jelisaveta was the wife of Vasilije Vasiljević, a wealthy merchant from Zemun. As Zemun was part of the



Pavel Đurković, Woman with a red shawl (Jelisaveta Vasiljević), 1817 (Matica Srpska Gallery, Novi Sad, Serbia).

Habsburg Empire at the time, the two spouses appear in their portraits by Đurković dressed according to the latest Viennese fashion.

The Danube is the common element connecting these two merchant families: they traded on both banks of the river, prospered, and bought luxury goods, thus showcasing their social position. The strings of pearls indicated their wealth and Jelisaveta's pearl bracelet matching her elegant dress and diamond rings on all her fingers only enhance the air of affluence.



## *Bălașa, Smaranda, Zamfira and their jewels*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

Few in Romania today associate the female names Bălașa, Smaranda, or Zamfira with precious stones that women of the eighteenth century, from princesses to noblewomen and to female merchants, coveted. Rubies, emeralds, or sapphires adorned golden earrings, rings, bracelets, brooches, and necklaces. Rings were worn on all fingers, as can be seen in the portraits of the time, and featured emeralds or rubies to match earrings with precious stones. The name *Bălașa* comes from the red stone called ruby, brought by merchants from the Venice, where it was called *balascio*. The origin of *Smaranda* lies in the green emerald, while *Zamfira* recalls the azure sapphire. Phanariot women were a model for the wealthy boyar and merchant women of Iași, Bucharest, Athens, Thessaloniki, and Izmir.

If we look at the portrait of this attractive and fashionable woman of the Phanar, painted by Jean-Baptiste Van Moor and today at the Benaki Museum in Athens, beyond the beauty and elegance of the costume, we discover numerous jewels: the young Phanariot lady covers her head with a red silk headscarf and wears necklaces, earrings, and a gold ring with precious stone.

The wives and daughters of the Phanariot princes and officeholders visibly influenced the choices of the Wallachian and Moldavian boyars, educating their taste for luxury and precious objects. For instance, on April 4, 1782, Măriuța Cantacuzino-Deleanu received as dowry from her father, *Grand Spătar* Iordache Cantacuzino, the following pieces of jewellery: a flower with rubies, a ring with a large diamond, a golden necklace with rubies, a pair of gold earrings, adorned with diamond and emerald stones, and a golden chain. Cantacuzino had a huge fortune, which he passed down to his daughter by his second marriage, after the death of his daughter Zoița at the age of 13, as is mentioned in the dowry list. Other equally wealthy boyars also gave their daughters valuable jewellery as dowries: diamond brooches of various shapes—flowers, pigeons, the sun, chamomile, and egrets—, belts and necklaces.

*Jean-Batiste Van Moor, A Greek noblewoman of the Phanar, Constantinople, wearing a sumptuous town dress ornamented with ermine and precious stones, eighteenth century (Benaki Museum, Athens inv. no. ΓΕ 9039, © 2020).*







Anonymous, Great Ban Grigore Brâncoveanu (1764–1832), cca 1830–1832, detail (Romanian National Museum of Art – Gallery of Modern Romanian Art).

However, we should not presume that jewellery was solely the prerogative of women. A look at the portraits of the time shows that men also wore rings (sometimes on all fingers) and necklaces. Perhaps the most precious piece of masculine jewellery – symbolically caught between the folds of the sash (*taklid*) – is the curved dagger known as the *hanger*, often decorated with precious stones. The imposing clothes in which Grand Ban Grigore Brâncoveanu is represented are completed by the *hanger* worn at the waist; we easily notice the essential element, namely

the richly decorated handle, which indicates the prestige and influence that the boyar enjoyed in the society of the time.

Jewellery items never lost their value. They could cover debts, could serve as surety, could be pawned, and could easily be hidden; in short, they constituted small fortunes that could save the owner in a difficult situation. Virtually all social groups strove to invest in jewellery and proudly displayed their possessions on numerous occasions. Following the death of her husband, Lady Catrina, the wife of one Gavrilă, a treasury clerk in Moldavia, received back part of her dowry: “a ring with a ruby in the middle and 4 diamonds; 1 ring with a bad white stone; 2 rings with a diamond; a green jasper man’s ring; 6 pearl necklaces, a pair of emerald earrings with 3 pearls; a pair of silver belts.” Gavrilă had previously been married to Anastasia, whose dowry also included numerous pieces of jewellery: “11 strings of pearls; 3 strings of imitation pearls; a pair of earrings with emerald in the middle, sapphire and 2 pearls; a necklace with ruby, 2 emeralds and one sapphire; a ring with 1 diamond; 1 ring

with 9 small rubies; a ring with 6 rubies and an emerald; a ring with a ruby and 2 diamonds; a sapphire ring; a jasper ring; 2 pairs of silver belt clasps.” The dowries of both Gavrilă’s wives (Anastasia and Catrina), along with a share of his fortune, were claimed for his three heiresses. Anastasia, who had long since died, had left two daughters whom Catrina had raised. For this reason, Anastasia’s brother, Constantin, and Catrina’s father, Ene Mîrza, meticulously described Gavrilă’s belonging so that they could be recovered and divided into dowry shares, in the name of the three daughters born from his two marriages. The girls, probably named Bălașa, Smaranda, and Zamfira, had every right to claim their mothers’ dowries and to deposit the jewels in chests, waiting for a suitable marriage. Constantin and Ene, their guardians, dutifully weighed, assessed, and registered the late Gavrilă’s property, in a bid to find a satisfactory solution for everyone involved.

### *Ișlic, kalpak, fez...*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

The *ișlic*, a tall hat that derived its name from the Turkish *başlık*, was a typical feature of a boyar’s dress and offered visual evidence of his rank, social position, and status. This was a headwear that was generally permitted to Christians in the Ottoman Empire, but it took on a symbolic dimension especially in the Romanian lands. The size, the shape, the type of fur, and the colour pointed to the story and status of its wearer: large richly ornamented *ișlics* were reserved for high-ranking boyars, while smaller *ișlics*, topped with squares of different colored cloth, were worn by those of lower rank.

There was a great variety of *ișlic* available in the principalities. The guild of *ișlic*-makers in Bucharest was very powerful and often applied to the prince for the punishment of leatherworkers or furriers who did not respect their right to priority in the making of *ișlics*. Their repeated applications also draw attention to the considerable income to be obtained by practising this trade, as the demand for *ișlics* was almost universal.





Anonymous, Great Hatman Mihalache Manu (detail), 1841 (Romanian National Museum of Art – Gallery of Modern Romanian Art).

To foreigners who passed through Moldavia and Wallachia on their way to Istanbul at the time, the boyar's *işlic* with its extravagant shape and size was a source of amusement. Considered “odd”, and as such noteworthy, the *işlic* became the subject of a series of narrative and visual depictions. The Scottish diplomat, traveller, and painter Robert Ker Porter, for instance, left an account accompanied by several sketches of boyar *işlics*. In 1818, during his stay at the Wallachian court in Bucharest, he was invited by Prince Ioan Caragea to attend a concert, which gave him the opportunity to observe and to draw the locals and their headgear. He writes: “I amused myself in silently sketching some of their figures. The general costume was Turkish, and of every-coloured brocade, embroidered, and befurred;



Monogramiste RGAI, Boyar of the lower class (third class), logothete or secretary of the Divan with an ink pot at his belt, and boyar of the high class, 1830, drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

so far all was well, till the huge Valachian cap turned the whole ridiculous. It is of a pumpkin form, nearly three feet in circumference, and of an equally enormous height. The material, a grey silvery Bucharian lambskin, with a tassel at the top, to assist the wearer in taking it off when he means to salute an acquaintance. This little appendage is green with every person, excepting the royal family, and they have it white. The cap of the lower orders is of the same shape, but not quite so large; and a square cushion covered with dark cloth is its enormous crest; in fact all these people appear so top-heavy it is painful to look at them, after the first risible impression of the absurd passes away”.

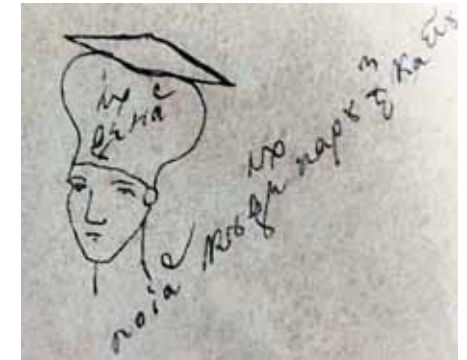
The features of this headgear were strictly regulated. Depending on its size, form, material, and colour, the *işlic* told the story of its wearer. The Phanariot prince and the *beyzades* (sons of the prince) wore *işlics* covered with sable fur, as did the five foremost officeholders of the princely divan.



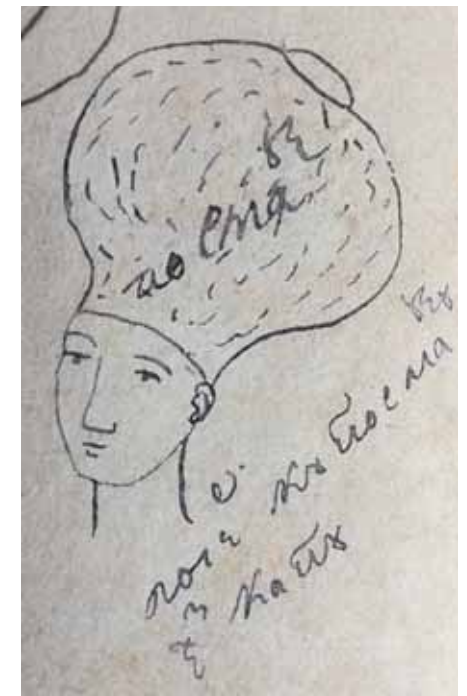


Anonymous, Dimitrie Ralet, 1789 (Moldova National Museum Complex – Iași Art Museum, inv. no. 1328).

Sketch in Gromovnic al lui Iraclie împărat, carele au fost numărătoriu de stele, 1795 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection).



But while the prince was entitled to a *gugiuman* (Turkish *gücemin*) of sable fur with a white top, the great boyars were entitled only to sable *gugiumans* with red tops. And while the great boyars in high offices wore large round *işlics*, the petty boyars wore smaller round *işlics* topped by a felt square coloured according to their rank and office. The *işlic* and *kalpak* of boyars lower down the social hierarchy were covered with fur of lower quality: marten, lamb, fox, or polecat. The Moldavian grand *vistier* (treasurer) Ioan Canta in his *Record of Expenses* mentions the following varieties of this headwear: “*işlic* of sable for the bridegroom”, light grey *işlics* (of lambskin), “Moldavian *işlics*”, “Nogai [i.e. Tatar] *işlics*”, night *kavuks*, and *kalpaks*, made and adorned by Ştefan the *işlic*-maker or Păun, the head of the *kalpak*-makers’ guild (*kalpakci-başa*). The *işlicar* and *kalpakci-başa* made headgear for lower-ranking boyars, as well; however, their hats were made from inferior quality pelts.



According to legend, boyars owned two sets of hats: one that was permitted by their rank and office, and another one for their own pride, which was worn especially among friends, and which tended to be much



larger and more richly ornamented. Possibly, this “fashion for *işlic* grandeur” was inspired by the example of the viziers of Sultan Mustafa III (r. 1757–1773) who “pressed for turbans grander than those worn by more illustrious forerunners,” as is noted by Madeline Zilfi.

The fashion for immense *işlics*, however, gave rise to pamphlets and caricatures in which the hats and their wearers were mocked. In the *Gromovnic*, a book of astrological predictions from 1795, the anonymous author sketched several boyars’ heads, noting ironically against each sketch: “boyar with a *gugea* on his head,” “boyar with a lamp on his head,” and “boyar with a biscuit on his head”. From there, it is but a short step to the negative image of the *işlic* “as tall as the obelisk in the public gardens,” which certain modern scholars saw as proof of the vanity of the boyars, who were proud of their ornaments, but unashamed that they could not read or write.

### *The fashion for cashmere shawls*

GIULIA CALVI

Starting with the second half of the seventeenth century, the Levant was a crucial gateway to Europe for printed cottons coming from Indian manufacturing centres. Portugal was the first European country to open the trade, which also flourished along the route connecting Cairo and Alexandria to Venice and, from there, to Europe. In Livorno, the inventory of a ship under quarantine in 1585 includes “two Indian bedspreads.” Letters from the Florentine de Medici family archive describe how Indian fashion had been integrated into the carnival traditions: “an Indian dance was performed on Thursday at the theatre, attended by numerous foreigners from outside the city, who particularly enjoyed the exotic dance and unusual costumes.” Indeed, during the seventeenth century, cities such as Genoa, Livorno, and Marseille, in particular, both imported Indian textiles and produced local imitations. In Venice and in Marseille, Armenians coming from the Eastern Mediterranean were leading manufacturers.

The intricate design and the lustre of the colour-resistant fabrics made them highly appealing to European and Ottoman consumers, thus setting the stage for a fashion for cashmere shawls. Historians concerned exclusively

with the history of Europe have long assumed that cashmere shawls were fashionable only on the old continent and that their proliferation was a phenomenon specific to the West. However, we should add that the Asian trade predated the British conquest of India and that luxury fabrics had been exported to Istanbul, Alexandria, Russia, and the Romanian principalities, where painters portrayed men and women of the boyar dynasties wearing shawls, sashes, and turbans in a variety of striped and floral patterns. In 1820s Trieste, the popular painter Giuseppe Tominz used colourful cashmere shawls in his portraits of Habsburg gentlewomen, Greek and Slavic women in merchant households, and Turks living in the city.

### *Shawls and headscarves for the ladies*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

The female members of the Romanian elite were influenced by fashion trends from the Ottoman Empire and used selected clothing items, such as shawls, as a means of social distinction. Giulia Calvi has emphasised, in her study *Translating Imperial Practices, Knowledge*, how cashmere shawls connected “material modernity, class distinction, and taste” to construct hierarchy and status. Having arrived in Istanbul from India, cashmere shawls quickly spread throughout Europe. They were considered a highlight in a woman’s appearance and were soon adored by Italian noblewomen and found a place in the ladies’ wardrobes of French high society. Women’s magazines, such as *Journal des dames et des modes*, with its supplement, *Costumes parisiens*, offered wealthy young women a variety of shawls of the finest cashmere, ornamented with a plethora of geometric or floral patterns, depending on the fashion of the time. The shawl served as an important accessory also in the visual representation of upper-class women in the Danubian Principalities. Almost all the portraits of female members of the Romanian elite produced between 1780 and 1840 show a woman seated and her shawl. Typically, the shawl is not merely lying abandoned on a couch awaiting its mistress but is depicted in full detail draped around her shoulders, “casually” thrown over her body, which is adorned also with



other luxury items and insignia of power or decorating an item of furniture in the background of the picture.

To cover their shoulders, the wealthy ladies of the boyar elite cherished cashmere shawls as well as shawls made of *giar*, a valuable fabric made of camel hair and decorated with flowers and embroidery in gold or silver thread. Moreover, both cashmere and *giar* were the preferred material for other valuable garments. The soft and velvety cashmere was often used for Turkish-style trousers, which were worn by women and men alike and which appear as “*çaksır* of shawl” or “*cintieni* of shawl” in the sources. For instance, the dowry of a boyar lady from 1775 lists a “*cübbe* (overcoat) of shawl cloth with laces of gold thread, without fur.” *Giar* was used for overcoats as well. The dowry of a boyar lady from 1797 lists among her belongings “a *cübbe* of *giar*, fur-lined with polecat”. On their heads, boyar ladies wore *sarık*s, a sort of silk headwraps adorned with numerous precious stones or embroidered flowers. For example, on 9 February 1792, Maria Bălăceanu received, as part of her dowry, four such pieces, each of them ornamented with different colours or decoration: “1 red *sarık* made of silk; 1 pale green *sarık* made of silk; 1 green *sarık* made of

Top: Cashmere shawl, nineteenth century (Museum of Art Collections, Bucharest. The Brothers Béatrice and Hrandt Avakian Collection, inv. no. 83323/548). Bottom: Cashmere shawl, nineteenth century (Museum of Art Collections, Bucharest. The Family Dumitru and Maria Ștefănescu Collection, inv. no. 103064/159).



Anonymous, [Maria Constantin Bălăceanu, second wife of vornic Iordache Golescu], 1819. She wears a beautiful colourful shawl on her shoulders, in line with fashion (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).





Votive painting of Mihai Manu, grand vornic and kaymakam of Craiova (1802) and of Wallachia (1821), and his family. (Fragment of mural painting in oil on canvas by Nicolae Polcovnicul, Popești-Leordeni Church – detail – Bucharest City Museum). Women depicted in votive portraits also wore shawls. For instance, Smaranda Văcărescu, the wife of the grand vornic Mihai Manu, was portrayed in Western dress with a shawl over her shoulders.

silk, 1 white cloth *sarık*.” There are descriptions of this particular type of head-covering by Andreas Wolf, a Transylvanian Saxon doctor at the princely court of Moldavia between 1780 and 1783, and by the naturalist Balthazar de la Motte Hacquet, who also added an engraving showing such a *sarık* and writes: “a boyar’s wife usually wears a *sarık* of thin silk or

muslin, in the form of a sugar loaf, adorned with pearls and other jewels and with all sorts of ribbons and flowers. Her hair is twisted over it in one or more plaits or plaited into a long pigtail. At the peak of this head ornament is a tassel, and on one side or in front it is adorned with two ostrich feathers.”

The *Customs Catalogue* published on 1 January 1792 indicates the provenance and price of several of these garments and accessories, underlining their value as luxury items vis-à-vis similar products. Ordinary shawls imported from Egypt and sold in the shops of Romanian towns, for instance, were not of great interest to the wealthy boyars. Instead, they chose the expensive shawls, some of them “adorned with jewels and pearls,” which





Balthasar Hacquet, “Boyar of Moldavia” and “Boyar’s wife of Moldavia”, in *Neueste physikalisch-politische Reisen: In den Jahren 1788 und 1789 durch die Dacischen und Sarmatischen oder Nördlichen Karpathen*, vol. 1, Nürnberg, 1790 (Carol I Central University Library, Bucharest).

were brought from India, Damascus, Aleppo, or Chios first to Istanbul and from there to the principalities. The correspondence of a commander of the princely guard, *Delibaşa* Gheorghe Constantin, who was involved in the luxury trade selling shawls as well as gold jewelry with diamonds, hints at the market value of cashmere and *giar* products from India. It suggests that a *giar* was worth 500 silver coins (*groschen*), which was a considerable sum of money. On 17 December 1813, he noted that, out of the goods from Lahore that he had received via Constantinople, he had sold fifteen shawls and five *giars* in Bucharest and sent another six shawls and one *giar* to Moscow, because they could not be sold locally. The deal brought him and his associates, Greek merchants in Constantinople, no less than 10,803 *groschen*. Indeed, although a sumptuary law from 1778, which will be discussed in more detail below, argued that shawls of cash-

mere and *giar* were “useful against the cold and durable” and the fabrics were therefore not forbidden, the use and visual depiction of luxury items made of them shows that they were obviously appreciated for more than these practical aspects.

### *Taklid and çalma for boyars*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

The boyars did not wear only the *işlic*, they also wore turbans and other garments coming from the Ottoman Empire. Yet while there are various sources on dress in Istanbul and other places in the empire, including regulations concerning the colour of turbans, evidence with regard to the Romanian lands is scarce: There exists a series of portraits, a couple of written sources, and the terminology used for specific items. Nevertheless, these sources indicate that, like other Christians in the Ottoman Empire, the Romanian boyars also wore striped *taklids* and *çalmas*. The *taklid*, or *taclit*, was a shawl worn around the waist, holding the typical *anteri* coat tightly. *Çalmas*, or *cialmas*, were shawls worn around the head as turbans. For instance, in the 1820s, the Serbian painter Pavel Đurković made portraits of the young boyars Constantin Cantacuzino and Iancu Manu wearing the *çalma* turban. Similar striped *cialmas* covered the heads of wealthy merchants in the Balkans or of the ruling class in Southeastern Europe. In 1824, the same Pavel Đurković painted the portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović wearing just such a *çalma*, with a floral design in red and green.

By 1824, Obrenović was no longer a simple Ottoman subject, but prince of the newly established Principality of Serbia. Nonetheless, he did not give up his Ottoman attire, which he had worn as a leader of the rebellion against the Ottoman sultan.

While *taklids* and *çalmas* were worn by the great boyars with important offices in the divan, lesser boyars and servants of the princely court wore *donluks*, made of felt of inferior quality, around their heads. The *Customs Catalogue* of 1 January 1792 specifies that “*taklids* of *alagea* (linen silk)” came from Aleppo while *donluks* were brought from Istanbul.





*Previous page: Pavel Đurković, Prince Miloš Obrenović, 1824 (Belgrade National Museum).*



*Top: Nicolae Polcovnicu, Portrait of a young man with turban, 1825 (Seulescu-Stere donation, Ion Ionescu-Quintus County Museum of Art, Ploiești).*

*Bottom: Constantin Lecca, Portrait of Gheorghe Coțofeanu, 1833 (Craiova Art Museum).*







Being at a safe distance from the imperial centre, the Romanian lands escaped the more rigorous dress codes of the empire, where – as Matthew Elliot has shown – the Christians at some point lost the right to wear turbans and were “assigned” the *işlic* and the *kalpak*.

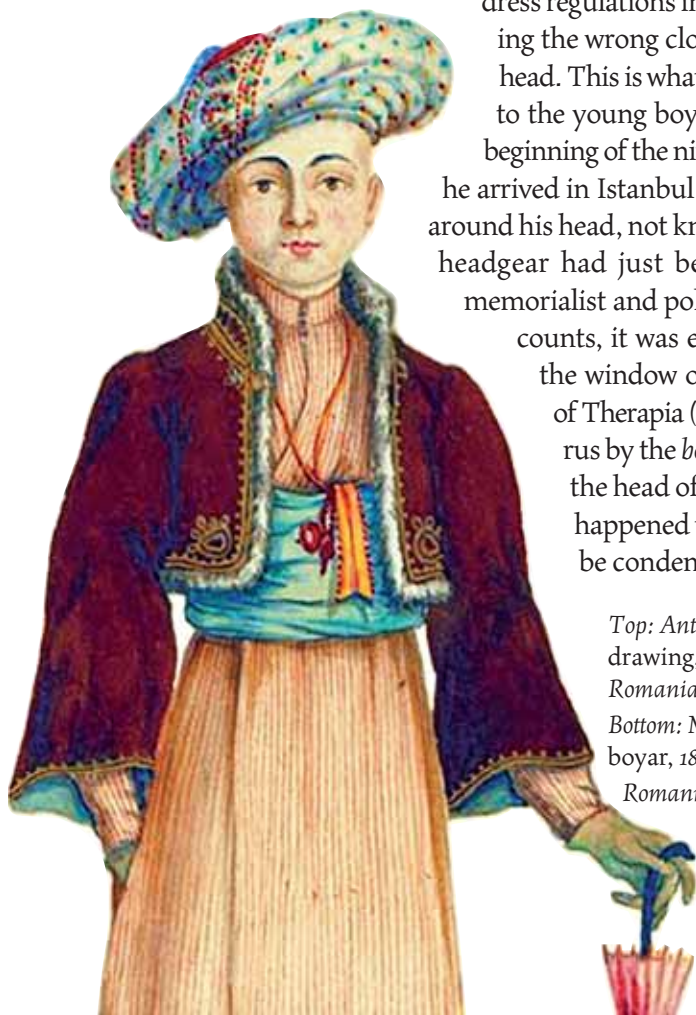
In the principalities, on the contrary, a boyar could put a *çalma* or *taklid* on his head without fearing for his life.

However, if he planned to travel in the Ottoman Empire, he would be well advised to catch up on the latest dress regulations in advance, because wearing the wrong clothes could cost him his head.

This is what happened, for instance, to the young boyar Aleco Vlahuţi at the beginning of the nineteenth century. When he arrived in Istanbul, he wore a *sarik* wound around his head, not knowing that this form of headgear had just been forbidden. As the memorialist and politician Nicolae Suţu recounts, it was enough to be spotted at the window of a house in the village of Therapia (Tarabya) on the Bosphorus by the *bostancibaşı* (police chief), the head of the palace guards, who happened to be passing, for him to be condemned to death.

Top: Anton Chladek, Boyar Portrait, drawing, undated (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

Bottom: Monogramiste RGAI, Young boyar, 1830, drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).



## *The Emperor's clothes: Ottoman kaftans in the early modern period*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK

On the second day following the arrival of Lady Maria, an agha came from the Porte to bring Voivode Constantin [Brâncoveanu] a kaftan, since the emperor dismissed vizier Mustafa Pasha from the vizierate and appointed a new vizier, Ali Pasha, who had once been a defterdar; upon his appointment to the vizierate, Ali Pasha sent the voivode a kaftan. So, the voivode, together with his entourage, set out to welcome the kaftan, as was customary, and brought it to the court, where the agha robed the voivode with the kaftan and cannons were fired, and the proper ceremonies performed,” wrote logothete Radu Greceanu.

While reading the description of the backstage politicking and elaborate ceremonies accompanying the reconfirmation of Constantin Brâncoveanu as prince of Wallachia, one detail in Radu Greceanu's official court chronicle is particularly striking. Following the Porte's decision, the voivode, one of the most successful and influential rulers of the country in the early modern period, set out with his whole court and considerable pomp to the margins of the city to welcome not a high-ranking Ottoman official, but an item of clothing: the princely kaftan. An imperial emissary, in Greceanu's account, is reduced merely to an instrument that allowed the kaftan to travel from Istanbul to Bucharest and, subsequently, onto the voivode's shoulders. It was this item of clothing from the Sublime Porte that effectively legitimised the status of Constantin Brâncoveanu, and as such constituted the centrepiece of the whole ceremony. Indeed, this anecdote emphasises the crucial role of silk kaftans as a status symbol and their high marketability as coveted luxury objects in early modern South-eastern Europe, featuring prominently in the inventories of the elites, in travellers' descriptions, court ceremonies, and visual representations of courtly life. Their significance extended well beyond their aesthetic qualities and monetary value; instead, they demonstrate the intimate connections between material culture, politics, economy, and social status in this part of the world.





Henri de Mondonville, [Dionisie Fotino], 1814, drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

Although the origins of silk cultivation and weaving lay in ancient China, its arrival in the Middle East occurred prior to the Islamic period, along the famous trade route, the Silk Road, which derived its name from the prized commodity. The exchange between the two regions intensified even further during the Mongol expansion in the thirteenth century, as the descendants of Genghis Khan imposed their rule over both China and Persia for almost a century. Silk production in the provinces south of the Caspian Sea had to meet a growing demand not only from the Muslim world, but also from Venetian and Genoese merchants eager to provide raw materials, a booming local textile industry during the fourteenth century. Although Mongol rule collapsed, the production of Persian silk continued to be the main source of the raw material that was subsequently woven into sumptuous garments. Throughout the early modern period, the raw silk passing through the ports of Aleppo and, subsequently, Izmir fuelled much of the luxury textiles industry throughout the Mediterranean and contributed to material, technical, and cultural exchanges.

The extravagance and beauty of the fabric quickly conferred on silk the aura of prestige among political and religious leaders. The Qur'an mentions that God would reward the righteous "for their steadfastness with robes of silk and the delights of Paradise (76:12)." Indeed, silk garments quickly became a feature of courtly ceremonies throughout the Mediterranean: on the one hand, they became indispensable elements of royal dress, while on the other hand, they featured prominently as diplomatic gifts and as components of anointment ceremonies, integral parts of authority both in the Christian and Muslim realms. By granting a robe of honour to a servant or a vassal, the king or the sultan not only rewarded loyal service, but also symbolically delegated part of their royal authority.

The vocabulary itself further emphasises the connection between luxury objects and authority in the medieval Islamic world. At the court of the Fatimid caliphs, who ruled North Africa from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, the Arabic term *khil'a* used for robes of honour denoted an item of clothing which had been taken off the ruler's shoulders and bestowed upon his subordinate; consequently, the dignitaries of the caliphate were often described as *ashab al-khil'a*, "the people of the *khil'a*", meaning that together with the robe they were also given the honour of



*Ceremonial kaftan attributed to Mehmed III, decorated in the saz style (Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul, inv. 13/216).*

sharing the caliphs' official powers. These medieval garments were usually embroidered with an inscription, known as *tiraz*, which commemorated the bestowal of the kaftan, thus making it both a token of power and a prestigious and valuable material gift.

As it expanded throughout South-eastern Europe, Anatolia and the Levant, the Ottoman Empire took control of the major routes of the silk trade between Persia and the Mediterranean. In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, the first Ottoman capital of Bursa became a major commercial node for commerce in silk and the most important centre of manufacturing fabrics and garments, a role it would maintain throughout much of Ottoman history. Aleppo, another important entrepôt, was conquered in 1516. By the late sixteenth century, the revenues generated by tariffs on Per-

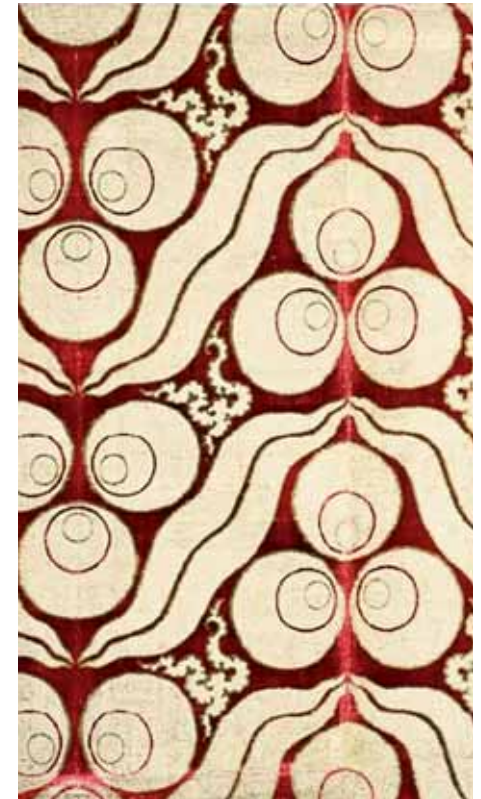
sian silk in Bursa alone amounted to the enormous sum of 6 million *akçe*.<sup>1</sup> Following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the sultans sponsored the establishment of a workshop in the palace catering to the needs of the court, which employed a hundred tailors for the production of kaftans alone in 1526. Nonetheless, silk production in the Ottoman Empire did face considerable obstacles, the most important of these being access to the raw material and the industry's dependence on silk from the Caspian region. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Persia came under the rule of the Shiite Safavid dynasty, whose rivalry with the Ottomans resulted in a series

1. *Ak*, pl. *akçe* – silver Ottoman coin.

of wars that frequently brought trade to a halt and caused shortages of silk in the Ottoman domains. Moreover, in the early 1600s, the Persian Shah Abbas I instituted a monopoly on the silk trade, transforming the much sought-after commodity into an instrument of state policy.

Demand remained high and both the court and other clients, both from within and without the empire, particularly high-end manufactures in Venice and Florence, commissioned large quantities of garments. However, in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, much of the silk industry focused on production for the Ottoman market and followed Ottoman designs to the extent that many velvets and silks originally produced in Italy are almost indistinguishable from their Ottoman counterparts except for minor technical details. While some garments or at least the fabrics they were made of originated from the Western Mediterranean, they were nonetheless an integral part of the material culture of the Ottoman elite.

With their simple cut, Ottoman clothes were meant to impress the observer by showcasing multiple layers of high-quality patterned fabrics. As European travellers were quick to observe, kaftans, the outer layers of Ottoman garb, played a central role in conveying the status of their wearer. In 1566, the Flemish noble Ogier Ghiselin De Busbecq had this to say about his hosts in Istanbul: “[they] wear long robes which reach almost to their ankles, and are not only imposing but seem to add to their stature; our dress, on the other hand, is so short and tight that it discloses the forms of the body, which



*Velvet with çintamanı motif from the mid sixteenth century (The David Collection, Copenhagen, no. 25/1962. Photo: Pernille Klemp).*





would be better hidden, and is thus anything but becoming, and besides for some reason or the other, it takes away from a man's height and gives him a stunted appearance." Busbecq appreciated the Ottoman kaftan to the extent that upon his return from the diplomatic mission to Istanbul, he commissioned a woodcut portraying him in two robes of honour that he had received at the Sublime Porte. He was not the only one to do so, and portraits in "Turkish dress" became fashionable among diplomats, merchants, and aristocrats throughout Europe. The allure of an Ottoman kaftan would also prove irresistible for members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassies, sometimes leading to awkward diplomatic situations. During an audience at the Topkapı Palace in 1700, ambassador Rafał Leszczyński's entourage began to fight among themselves in order to get the robes of honour distributed by their Ottoman hosts, prompting a harsh retort from the diplomat.

Part of the allure of the kaftans stemmed from the fabric itself. Ottoman sources provide a classification of fabrics according to their quality: *kadife*, a silk velvet fabric, was the most common and relatively inexpensive material compared with the more elaborate and brocaded *kemha* or *çatma*; at the top of the hierarchy, there was *seraser*, a *taquette* fabric woven with gold and silver threads, reserved for the most luxurious and prized textiles. Apart from the material itself, the fabrics were also classified according to the pattern employed for their decoration, thus obtaining a variety of different models. Starting with the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire established a distinct visual nomenclature that both drew on established models and codified them as part of the imperial identity that spanned across different media, such as ceramic tiles, textiles, and illuminated manuscripts. This "coding" was to a large extent politically motivated because the Ottomans' rivalry with the Safavid Persians led artists to develop their own reinterpretations of pre-existing Central Asian traditions. Thus, whereas Safavid weavers employed depictions of animals, courtly scenes, and elements from the Islamic-Persian tradition, the Ottomans opted for floral designs, repetitive patterns, and larger and bolder features. Some of the most characteristic designs involved the so-called *saz* style of tulips and carnations together with the *çintamani* pattern of Central Asian origin, both of which are prominently displayed on miniatures and fabric.

*Moldavian prince in a ceremonial costume, ca. 1808–1826 (New York Public Library).*

The fabric itself was not the only element to convey the prestige of the kaftan. The kaftan was usually lined with fur. Sable and silver fox pelts were considered the priciest and the most luxurious, while other pelts garnered lower prices. Pelts of different types were employed on a seasonal basis: sable being worn in winter and ermine in summer.

As in the case of raw silk, the trade in pelts exacerbated imperial rivalry. Sourced primarily from the Ural region and Siberia, the high-end fur trade was strictly controlled by the Russian authorities as it provided an important source of cash to the tsardom. In fact, it was largely the demand for pelts that drove the Muscovite expansion into Siberia. Given that relations between the tsars and the Sublime Porte were frequently hostile, issues of trade were inevitably tied to political concerns.

Finally, another feature provided a marker of distinction. It seems that the garments manufactured for the court were characterised by ridiculously long and relatively narrow sleeves that reached the ground and therefore could not be worn. In fact, either the kaftan rested on the shoulders or special armholes were provided below the false sleeves. One plausible theory to explain the length of the sleeves suggests that they were meant to impose proper court etiquette: protocol required one to kiss the hem of one's superior's robe as a sign of deference, and thus reaching for the end of such a long sleeve would force one to take a deep bow when paying one's respects.

The importance of kaftans in marking social identities was not just a matter of their value. They also created hierarchical relations through the act of their bestowal. Conferring robes of honour constituted an essential and recurrent part of Ottoman political culture. As mentioned before, the bestowal of a kaftan was an act laden with political importance. On the one hand, it demonstrated the sultan's hospitality and generosity; on the other, together with the robe, the servant was also granted the sultan's political authority. Following the sultan's accession to the throne, the high-ranking officials and dignitaries of the empire pledged allegiance to the sultan by kissing the hem of his robe and, in their turn, they received a robe of honour meant to create a personal bond with the ruler. These bonds would be reinforced repeatedly, on religious holidays, to celebrate victories, or to mark court events, such as the lavish festivities accompanying the circumcision of Mehmed III's sons in 1582. Although



*Anonymous, Portrait of Miho BeniĆ, dragoman from Ragusa (Dubrovnik Museum, Dubrovnik, Croatia, DUM KPM SL-182).*

these celebrations put a heavy burden on the treasury, they were largely considered necessary to maintain and reinforce imperial prestige.

According to Ottoman chronicler Mustafa Naima: As the public's gaze has become accustomed to and familiar over the course of generations with the dazzling view of court dignitaries clad in robes of honour covered with fur and equipped with gold-coated and silver-based arms and armaments, to introduce sudden change to these familiar sights and to allow courtiers to appear at court wearing course apparel and squalid attire not just demeans the wearers but brings disgrace and loss of esteem to the general populace at large.





Naima's remarks point out, however, that the luxury of the garments themselves was meant to enhance the pomp rather than to be the main feature of the ceremonial, which focused on obtaining a robe that belonged to the ruler and thus carrying his charisma. This characteristic was not exclusive to the Ottomans; in 1621, the English ambassador to the Mughal court of India received a mantle that the prince had worn earlier. Roe was reluctant to accept the gift for political reasons, fearing that by accepting it he would become the servant of the Mughal prince. Furthermore, the conferral ceremony sent subtle messages to the audience: fewer or lesser quality *hil'ats* were often interpreted as a sign of the Porte's displeasure. For instance, in 1666, Transylvanian envoy David Rozsnay remarked bitterly that his mission received just six kaftans as compared with the usual twelve. Conversely, the increase in the number of garments received was a sign of recognition; in his chronicle of Brâncoveanu's reign, Radu Greceanu proudly mentions that the voivode

*Votive painting representing biv vel armaş Cernica Ştirbei, in charge of building Hurezi monastery (1694). The official wears a richly ornamented kaftan (Hurezi Monastery, Hurezi, Vâlcea County. Photo: Lidia Cotovanu).*

received twelve kaftans at the beginning of his reign and as many as thirty-six toward the end of his reign.

The symbolic and political meaning embedded in the garments was easily recognizable by contemporaries and, despite or because of their allure, brought concerns regarding the consequences of the bond with the sultan that the *hil'ats* established. This concern is clearly seen in the Republic of Dubrovnik (Ragusa), whose legislation established strict limits regarding the use and ownership of *hil'ats*. A city-republic based on the principle of collective rule by the local patricians, Dubrovnik was a tributary of the Sublime Porte and paid an annual *harac* to the sultan, but at the same time tried hard to keep the Ottoman authorities at arm's length from its domestic affairs and its diplomatic contacts with Christian States. This balancing act played out on a sartorial level as well: the envoys delivering the tribute to the Porte were presented with robes of honour, which they accepted as gifts on behalf of the Republic, but they were not allowed to wear or display any gifts from the sultan or from other imperial officials. Instead, upon their return to Ragusa, they were to deposit the kaftans in the city treasury, thus making them communal property and dissolving any political ties between an individual member of the nobility and the Sublime Porte. This sartorial separation is also visible in the portraiture of Ragusan patricians: in spite of the fact that many members of the elite were sent to the imperial court as diplomats, the garments they donned were indelibly tied to the dress culture of the commune, with the exception of dragoman Miho Beniċ, whose status as the interpreter of the republic meant he derived his identity from navigating both cultural spheres.

Although in a somewhat similar position to the Ragusan patricians, the Moldavian and Wallachian elites had no such qualms regarding the adoption of Ottoman robes of honour and the underlying political implications. On the contrary, they eagerly embraced kaftans as symbols of power, status, and association with the Ottoman Porte. Radu Greceanu's official chronicle of Constantin Brâncoveanu's reign records meticulously the number of kaftans received from the Sublime Porte, with each bestowal methodically noted. *Condica lui Gheorgachi*, written in the mid-eighteenth century, shows similar diligence in describing the ceremonies of the voivode's appointment. Gheorgachi insists on the crucial role of the kaftans not so much as material objects of great value, but primarily as tokens of political authority and

sultanic charisma. In their turn, the voivodes developed their own ritual of conferring kaftans on local boyars, both as a reward for loyal service and as a reaffirmation of the bond that existed between the voivode and the local elite. Boyars themselves recognised the importance of kaftans, as evidenced by the careful representation of robes of honour on votive paintings in Moldavian and Wallachian churches and monasteries. The extent to which the garment itself became entwined with the structures of power is demonstrated by the frequent use of the term *a caftani* (to bestow a kaftan) as a synonym for granting official positions and boyar status, in a striking parallel with the vocabulary employed in the Islamic world since the Middle Ages.

In creating the second “circuit” of kaftan bestowal, the voivodes did not differ that much from the Ottoman officials, who similarly used gifts received from the sultan or acquired on the market to reinforce ties with their subjects. The ornamental motifs on kaftans such as the one shown above, belonging to Cernica Știrbei, former grand *armaș*, help us to identify them as products of Ottoman origin. The Porte often granted them to princes and boyars. For example, according to chronicler Radu Greceanu, in 1699, Osman ağa, on a mission to Constantin Brâncoveanu’s court, brought kaftans for the prince and for twenty-four of the Wallachian boyars. A few years later, in 1703, thirty boyars were granted kaftans. Thus, these gifts reproduced the sultan’s loyalty model and served another practical goal: the allocation of wealth. Unlike medieval Islamic garments, the Ottoman robes of honour lacked inscriptions commemorating the occasion on which they were bestowed, and, as such, they could easily be sold. Their limited numbers and high monetary value made them a perfect way to store wealth, particularly important within the Ottoman context. Although often extremely wealthy, Ottoman officials led insecure lives since, as subjects of the sultan, their property could be seized by the treasury at any moment through the procedure of *müsadere*. The same applied to Moldavian and Wallachian voivodes and several registers document the property of Constantin Brâncoveanu confiscated following his execution in Istanbul in 1714. With the risk of confiscation looming large over their heads, dignitaries could keep part of their wealth by leaving expensive fabrics and other objects of value in the care of their trusted subjects. These fabrics could store considerable wealth: the price of *seraser* was ten to twenty times the

Sticharion donated to Solca monastery by Ștefan Tomșa II, prince of Moldavia (Museum of Sucevița Monastery. Photo: Maria-Magdalena Székely).



value of high-quality European silks in the seventeenth century and some kaftans garnered as much as 8,000 *akçe*. During a career at the top of the Ottoman political hierarchy, a dignitary would receive numerous kaftans and was thus able to amass a significant fortune thanks to the expensive fabrics he possessed.

In addition to their political significance and monetary value, kaftans also served an important spiritual purpose. Somewhat ironically, beyond the walls of the Topkapı Palace, the majority of early modern kaftans that survive today were preserved in the sacristies of both Catholic and Orthodox Churches, transformed into liturgical garments and other ecclesiastical materials. This seemingly unlikely association between Christian liturgy and Ottoman silk production had several aspects. The Orthodox Church alone was one of the largest clients of the Ottoman silk manufactures in Bursa, with part of the production geared specifically for ecclesiastical use. Not only are these artifacts prominent in Christian imagery of the Byzantine tradition, but they also feature elements of Ottoman aesthetic, especially in the way themes are depicted on fabric. Their design shifted from a large central pattern, a dominant characteristic of the pre-Ottoman period, to repetitive roundels, reflecting the carnations and flowers of the secular Ottoman textiles. There were also fabrics without figurative patterns, similar to consumer materials. This fact has led to considerable confusion among modern scholars. The use of materials with oriental motifs shows us that Orthodox liturgical vestments were influenced by the visual codes of Ottoman contemporaries. The aniconic silk garments woven in Italian workshops have misled many specialists; some are on display in the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens



as “Oriental fabrics”, although they came from the West and were used in officiating the Orthodox liturgy.

Some of the garments preserved in church sacristies, both Orthodox and Catholic, began their life as secular kaftans, in some instances bestowed by the sultan, before being recut and transformed into liturgical vestments. This was the practice in Ragusa, as mentioned before, where the kaftans brought in by the ambassadors from the Sublime Porte were kept in the city’s treasury, with some of them being used in the church. Similarly, the small-town port of Perast contains an impressive collection of such garments, preserved and displayed in Saint Nicholas’s Church.

Similar kaftan “recycling” also took place in the Romanian lands, even though in many cases there are no written sources to elucidate the course of an item of clothing. Tracing the circulation of these pieces is hampered by the constant intersection of the commercial space with that the sultan’s court and, as art historians have found out, by stylistic interferences. Nonetheless, circumstantial evidence suggests that some of the pieces kept in church sacristies were cut from kaftans granted by the Porte. In 1603, for instance, boyar Nestor Ureche donated to Secu Monastery a vestment made of *kemha*, embroidered with the symbol of an eight-pointed star. Such decoration is extremely rare among the Ottoman fabrics preserved to this day. In addition to this one, three more kaftans bearing this symbol survive, and they all are from the sultan’s court: one is housed in the treasury of the Topkapı Palace and two, recovered from the graves of sultan Mehmed III’s brothers, whom he murdered in 1595, are to be found in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Considering the rarity of such an ornament and that the other pieces are undoubtedly related to the sultan’s court, it is almost certain that the kaftan donated to Secu Monastery was granted to the boyar by the Porte, either directly or with the help of the prince.

Much more difficult to establish is the exact origin of the second interesting liturgical garment from the beginning of the seventeenth century: a *sticharion*, originally donated by the Moldavian voivode Ștefan Tomșa II to the church he founded in Solca (1614), is a “recycled” garment composed of two different Ottoman silk kaftans. If their Ottoman origin is certain, it is unfortunately impossible to reconstruct how they came into the prince’s possession. It is important to note that neither of the original kaftans that

made up the garment appear to have been intended for church use. With a multitude of floral motifs and no Christian elements (a seraphim-shaped medallion and a piece of fabric with Christian motifs were sewn on later, when the two kaftans were transformed into a liturgical garment), the original material must have been intended for secular garments, resembling those produced for the Ottoman elite, especially for the sultan’s court.

Specialising in Orthodox and Ottoman art respectively, Nikolaos Vryzidis and Nurhan Atasoy show that such “recycling” of luxury secular clothing of Ottoman or even Safavid origin was not uncommon throughout the seventeenth century. On the contrary, their research suggests that the prelates of the Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire shared the aesthetic preferences of the Muslim elite. Moreover, as Nikolaos Vryzidis demonstrates, such fabrics were present in the Ottoman Empire and were integrated into the circuit of gifts offered by the sultan. The Orthodox hierarchs also adopted such garments, which emphasised the proximity of the Porte and today can be found in the monastic treasures of Mount Athos and in numerous museum collections. Donations to monasteries were not only a sign of piety but also a status marker: by providing lavish garments to the churches they founded, the donors showed also their social and political standing, now embedded in the fabric. Of course, the Christian motifs on silk fabrics were not replaced by aniconic motifs but research on the stylistic evolution of this period shows that church fabrics with Christian motifs were under the strong stylistic influence of Ottoman models. In Romanian historiography, the most notable Ottoman influences in the principalities are associated with the Phanariot period. However, even before this period, local princes, boyars, and clerics, considering themselves part of the elites of the Ottoman Empire, had adopted numerous Ottoman elements, as had Orthodox elites south of the Danube.

Throughout the early modern period, Ottoman silk kaftans played a crucial role, bringing together networks of global trade, imperial rivalry, social status, political authority and economic wealth. Taken together, they provided not only aesthetic pleasure, but also a sense of political power, prestige, and piety, which evoked the image of the imperial court and the Ottoman elite. Their widespread allure cannot be explained exclusively through their function as markers of wealth and opulence. Instead, their importance stemmed from the fact that they tied together many different literal and abstract threads and meanings which never failed to impress.

*Sumptuary laws in Transylvania  
between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

**S**umptuary laws derive their name from the Latin “*sumptus, -us*” – expense; the so-called sumptuary regulations are therefore meant to control and limit expenses, waste, and excess. In Medieval Europe, the first sumptuary laws had been passed during the twelfth century in Italian cities such as Bergamo, Milan, and Florence, closely followed by rules regarding clothing extravagance and expenses in large German cities such as Nuremberg or Augsburg. Sumptuary legislation, passed by monarchs or city councils, included edicts covering all situations in which subjects were tempted to overspend clothing, celebrations, weddings and funerals. Consequently, garments had to reflect the status of each person and endorse representations of social order in each community. However, this type of social control regulating the subjects’ private life did not manifest itself at the same time in different European societies. From the eighteenth century, in Western Europe sumptuary legislation became increasingly rare, focused exclusively on clothing, with the aim to reinforce social hierarchy through the fabrics and accessories each social group was allowed to wear, while similar legislation in Eastern Europe was only then beginning to limit spending and to regulate clothing.

The differences between the advanced political structures of important European cities and the modest urban institutions found throughout the various regions of East Central Europe are evident regarding police ordinances and sumptuary laws. In Transylvania, the first sumptuary laws were passed during the sixteenth century by the cities of Bistrița and Sibiu and by the synod of the Lutheran Church, established after 1570. This evolution is concomitant to that of small German towns. The peak of sumptuary legislation was reached during the eighteenth century when other small Saxon towns, such as Orăștie, adopted their own sumptuary laws.

In chronological order, Bistrița’s city council was the first to pass legislation to curb debauchery and to limit excessive spending for engagement parties, weddings, and christenings. In 1532, wedding celebrations were



*Set of noble ornaments belonging to Gabriel Báthory, prince of Transylvania, 1608–1613  
(National Museum of History, Romania, inv. no. 72720).*



limited to one day, instead of three, and in 1539, the time for entertaining guests was further reduced to about half a day, from morning to early afternoon. In Sibiu, the first sumptuary law was passed in 1547; unfortunately, the text of the law is lost, but archive records suggest it prohibited the performance of music during wedding celebrations. In 1565, the town council passed legislation stipulating how many tables and how many meal courses craftsmen and apprentices were allowed to provide at events related to their trade, as well as the number of guests they could invite at a wedding in the city: only as many as could sit at twenty tables.



Female waistcoat, made of brocade with plant motifs, decorated with metallic thread lace, eighteenth century (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M1198/3763).

In the following century, Transylvanian sumptuary laws focused on distinct matters, as reflected by their titles in German, the administrative language of Saxon towns: *Kleiderordnungen* – clothing regulations, *Hochzeit-slimitationen* – wedding rules – *Leichenordnungen* – funeral ordinances. This is a clear sign of the political advancement of the city councils and of the increased specialization of legal categories. Inspired without a doubt by similar regulations in the Holy Roman Empire and in the Habsburg Empire, nevertheless these laws were adapted to meet the specific needs of each town. The reasons that explain the existence of sumptuary laws in certain Transylvanian towns, namely in the great Saxon towns and in Cluj, are difficult to discern. The above-mentioned cultural transfer helped these practices to reach the principality of Transylvania, but once there, they found fertile ground on which to grow. Town

councils played an important role in disciplining and controlling the populace. Furthermore, their striving for good governance, the so-called *gute Policy*, was politically and administratively warranted. Thus, sumptuary laws as *Policeyordnungen* became an essential political tool of urban authorities and helped reinforce their paternal influence over city dwellers.

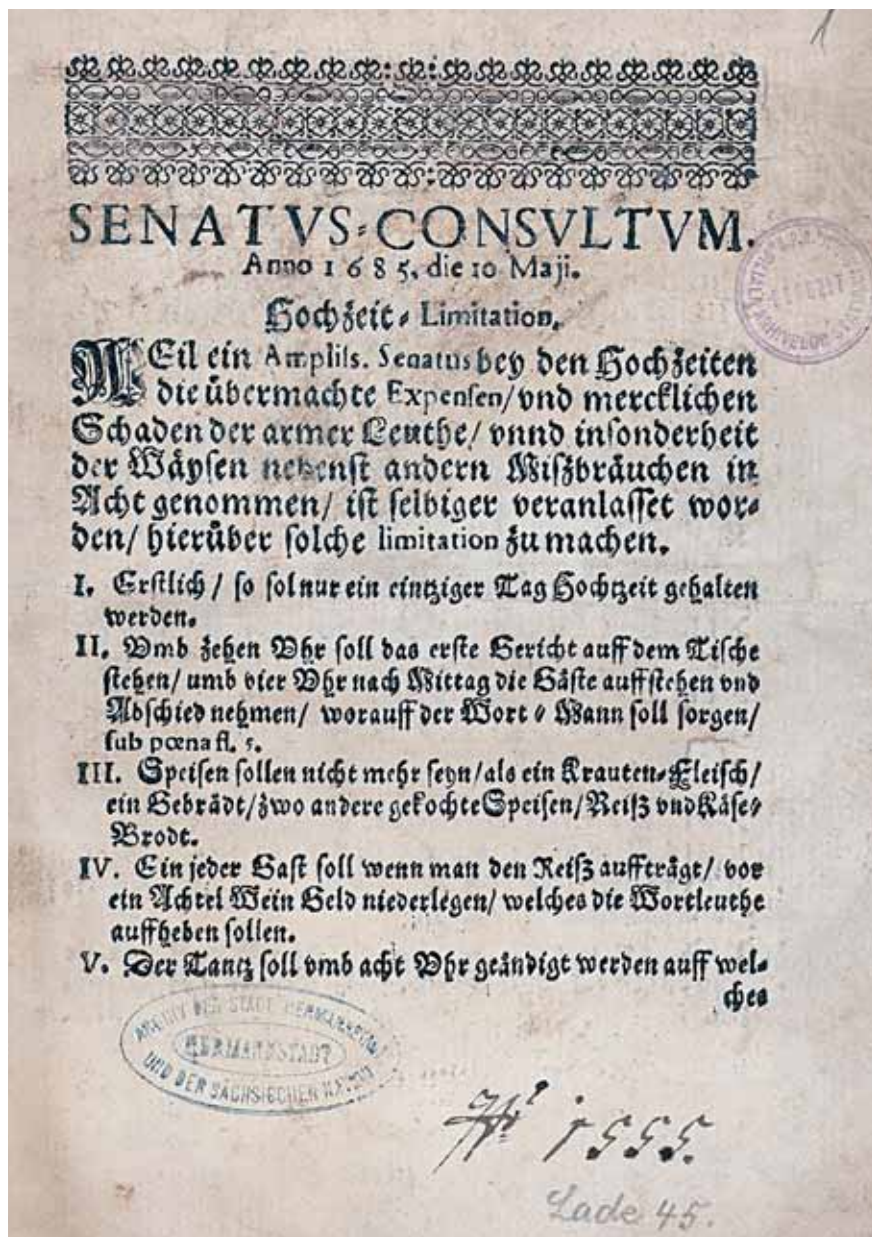
Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the issuing of sumptuary laws also came to an end in Transylvania, the greatest number of regulations of this kind had been passed by the town councils of Sibiu (11) and Braşov (8). In fact, in Braşov the first surviving regulation of this nature dates from 1652, when the council of Braşov passed an edict to observe Sunday as the day of the Lord and to limit wedding excesses. The next ruling in Braşov was passed in 1679, but we only know about it from a similar document from 1693. Called *Polizeyordnung* or *renouncing the luxury of clothing*, the law mentioned the great fire of 1689 and urged the populace to be more temperate and less reckless in order to appease the wrath of God. Similarly to many sumptuary laws, this one too blended Christian beliefs with administrative scolding in an effort to instil self-restraint and more care for family life into citizens.

Most sumptuary laws were passed during the eighteenth century, when the influence of policing legislation coming from the Viennese court was evident. Transylvania became a principality within the Habsburg Empire in 1699 and was, therefore, under the judicial jurisdiction of

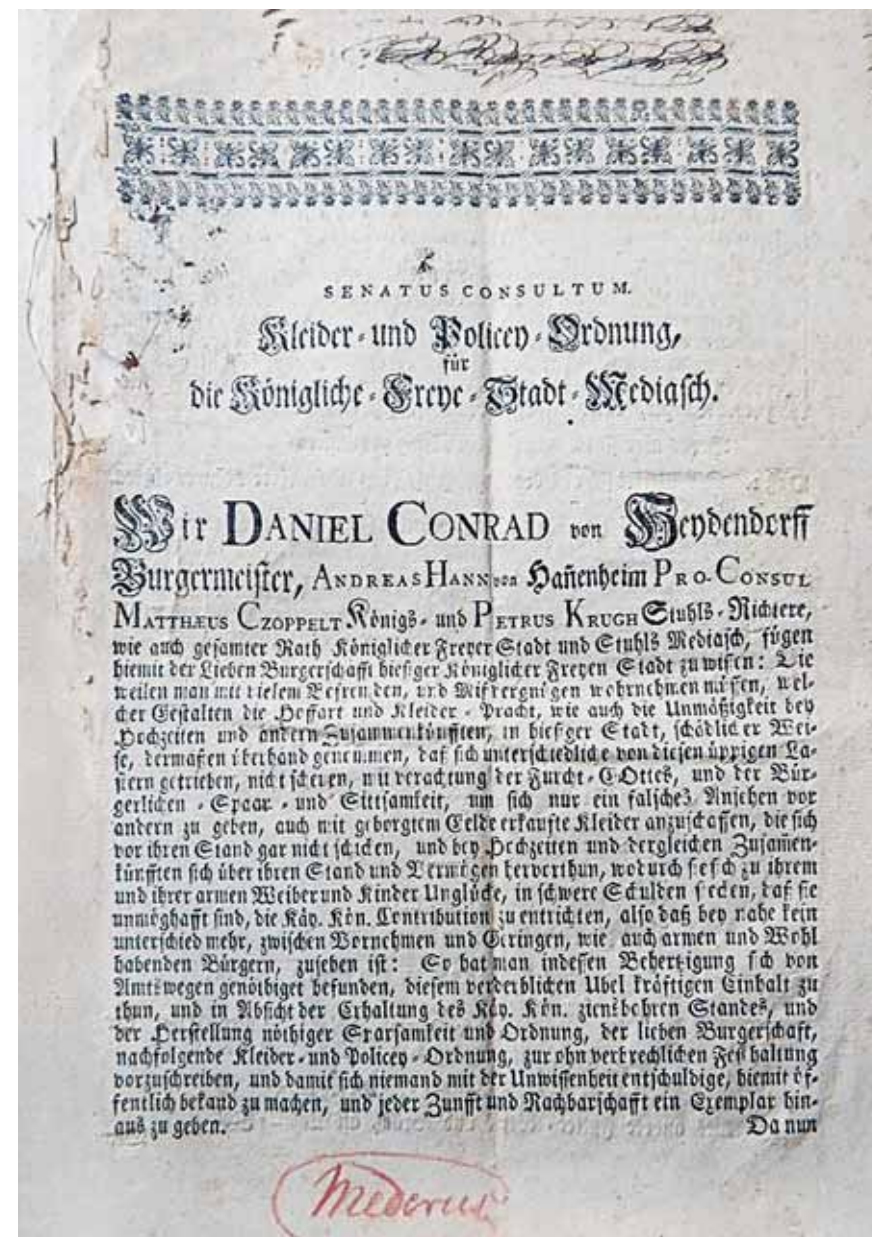


Velvet dolman that belonged to György Bánffy, the first governor of Transylvania. 1691–1708 (National Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).





Sibiu city regulations, 1685 (Romanian National Archives, Sibiu County, leaflet).



Mediaș sumptuary law, 1767 (Romanian National Archives, Sibiu County).





Up: Gold earrings with pearls and enamel, Transylvanian workshop, seventeenth century (National Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).

Bottom: Bonnet that belonged to Zsófia Kendi, the wife of the Transylvanian nobleman Menyhért Bogáthi, sixteenth century (National Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).



Vienna. In addition to general sumptuary laws, towns enacted quite a lot of their own regulations. These were more complex than those from previous decades and had a much more coherent approach towards social order.

These regulations were disseminated through diverse methods: they were read out in church,

as the Braşov law from 1693 stipulated, they were presented during guild or neighbourhood meetings, or they were printed on leaflets (apparently, for the first time in 1685 in Sibiu).

The 1696 Sibiu neighbourhood regulations had been printed “to inform the honourable community of citizens.” The 1767 Medias sumptuary law warned that everyone was subject to the stipulated fines and that “no one should blame ignorance” because each guild and neighbourhood had received printed copies of the regulations. In turn, heads of families were held responsible for everybody living in their household: not only family members but also apprentices, servants, and maids.

According to regulations passed in 1756 by the town council of Rupea for all the villages under its jurisdiction, garments already in the possession of people, but banned by the sumptuary law, must either be removed right away or could be worn until they became rags.



Top: Jewellery box, 1687 (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M945/9309).

Bottom: Fan decorated with scenes from social life (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M1135/9422).

All these regulations share a common set of concerns and objectives. Named by its Latin name (*luxus*), the concept of luxury associated with financial profligacy is mentioned for the first time in 1593 in a sumptuary law from Cluj. The city council, determined to curtail waste, decided that those who dressed above their rank (“above their poverty”) by wearing expensive silk clothes and adornments such as beads and pearls should pay double taxes to the city coffers. Furthermore, at the end of the seventeenth century, the regulations of the Lutheran Church made it clear that the display of luxury displayed by pastors was considered at odds with their purpose, which was to be an example to the community. Pastors’ wives, in particular, also had to wear modest clothes.







*Saxon belt, Transylvanian workshop (Braşov), eighteenth century (National Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).*

For public servants, the rhetoric of entitlement had been inscribed in the 1696 regulation of the Sibiu council: those whose fathers and grandfathers had been public officials were considered “patricians” and, as such, they were allowed to wear hats made out of sable fur, English cloth, and blue silk and they were permitted to ride in a four-horse carriage. The Sibiu 1752 sumptuary law placed the royal judge and the mayor in the upper class; in fact, those who held these positions were the highest representatives of the entire Transylvanian Saxon nation and therefore they enjoyed a deep-rooted prestige. The law recognised the importance of the two high-ranking officials as role models and examples for the entire community, did not impose any clothing restrictions on them, and allowed for their better judgment and goodwill to decide how they presented themselves in public. The mayor and other the notable figures of Sighişoara (1755) benefited from the same permissive attitude of the law, which stipulated that they must distinguish themselves from other inhabitants but warned against wearing strident or inappropriate clothing.

The sumptuary law of Mediaş from 1767 made the best argument concerning the direct relationship between economic ruin, the loss of the soul, and the vanity of showing off to the world on account of reckless spending: “we must note with great displeasure the damaging way in which pride and luxury in clothing have become dominant in our city, as well as the lack of restraint and excess at weddings and other parties, so that some are no longer afraid to show off, despising God Almighty and mocking temperance and good manners, only to give others a false impression by buying clothes with borrowed money, which are not commensurate with their situation, and at weddings and other



*Anonymous, Portrait of Anna Maria Closius, (1758), oil on canvas (mounted on plywood). The portrait represents the wife of the Braşov doctor Stephan Closius in expensive clothes, specific to the Saxon patricians (Braşov Art Museum, inv. no. 3538).*









Anonymous, Portrait of Georg Rhetter (1758), oil on canvas (Braşov Art Museum, inv. no. 2511).

meetings they present themselves above their condition and wealth, bringing their poor wives and children into heavy debt, so that they cannot pay their taxes.”

The motivation of the law is, therefore, a mixture of paternal and moralising qualms, trying to warn citizens about the consequences of vanity. Vanity, a Christian sin, causes personal and public bankruptcy, but it also overturns order and social hierarchy, so that “there is almost no difference between the rich and the poor.” We should also note that in all the Transylvanian sumptuary laws, it is men who ruin their families with immeasurable pride and vanity, while women are never the cause of social dissonance. It goes without saying that wives were under the moral control of their husbands and, at least from a discursive point of view, they were without decision-making power and agency. Nonetheless, in a regulation regarding loose women from 1697, the Sibiu council instructed the neighbourhood heads to be vigilant and to force prostitutes to wear red clothes and prevent them from covering their heads with white scarves “in order to be distinguished from honest ladies.”

However, the authorities did not only watch over public dress, but also tried to enter the private sphere of families. The above mentioned 1696 Sibiu regulation detailed the clothing women were allowed to wear around the oven: the wives of outstanding citizens were permitted to have aprons made of dyed cloth (*serge*), while common women could wear only linen aprons.

Luxury in clothing has a very precise meaning and each social group has its own type of luxury. The fabrics and textiles from which the clothes were made conveyed the different types of luxury, together with other features, such as size, the width of the ribbons for *Borten* or the height of the velvet toque hats (cylinders) specific to the Saxon dress. An innovation of the later sumptuary laws, inspired by the laws of the Habsburg Empire, was the division of citizens into well-defined categories or social classes based on similar professions and comparable income. Thus, the 1752 sumptuary law of Sibiu created nine classes of city-dwellers, that of Sighişoara, passed in 1755, set up five classes with several subcategories, while that of Mediaş from 1767 instituted five classes, but with a reversed hierarchy so that the poor were in the first class. Last but not least, the 1780 Bistriţa sumptuary law also established five classes of citizens.



Notabilities from the upper classes, which included elected officials, educated professionals such as notaries, doctors, lawyers, and pharmacists, could wear sable fur hats and coats with wide sable fur hems, along with other materials such as velvet, lace, and heavy silk. These signs of social distinction were forbidden to those from the lower classes, who earned their living by physical labour. In fact, they were allowed to wear fox fur and cheap homemade fabrics. Furthermore, only the wealthy could wear silk girdles and tassels, together with boots and high-heeled shoes, which appeared during the eighteenth century.

Historians have pointed out that sumptuary laws, especially those of later periods, had an economic component that should not be neglected, as they were intended to limit imports of expensive fabrics and objects and to stimulate the local textile production. In a similar vein, prior to the upcoming annual fair, in the law of 1754, officials from Braşov advised their “beloved townspeople” not to buy luxury nor opulent goods, such as velvet, gold and silver threads, fox furs or any other imported products.

### *Sumptuary laws in Moldavia and Wallachia*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

Charles-Marie d'Irrumberry comte de Salaberry travelled to Istanbul in 1796 and made a long stop in Bucharest. He expressed his amazement at the “*opulent luxe*” of the Wallachian boyars dressed up in “Indian fabrics, shawls and sable furs.” The opulent luxury of the boyars was not only a recurrent theme in the eye-witness accounts of the period. It was also a phenomenon that the Phanariot rulers had to address, and they did this in a number of ways. Some Phanariot rulers supported the boyar’s appetite for luxury. The chronicler Ion Neculce (1672–1745), a wealthy boyar of early eighteenth-century Moldavia, wrote that the Phanariot prince Grigore Ghica (r. 1726–1733) “desired” that the court of Iași “be all dressed up.”<sup>1</sup> He asked the boyars, regardless of their material condition, to put on

1. He ruled a number of times: in Moldavia 1726–1733, 1735–1739, 1739–1741, 1747–1748; in Wallachia 1733–1735, 1748–1752.

rich garments when they made an appearance at court. The golden overcoat made of silk embroidered with silver thread and gilded silver, accompanied by a wide-brimmed hat, of the same fabric and with the same colours, bore witness to the refinement and wealth of the established boyars. Discovered at Saint Sava Monastery in Iași, these garments were either donated to be used by monks or simply given for preservation.

At the opposite extreme was Prince Constantine Mavrocordat, who ruled several times over both Wallachia and Moldavia between 1726 and 1752. A “rational” erudite, this ruler promoted moderation in all things. His own public appearances were lessons in modesty and simplicity. He also adopted an austere lifestyle: “He would get up early in the morning at five o’clock and would stand in the church with great recollection and piety, together with all the boyars and princely servants who dwelled at the princely court.” Mavrocordat despised luxury and “the pleasures and pastimes of life,” banning music from the princely court and adopting fasting, prayer, and humility, imposing an example that could not be ignored. Indeed, we are told that the boyars felt they had to remodel their public appearances according to the princely model: “Many of the great boyars were obliged to imitate the harsh fasts that he kept,” to give up tobacco, and “to keep a rein on their bodily desires”, wrote the chronicler of the time.

However, the Phanariot rulers were often reluctant to curb the luxury and opulence of the local elites, because of their short reigns of only three years at a time and the difficulty of implementing regulations regarding boyar lifestyle. For instance, Prince Grigore Alexandru Ghica (r. 1777–1782) of Moldavia, reportedly “considered giving the command not to wear all sorts of garments,” but did not have the courage to issue such a law, because “it might be that many [boyars] would not take this command into account.” He knew that he would have to impose any such measure by force and did not dare to punish the all-powerful boyars. Instead, in order to not “look bad before the common people,” he followed the model of Prince Constantine Mavrocordat. The chronicler of the time writes: “His Highness made for himself alone a suit of clothes of felt, *libade* and *cübbe*, and one day, without announcement, he came out dressed in them to the divan.” Faced with the modest and frugal image proposed by the ruler, the boyars could not but conform, at least when they were guests at the princely

court: “Seeing this, the native boyars began also to make themselves *libades* and *cübbes* of felt.” Still, the felt coats were probably cast aside as soon as Prince Grigore Alexandru Ghica lost his throne and another prince, much more indulgent in matters of clothing, was installed.



*Conteș of silk embroidered with silver and gilded silver threads, seventeenth century. (Museum of the History of Moldavia, Iași, inv. no. 16155).*

These examples underline how fragile power relations between the native elite and the Phanariot rulers were.

Until around the middle of the eighteenth century, the boyars’ social status was based on origins: their belonging to ancient families enabled them to rise to the top of the social hierarchy, an ascent that had to be reinforced by the visible markers of social identity: clothing, carriages, country houses, and heraldic insignia. But with the arrival of a “Phanariot” or “Greek” elite in the entourage of the Phanariot rulers, social mobility trumped distinguished origins, and the native Moldavian and Wallachian boyars found themselves in fierce competition for the most prestigious positions. Deprived of direct access to high office, they invested in a “culture of appearances” (Daniel Roche) that proved ruinous to all sides. Moreover, a new social group emerged and made its appearance on this stage: the merchants who had enriched themselves from trade in luxury products. Profiting from this fluid redefinition of social groups, some of them bought ranks and offices,

activated skilful matrimonial strategies, and entered the privileged group of the great boyars.

It is in this context that sumptuary laws appeared in the principalities. They testify to the Phanariot rulers’ efforts to control state and society and regulate social mobility within the elite, whose composition changed with every change on the throne every few years. Sartorial regulations existed in many places and were a common means by which authorities tried to control the wealth of the elite and to regulate social distinction. These laws therefore tell us about the competition between rulers, different members of the elite, and those who were trying to enter these privileged circles. But they do not only “narrate the social order,” (Claire Sponsler) they also highlight the need to affirm power relations through consumption and social practices.

In most parts of Western Europe, sartorial regulations became sporadic in the eighteenth century. In the Ottoman Empire, such regulations appeared in the context of an increased social mobility, a “social opening,” (Donald Quataert) and continued to exist until the late in the nineteenth century. In the Danubian Principalities, clothing laws were promulgated only during a short period, belated in relation to Western Europe but not to the Ottoman Empire: the first sumptuary law dates from 1778, the last one from 1815.

The Romanian clothing laws were inspired by the Ottoman model. The Phanariot princes were, as high officials in the Ottoman administrative



*Brimless silk hat, with wide cap, embroidered with silver and gilded silver threads, with tassel, seventeenth century (Museum of the History of Moldavia, Iași, inv. no. 16156).*



system, familiar with such texts. And also the boyars travelled often enough to the empire's main cities to know about Ottoman sartorial regulations. The Wallachian high official and diplomatic agent Ianache Văcărescu (1740–1797) writes in his *History of the Most Powerful Ottoman Empire* about the reforms of the sultan of his time, Sultan Mustafa III (r. 1757–1773): “He changed the debauched clothes both of the subjects (*re'ayas*), with the command that all should wear black clothes in Istanbul and elsewhere, excepting only Vlaho-Moldavia, and of the Turks, both with a command to wear simple clothes and by example, for the Emperor himself wore them.” The author underlines that while these dress regulations did not apply in the territory of the tributary principalities, they still served the Phanariot ruler Constantin Moruzzi (r. 1777–1782) as an example and made him appear in public in “plain clothes.”

The first sumptuary law in the principalities was issued in 1778 by Prince Constantin Moruzzi, but it was crafted by the head of the Orthodox Church in Moldavia, Metropolitan Gavril Kalimaki, and includes the signature of Patriarch Avram of Jerusalem, as well as a curse on all the men and women who would not submit to the command of these political and religious authorities. The law did not sanction a particular fashion or colour, but rather certain rich fabrics and ornaments, which added value to male and female garments: “taffeta, *cumaş* (from Turkish *kumaş*, silk fabric), *ghermeşut* from India, Şam [Damascus], Țarigrad [Istanbul], or Europe woven with wire (*fir*), braid (*peteală*), gold and silver thread (*sırma*), or flowers of silk.” These ornaments were all forbidden. Clothes had to be “plain,” made of fabrics without other threads added and without adornments, braid, or lace. However, as mentioned above, cashmere shawls and *giars* did not come under the interdiction with the explanation that they protected from the cold. And also, the valuable kaftans used by rulers to invest new officials, those offered to brides, and other textiles used at weddings were not sanctioned.

The text mentions economic and moral concerns as the motives behind the legislation. This line of argumentation reappears in later sumptuary laws, for instance, one promulgated in 1794, which prohibited the import of expensive fabrics, and one promulgated in 1796, which forbade the import of carriages to support local manufacturers. The 1778 law incriminated

“the grand houses of the great boyars,” who went into debt “out of pride,” wasting their fortunes on the “vanity” of appearances. They ruined the country and corrupted the moral fabric of society. The text argues that banning the abovementioned fabrics and ornaments was necessary on the grounds of their precarious nature: brought from far off and purchased with extraordinary financial efforts, these clothes were kept in conditions where they deteriorated quickly, due to the “smoke” in the boyar houses or because they were eaten by moths during the long winters. Boyar houses were heated in the winter with stoves that produced thick smoke, in rooms that were not well ventilated. Clothes and other items were kept in chests and coffer, sprinkled with tobacco leaves or lavender flowers to protect them from moths.

Clothes did not store wealth nor did they become a secure capital for the family estate or part of the inheritance, which was key to the family's survival. If the boyars wanted adornments, the text argues, they should adorn themselves with jewellery and other “items of gold,” that is, “things that do not spoil” and “are an enduring fortune, which is passed down to the sons of sons.” Indeed, the last wills of contemporaries show that clothes mostly vanished while jewellery survived. The will of Maria Văcărescu, for instance, the divorced wife of grand *ban* Nicolae Brâncoveanu, notes that many of the “fabrics” she had received as dowry have been “lost,” while a considerable amount of her jewellery passed to her heirs. Such items of gold, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, or emeralds could indeed be used like a currency to purchase estates, deposited as security, or offered as gifts.

### *Ottoman costume and the moral ruin of society*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**S**tigmatised as a “source of evil,” as Rousseau wrote in his *Discourses*, luxury proves indispensable in building a social identity. Still, “prestige expenses” (Norbert Elias) were unavoidable for maintaining rank, and the 1778 Moldavian sumptuary law explicitly recognised this need for luxury in underlining and displaying rank, office, and social



status in public. The law targeted the “new men”, those rich merchants who bought themselves a place in the social hierarchy with the display of opulent luxury, and acknowledged that the boyars generally believed they were “doing their duty” when they “adorn[ed] themselves with valuable and expensive clothes” and ruined themselves in “glittering ornaments” out of “the love of honour,” as Metropolitan Gavril Kalimaki worded his sumptuary law. Therefore, the text argues, such extravagant expenses should be incurred only by those who can afford them: “those who are lacking and do not have the means, are not obliged to become indebted beyond what is permissible for clothes, which it would be fitting for them to have in common with those of their own sort.”

It is uncertain to what extent these sumptuary laws

“The devil with an umbrella” (detail), fresco from Valea monastery, Argeş County (Photo: Lidia Cotovanu).

were followed and enforced by authorities. This is a typical problem in the study of legal texts, which has been discussed with regard to other regions. Apparently, Prince Constantin Moruzzi’s sumptuary law of 1778 was immediately made light of. After the text was read aloud to the public in the main square, to the sound of drums, pamphlets spread in the alleyways of Iaşi mocking the ruler’s efforts: “Constantin *Vodă* Morouzi / Being a very grumpy man / Gave an order firmly / That all should wear homespun / Oh, my poor *cübbe* / With *artaname*<sup>1</sup> and heavy / I had lined it with sable fur / To wear it at Christmas / But now woe is me / I’ll never put it on again.”

Indeed, it seems as if the law could not temper the boyars’ desire for social recognition. They seem to have continued playing out their prestige on the public stage by luxury consumption. For instance, in the same year the law was promulgated, 1778, several supposedly forbidden items appear among the dowry received by Măriuța Cantacuzino-Deleanu, the daughter of the great boyar and former grand *spătar* Iordache Cantacuzino, on her marriage to the former grand *agă* Constantine Ghica: “a *cübbe* of *altân* [felt cloth with gold thread], a dress, and an *anteri*, all of them similarly furred: with a lining and edging of sable and with heavy laces.” The dowry list includes also other items of clothing as well and other “items of gold,” and the wedding itself was held with great pomp at the country house of Deleni, outside of Iaşi.

The materials and fabrics condemned by the Moldavian Metropolitan appear prominently among the purchases of the boyars. On 13 September 1775, a certain Catrina (boyaress or retailer, her identity is not clear) placed in three chests a series of garments and other fabrics that would be useful in any house. Catrina’s chests were full to the brim with expensive fabrics and luxury garments, decorated with goldwork and furs: “1 *cübbe* of *geremsüd* fur-lined with sable; 1 *cübbe* of *atlas* in *şetrance*<sup>2</sup>, fur-lined with mink; 2 *cübbes* of *geremsüd*, with flowers of goldwork, fur-lined with ermine; 1 dress of *geremsüd* of India, with flowers of goldwork with silk; 1 dress of *atlas*, in *şetrance* with *anteri*; 1 dress of *geremsüd*, with flowers of goldwork,

1. Probably *altâl*, *altânbaş*, a felt cloth woven with gold thread.

2. *Satrance* = the game of chess, whence the use of the name for fabric with a pattern in the form of a chessboard.



## Recommended reading

with *anteri*; 1 white dress of *geremsüd*, with flowers of goldwork, with silk; 1 dress of *geremsüd* with flowers of silk, with *anteri*; 2 dresses of *citarea* with sleeves; 1 white dress, ornamented, with *anteri*; 1 *cübbe* of velvet with goldwork braid without fur; 2 pairs of *cintiiani*, one of *geremsüd* and the other of Stamboul, shawl.” In the chest described as “the *lipticănesc* one”, i.e. the one with goods brought from Leipzig, there are also cubits of “uncut orange taffeta”, “uncut white cloth”, “uncut *geremsüd*”, “rolls of gold thread”, and “rolls of *ibraşin*”, along with other materials and braids brought from Țarigrad (Istanbul) and placed in the “Braşov chest”. The two sources – the sumptuary law and the list of luxury goods – complement one another in describing the fashion for luxury and its use in social promotion.

Material culture and consumption may be measured with the help of two instruments: dowry documents and wills. The dowry lists reflect consumption and competition, while the wills measure what remains, the wealth accumulated at the end of a life. For example, the will of Maria Văcărescu (married to and divorced from *Ban Nicolae Brâncoveanu*) echoes the advice offered by Metropolitan Gavril Kalimaki: many of the “fabrics” she had received as dowry had been “lost”, and her legacy was based around a considerable quantity of jewellery. It is important to add that jewellery (gold, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds) played a central role in any transaction: they appeared as a currency of exchange in the purchase of estates, were deposited as security, or offered as gifts. In the end, perhaps, these experiences resonated with the boyars and their appetite for luxury; the so-called “source of evil,” might have taught them a lesson.

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PART IV

*Delicacies and precious spices*

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*Rose water and the meal ritual*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

In March 1813, Auguste Louis Charles, Count of Lagarde (La-Garde), was hosted as a guest by Grand *Ban* Grigore Brâncoveanu (1764–1832). In a letter to his friend Jules Griffith, the Count of Lagarde described local manners, dishes served during meals, and the atmosphere of the mansion: “before we sat down at table, servants dressed in various national costumes brought water in silver gilt basins; we washed our hands with all sorts of soaps, and then we sat down, following our host’s example. I shall not send you the list of dishes, some of which were Turkish, others German, many Romanian and Russian, but so many that they were proof of as much opulence as lack of taste. *According to custom, each put their hand in their plate, which is more cordial than cleanly* [my emphasis], though I had to do the same or resign myself to staying hungry. [...] After four hours of such a gastronomic session we again washed our hands, mouths, and chins, perfumed ourselves, and finally went into the salon.”

The Frenchman Auguste Lagarde, driven by Napoleon to Russia and then to the Ottoman Empire, noted the importance of culinary pomp in the display of social status. Grigore Brâncoveanu occupied the second highest office in the Wallachian princely council. For him, the way the dinner was organised and the food that was served had to emphasise not only this position but also the place occupied by the Brâncoveanu family

in the social hierarchy. The great number of dishes, the numerous guests, the precious and often exotic ingredients, and a certain etiquette and ritual pomp combined to highlight the social status; these elements could be displayed without any regard for rules of good table manners, which were of less importance at the time.

On his way from Istanbul to Bucharest, Lagarde had experienced various sorts of foodstuffs served according to various rules: in Therapia, he partook of “a supper that united two continents” (Europe and Asia) in the dishes served and the etiquette, in the company of an Armenian merchant. In Silistra, he ate “without knife and fork” from tin vessels in the company of a pasha, and in Bucharest he enjoyed both “a patriarchal banquet” and “a French supper” in the company of the local aristocracy.

“Patriarchal banquet” is his term for the culinary ritual in the house of the boyar Grigore Brâncoveanu, which reflected the aspirations of a provincial and peripheral elite seeking to affirm its social status. Lagarde, as a French nobleman, observed and recorded all that did not conform to his expectations, all that departed from familiar norms. Nevertheless, he himself evaluated meals in terms of social rank and hierarchy, associating the dishes on offer, the manner of serving them, and the culinary utensils with social status. For instance, when the pasha invited him to dinner in Silistra, he noted the absence of knives and forks from the table and the need to eat with one’s fingers. However, it was not this absence that most surprised him, but the “poverty” of the copper tableware, which was not at all in keeping with the social position of a pasha: “I asked him why at the table of an effendi, such as he is, there was not a single vessel of silver.” The pasha argued piously that ‘this luxury was severely punished by the Quran,’ citing the relevant verses. Any impression of piety faded, however, when, “at the end of the dinner the pasha drank water from a golden goblet presented by Sultan Mahmud.”

Lagarde’s account captures the tensions within the elites of South-eastern Europe, at the borders of empires: the members of these elites wanted to be fashionable and to integrate good manners in their lifestyle, but also to show their greatness by exhibiting their wealth, abundance, and alimentary exoticism.

As Lagarde writes, a boyar’s dinner followed a ritual sequence characteristic of the Ottoman Empire: it opened with rosewater, intended to purify the hands and chin. The jug-bearer (Ro. *ibrictar*, Tk. *ibrikdar*) poured the rosewater from a silver jug (Ro. *ibric*, Tk. *ibrik*) for the host and guests to rinse their hands, while the towel-bearer (Ro. *peşchirigiu*, Tk. *peşkirici*) offered them towels (Tk. *peşkir*) woven from silk thread to dry them. Dinner was served on a low table (Ro. and Tk. *sofra*), with the diners seated Turkish style on sofas or divans. Under the sharp eye of the *sofragiu* (Tk. *sofracı*), servants brought in silver or porcelain plates laden with various dishes, including broth (Ro. *ciorbă*, Tk. *çorba*), steak cut in pieces, pilafs (Tk. *pilav*), fruits, yoghurt, and sweets. Between eight and sixteen dishes would be served at a meal, and a boyar would take pride in offering as many as possible.

The wealthy urban elite tried to copy the local boyar class in behaviour and manners. Teodor Vârnav, a journeyman in the house and shop of the merchant Constantin Lada, describes in his memoirs the latter’s culinary habits at the time of the great plague epidemic of 1813: “He had a great interest in gastronomy, and loved to have a clean table with seven or eight dishes, good wine, and dessert.” A great boyar or a great merchant would never eat alone. Constantin Lada had a daily ritual from which he never departed, as Teodor Vârnav records: In the morning, after getting dressed and drinking German coffee or chocolate, he would go to the market of the *lipscani*<sup>1</sup> and spend time there until 12 o’clock; then he would come to dine with two or three friends, eat well, and rest. After dinner, in the evening, he would get into his carriage with two good horses, taking footmen behind him, and ride on Podul Mogoşoaiei (the most beautiful street in Bucharest) together with one of his friends, most often with the German consul.

We are told the same about boyars’ dining habits: “The table of the boyars is abundant [...]; they like to have many guests, and those who come to dine are always welcome and find a place set for them,” wrote Stephan Raicevich, French secretary to Prince Alexandru Ipsilanti of Wallachia (1774–1782) and later Austrian consul in the Danubian Principalities, in 1780. The guests upheld the prestige of a great boyar and

1. Merchants bringing goods from Leipzig (“Lipsca”) and other German towns.



spread information about his grandeur and rank. Hospitality could be a manner of collecting information, as Eric Dursteler writes in his study of food and diplomacy.

With guests present, dinner closed with a final ritual in which servants again brought in rose water in silver basins for the washing of hands and chins. But the culinary ritual did not end here, as the party moved from the dining room to the salon, where the coffee-bearer (Ro. *cafegiu*, Tk. *kahveci*), tobacco-bearer (Ro. *ciubuciu*, Tk. *çubukçu*), and sherbet-bearer (Ro. *şerbegiu*, Tk. *şerbetçi*) provided them with coffee, pipes, tobacco, narghiles, sweets, and sherbet. When spices or agarwood (Ro. *odağaci*, Tk. *odağacı*) were lit in the censer (Ro. *buhurdar*, Tk. *buhurdar*), it was the sign that the party (Ro. *ziafet*, Tk. *zyiafet*) was over. The guests returned to their homes for a rest (Ro. and Tk. *huzur*). This culinary ritual was repeated in almost every boyar or merchant house, and was maintained by visits to Istanbul, numerous periods of exile in Nikopol, Rhodes, or Edirne, and the company of so many pashas, *ayans*, and *kapudans*.

A change took place when, through contact with the foreign embassies on the banks of the Bosphorus, the princely court, made up of members of the Phanariot elite, adapted to what would be identified as “French fashion”: “At the prince’s usual meals [...] they do not eat with their fingers, but with a knife and fork. If there is a Turk, or a Greek newly arrived from Constantinople, he is free to eat with his fingers,” wrote Franz-Josef Sulzer in 1780. Sulzer had made the rounds of princely or boyar dinners for fourteen years in the hope of securing the office of princely secretary. Swiss, with a Jesuit education, he saw the use of knives and forks as a clear mark of civility, education, and refinement. The people he met he read through the prism of self-control of the body, good manners, and control of the appetite. If the Phanariots had picked up elegant manners in the company of the European diplomats in Pera, the same could not be said of the Sultan’s other subjects, Christian or Ottoman. In the Romanian case, references to culinary excesses or lack of table manners occur frequently in the accounts of various “foreign” guests at the houses of boyars.

Even if around 1780, many members of the elite were still eating with their fingers, things were gradually starting to change. A number of elements contributed to this shift: prolonged military occupations, the es-

tablishment of consulates, and the movement of foreign “specialists” to the South-East European provinces, where they were involved in the reform of certain sectors of education and administration.

For instance, the six-year presence of the Russian army in Iași and Bucharest (1806–1812) was an important step towards the integration and exercise of good manners. Nevertheless, the rate of change varied according to social status, education, and material situation. Even though young Dimitrie Merișescu boasted of “eating daintily”, his good manners were not fully assimilated, and he made use of them only to attract attention, to highlight his belonging to a distinct group. Merișescu is the son of a cattle merchant, Foti Merișescu. The father settled in Bucharest at the end of the eighteenth century, grew richer and purchased a boyar title and tried to imitate a middleclass lifestyle. The son, Dimitrie, used wealth too when he wanted to underline differences of social status: “at home and in everyone’s home there were tin spoons and dishes also of tin, ladles and large and small bowls, also of tin. At Easter and

*Floral details – roses probably – transposed in an eighteenth-century document (Library of the Romanian Academy, Historical Collection, XXXVII/1, November 23, 1754).*



Christmas, they brought out silver onto the table. There were also [porcelain] plates, but they weren't used about the house." Silver tableware and porcelain plates were brought out only for special occasions, and in the presence of guests, for the purpose of marking the family's rank.

A common element appears in all these accounts: rose water. It was used abundantly throughout the Ottoman Empire, from Bucharest, through Athens and Istanbul to Aleppo and Brusa. The use of rose water, an Ottoman practice, became a habit and a necessity among the elites of South-Eastern Europe, as may be observed from the information provided by various travellers in the Ottoman Empire. The preparation and distillation of roses counted among the tasks of any boyar lady concerned to stock her larder with the ingredients necessary for sociability. The Phanariot Greek boyar Costache Caragea, a high office-holder in the princely council, recalls in his memoirs the pleasant experiences of a peaceful Moldavian spring (1778), when, as a happy newly-wed, the activities he shared with his wife, Ralița Ghica, included the distillation of rose water: "We extracted triple essence of roses, meaning that we passed it three times through the still."

Rose water was part of a ritual. As Fernand Braudel writes, the realities of material life "cannot be so closely correlated that the relationship can be taken for granted"; food is a "constraining necessity" but people may feed themselves in different way, following different fashions, submitting to the "unconscious pressures of economies, societies and civilizations." Starting from this conclusion, we may observe that rose water came to feature in every account of travel, presented as an exotic custom accompanying the reception of guests. It might be associated rather with "elegance" than with cleanliness, in an age when dirt was part of everyday life. Foreign travellers classed it among the exotic items that upheld the "social distinction" of the notables of the region, just as in Europe, "good manners" and "good taste" were creators of "social differentiation."

Along with rose water, a series of other 'exotic' ingredients were offered to guests, following a set of rules aimed at stimulating and sustaining conversation. "I made a wonderful rose preserve, for all the roses of Moldavia are wonderful," Costache Caragea wrote from his "honeymoon" in May 1778. Indeed, rose preserve, known by the Hellenism *rodzahar*, was

one of the delicacies offered to guests, together with coffee and a narghile. Sherbet, coffee, and the narghile were part of a ritual of sociability and hospitality that was propagated throughout the Ottoman Empire. At the start of the nineteenth century, coffee houses were already spaces dedicated to public sociability, spread almost everywhere in spite of bans or political condemnations. The Christian and Muslim elites did not drink their coffee in public, but developed a daily ritual that included high-quality ingredients, a set of utensils, and specialised servants. In Iași or in Bucharest, in Athens, Vidin, Sofia, Belgrade, or Silistra, the elite copied the model set by local notables (Phanariot princes, pashas, viziers, beys, ayans), who brought with them the fashion for coffee, the siesta, and the narghile. Romanian archival sources enable us to trace the presence of a large number of servants with specific roles in the serving of the feast, not only at the princely court and in the mansions of boyars and wealthy merchants, but also in the residences of leading churchmen and even in important monasteries. Distinct posts were established (*çubukçubaşı*, *kahvecibaşı*, *şerbetçibaşı*, *sofracıbaşı*, *ibrikarbaşı*, *peşkirçibaşı*), and servants were employed with specific duties: the Romanian *cafegiu*, *ciubucciu*, *şerbegiu*, *sufraçiu*, *ibrictar*, and *peşchirgiu*. The necessary utensils were also available: coffee cups (Tk. *fincan*, *filcan*, Ro. *felegean*) and their holders (Tk. and Ro. *zarf*), coffee grinders, chibouks, narghiles of cherry or jasmine wood, saucers and spoons, water jugs, trays, and hand towels. For example, the set of six *fincans* with their *zarfs*, the coffee mill, the small spoon and saucer for preserves, and the preserve pot of glass or porcelain (Tk. *Kise*, Ro. *chisea*) feature regularly in the dowry contracts that have been investigated for Moldavia and Wallachia.

Taking us beyond the mere lists of objects and ingredients in the archives, travel literature offers us a glimpse of how this ritual took place. The accounts are numerous and picturesque, capturing a set of common elements that travellers found in the residences they visited and in the behaviour of the notables they met. By way of example, François Recordon, French secretary to the Phanariot prince of Wallachia Ioan Caragea (1812–1818), describes the coffee ritual as follows: "among the other customs that the Wallachians have received from the Turks I cannot pass over the manner in which they receive their friends and visitors, together with the great passion that they have for tobacco, coffee, and preserves. During



a visit, after a few pleasantries after the manner of the European nations, a domestic brings the visitor a pipe, a second presents him with a tray laden with dry and liquid sweets, or often also a single jar of preserve, from which one takes one or two small spoonfuls, after which one drinks at one's discretion water from a large crystal goblet or a silver cup on the same tray; finally, a third domestic makes no delay in presenting him with a small cup of coffee with the grounds and without sugar, which one takes very hot and savours drop by drop, almost always while smoking one's pipe. In all the houses of a certain rank, there is a domestic who has no other job than that of preparing the coffee; the same servant carries it in a small coffee-pot placed on a silver tray with a number of small cups; he stands by the door of the room where the other domestics pour the coffee into the cups for all of the guests, and they always present to them on saucers or rather in other small cups of silver-gilt which have a foot to prevent one from burning one's fingers."

Aleksandar Fotić also draws attention to the imitation of an Ottoman model by the periphery: the etiquette of an Orthodox bishop's palace largely followed the example of the local pasha *kapısı*, which in turn was a copy of the Sultan's *seray* in miniature. If the pasha had his own *kahveci* (as a servant, not an officer) the metropolitan had one too. [...] Even after achieving autonomy, Knez Miloš of Serbia kept a *čibukdžija* and a *kafedžija* among his servants.

The ritual took place like this for every guest, and it persisted even after the shift towards "European manners", when the *sofra* was replaced by the European table, sofas by chairs, and *fincans* and *zarfs* with coffee cups of Saxony porcelain. Some "Europeans" appreciated this ritual of hospitality with the partaking together of coffee, sherbet, and the narghile, while others considered it "disgusting" because the recipients were shared. The painter Miklós Barabás, born in Transylvania (10 February 1810, in the village of Mărcușa) and educated in the Habsburg Empire, arrived in Bucharest in 1831 to paint the Wallachian elite. He found the ritual repulsive: "On the table there was neither wine, or water, nor glasses, but in the corner of the dining room an Arnaut stood with a bottle of wine and a glass in his hands, and whoever wished to drink made a sign to him, after which the servant came up to him and gave him a filled glass. However, if anything was left in the glass, it was not thrown away anywhere, but the



"A soiree offered by the prince, in Iași", in L'illustration, August 19, 1848 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

glass topped up again was given to the following guest, so that everyone was used to drinking from the same glass. In the same way they took the preserve left by the neighbouring guest, if it happened that he had been unable to sip all the rose sherbet, together with which lemon preserve was also often taken. This curious way of serving preserves was so disgusting to me that I never took a preserve, saying that it was not good for me and I was forbidden by the doctors."

Miklós Barabás points clearly to the differences of civility across what Andrew Dalby terms the "cultural frontier" defined by sherbet. As Dalby shows, Transylvania was not much attracted to this Ottoman speciality:

copying the model of the Austrian lands, it offered its guests beer. However, in the Southeastern provinces, coffee remained the defining mark par excellence of sociability, sipped from *finçans* and silver *zarfs* or later from coffee cups of Saxony porcelain. In her study dedicated to food, Priscilla Mary Işın quotes the poet Seyyid Vehbi, who declared in 1720 that “among likeminded friends the best banquet is two cups of coffee and a pipe of strong tobacco.” “Come to mine tomorrow morning for coffee and a *chibouk*,” was the everyday invitation, especially among men, whether they were meeting for a game of cards or for discussions of a political character. This masculine sociability was an Ottoman associative form that managed to survive for a long time among Wallachian and Moldavian boyars without in any way diminishing the success of the salon and the *soirée* in vogue by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Under the growing influence of French cuisine, the ritual of the meal-time and the culinary art gradually transformed in the nineteenth century. Several elements contributed to this change: long-term military occupations, the emergence of consulates, the frequent movements of professionals from the West to Southeastern Europe and their involvement in the reform of education, administration, and culture. Analysing the change in preferences and etiquette in the territories of the Ottoman Empire, historian Özge Samancı emphasises the role of diplomacy and diplomatic banquets in accepting and imposing *alafranga* (after the French fashion) customs. Under the terms of the treaty of Küçük-Kaynarca (1774), a series of consulates appeared in the South-East European provinces, and consuls were installed all over the region, bringing their families with them. The diplomatic installation ceremonies took place, initially, according to the Ottoman model. The rituals included the sharing of various dishes, coffee, narghiles, sweets, and perfumes. Jean Marco, the Prussian diplomatic representative, describes the final stage of the diplomatic ritual in Wallachia during the reign of Alexandru Suțu (1819): “a second coffee was served to the prince and to the consul, at the same time; then perfume was thrown over them and their clothes, after which they were censured with smoke of aloe wood.” The princely audience came to an end, but the consul still had to present himself to the prince’s wife and then to his children. With each member of the princely family, the same ritual took place, with the sharing of coffee, perfumes, and aloe smoke.

Balls and banquets for the reception of the various foreign consuls and diplomatic representatives became more and more numerous and better organised as the nineteenth century advanced. Cuisine, etiquette, and music were adapted according to the rank of the guest. Adrien Louis Cochelet, French consul in Bucharest and Iași, describes as follows his reception by the prince of Moldavia, Mihail Sturdza, in 1835: “The lunch, to which I was invited, was luxurious and served in the European style.” Cochelet tells us little about the culinary etiquette. However, the same cannot be said of Eugène Stanislas Bellanger, a French traveller in search of the “Orient”. He was in Wallachia in the years 1835–1836, and was at various receptions, balls, and *soirées* attended by the consuls of the European powers. Out of the numerous descriptions that he offers his French readers, I shall take as an example the *soirée* organised by one of the leading boyar families of Bucharest. Bellanger grasps and avidly records the mixture of the “old” and the “new”: elderly boyars dressed in their Ottoman garb, reclining on sofas and smoking long *chibouks*, while young women in elegant dresses conversed in French. The dinner opened with the customary washing of hands with rose water and essence of aloe, followed by a succession of various dishes, fruits, and wines, strictly respecting French manners: “Imagine a dining room lit by three hundred pink Leopoldstadt candles, a table in the middle with fifty-two places set, and on this table a mass of silverware and crystal in pyramids glistening like so many precious stones, diamonds. France and Bohemia shone there in the splendour of their works. The service was in the French style, with the difference that they began with a salad, and finished with a *consommé*. [...] The *meilsch-speisen*, light pastries that have much in common with our *beignets*; the *sarmale*, meatballs roasted and wrapped in young vine-leaves; the cooked plums rolled in fat; the fresh eggs prepared in wine; the mutton covered with *doultchaz* [Ro: *dulceață*, fruit preserve]; and finally, the fish salad – all was truly succulent. Apicius and Brillat Savarin would have taken delight in it. Cyprus and Lesbos, Naxos and Tokay, Champagne and Bordeaux flowed in streams from all sides. Towards the middle of the dinner they served Malaga. Then came black caviar and white caviar, an excellent cheese made from sturgeon’s eggs. I shall say nothing of the dessert [...] the four corners of the world had helped to provide it... so much fruit, of so many types, so many flowers.”



Bellanger's account shows the growing interest of the Wallachian and Moldavian elites in French cuisine and etiquette, which were considered an essential model. It remains to be investigated to what extent this model spread and how quickly. However, a gastronomic literature soon began to come into being, and it helps us to evaluate the changes that occurred. Cookery books were translated or compiled for the use of an urban elite, teaching not only how to prepare the dishes but also how to display them, insisting on an aesthetic of taste and appearance. The first cookery book was printed in 1841; the authors considered themselves to be "the introducers of the culinary art" and ironically predicted "a mighty revolution in Moldavia." Indeed, the years that followed saw a multiplication of cookery books, evidence not only of an interest in gastronomy, but also, of course, of culinary preferences. In 1846, Manolache Drăghici translated "the five hundred tested recipes" of the great "Robert, first cook to the court of France", and in 1849, Maria Maurer compiled an "urban" recipe book for the pupils in her girls' *pensionnat*. Twenty years later, a certain Christ Ionin published the first collection of "Romanian cuisine". The author's pretensions to be establishing a "national cuisine", not long after the union of the two Principalities in 1859, evaporate when one looks through the recipes, which prove to be a jumbled mixture of French, German, and Ottoman dishes. What is truly innovative in the book, however, is the space given to etiquette: the dishes must be served in a certain order, and "arranged" to delight not only the taste buds but also the eyes.

The nineteenth century was one of innovation in a number of directions. It brought not only French etiquette, but also the utensils necessary for preparing and displaying the dishes served at banquets, receptions, and soirées. Diplomats, who were increasingly numerous, played an important role in transmitting and propagating the new model, which was taken up by the great boyar houses, by merchants, tradesmen, doctors, and the prosperous bureaucratic elite. Already in 1847, the boyar and journalist Costache Negruzzi humorously declared the death of Ottoman cuisine: "today pies have lost their value and the pieman his poetry; civilization has killed them." Pies may have been in no real danger of dying under the weight of civilization, but food was adapting to developments in society.

## *Spices used in Southeastern Europe before 1800*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

Spices used to be a luxury commodity in international trade for many centuries. During the Middle Ages, aromatics brought over from the far corners of the world were expensive, in high demand, and had many uses: they spiced up and preserved food, especially meats, but they were also highly regarded products because of their medical and cosmetic properties.

Sibiu and Braşov, the great commercial towns of medieval Transylvania, were centres of exchange and transit in international trade from the end of the fourteenth century, and spices were, therefore, known and consumed in the region in the Middle Ages. The customs tariff of the Transylvanian voivode Ştiber, established for the merchants of Braşov in 1412, provided that the custom duties be paid for spices (pepper, saffron, ginger, cloves), mohair (goat hair), cotton, and "other goods brought by the Saracens" (Turks) were to be a thirtieth part of the price of the goods: "...*de pipere, croco, sinsibero, cariofolis et de crinibus caprarum, bombasio et de omnibus rebus mercimonialibus quae per Saracenos asportantur, habetur tricesimum.*" The following year, Mircea the Elder, the ruler of Wallachia, announced a similar customs tariff, which mentioned goods "coming from the sea or across the Danube" ("*de marinibus partibus seu trans Danubium*"). In the following centuries, Transylvania remained an important destination for spices arriving through Wallachia and Moldavia, as evidenced by the customs registers of Braşov and Sibiu. Transylvanian customs records from the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries mention a variety of spices: pepper, saffron, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, and cloves, although some in very small quantities. Of course, pepper was the most popular spice, used especially for seasoning meat. In seventeenth-century Transylvania, a modest intake of spices was prescribed to patients in the Cluj hospitals, which proves that during this period spices were used not only by the wealthy, but had entered the diet of broad urban strata, as everywhere else throughout Central Europe.

Gabriel Bethlen, prince of Transylvania (1613–1629), a consumer of delicacies, ordered sweets, spices, raisins, and other dried fruit mostly from

Venice. He issued two price lists (*limitationes*), for imported goods and for goods made in Transylvania. The first price list was submitted to the Diet's vote in April 1627 and contained the following foods: almonds, olive oil brought from Vienna, Turkish olive oil, raisins and other dried fruit, "Venetian" sugar cane, sweets (*confreit*), Venetian saffron, pepper, cinnamon, Turkish saffron, cloves, nutmeg, rice, candied sugar ("red" and "white") and ginger. In October of the same year, Prince Bethlen expanded the list of maximal prices for goods sold in Transylvania to include saffron from the regions of today's Slovakia, mace, figs, and chestnuts from Italy and from Baia Mare. These lists show us the wide range of foods sold and consumed in Transylvania in the first decades of the seventeenth century.

Prince Bethlen had his own suppliers, who procured his desired delicacies, but most consumer goods and foodstuffs reached the Transylvanian market through merchants and were made available in shops and at fairs. The traders bringing in products from the Ottoman Empire were Balkan-Levantine merchants, of Greek origin or Hellenised ones from the Balkan Peninsula. "Turkish" merchandise and "Greek" merchants constituted an economic reality throughout East Central Europe. In the second half of the seventeenth century, trade between the Ottoman Empire and Europe intensified and the number of merchants involved in this commerce increased significantly. This upward trend is clearly reflected by data collected from the Sibiu customs registers. However, if the distances travelled by traders are taken into account, with a focus on the land routes crossing the Balkan Peninsula to Transylvania, it becomes obvious that only certain foodstuffs could be part of the inventory of traders. These were mainly spices, dried fruit, rice, and olive oil, non-perishable products that could last a long time without losing their qualities and that are also found in the customs registers of Transylvania.

Saffron was the most expensive spice. The 1627 price lists mention several types of saffron: that imported from northern Hungary had the highest sale price, while Turkish saffron cakes (*pogácsa safrán*) were listed according to four degrees of quality. The saffron brought through the Sibiu customs came via the land routes of the Balkans but its quality or type were rarely described. The records mention saffron cakes, alongside

lower quality and less expensive cerate saffron (*viaszos safrány*). Ginger, nutmeg, and incense were also among the spices imported from the Ottoman Empire.

The Sibiu archives hold requests to supply the court in Alba Iulia with spices from the customs stock. In 1675, Anna Bornemisza herself, the wife of Prince Mihail Apafi (1661–1690), sent a letter to Sibiu asking for "a *cantor*<sup>1</sup> of spices for the needs of our kitchen." In the registers from 1672 and 1673, in addition to the usual customs expenses (salaries, transportation costs, paying for firewood, etc.), the scribes also entered the shipments of spices sent to the princely court every three months. For instance, in the year 1672, the *kanthar* of spices for the prince contained the following ingredients each and every time: 60 pounds of pepper, 30 pounds of ginger, 6 pounds of saffron, 3 pounds of nutmeg, 3 pounds of cloves, 3 pounds of cinnamon and 16,5 pounds of cane sugar, all worth a total of 50 gold florins. The regular supply of spices to the Alba Iulia court was stipulated in the agreement that the officials of Sibiu made with Prince Michael Apafi as part of the leasing of the Turnu Roșu customs point. A note from the 1682–1685 register mentions that, according to the lease agreement, Sibiu was supposed to pay 1,000 florins out of the total sum "in spices for Her Highness the Princess," Anna Bornemisza.

According to customs registers, the town of Cluj imported spices from Vienna during the 1630s and, a decade later, from Polish towns. It is known that, during the second half of the seventeenth century, Dutch and English trading companies took over the international spice trade and shipped spices directly to European ports. Thus, the old medieval spice routes, which crossed much of Asia and the Middle East by land and reached Mediterranean ports or Ottoman-controlled emporiums, were no longer profitable in the spice trade. In the seventeenth century, spices were already being sent to Istanbul from Vienna, in a reversal of their old trade route.

The foodstuffs imported to seventeenth-century Transylvania consisted mainly of dried fruits, citrus fruits, almonds, olive oil, and rice. Some of

1. Unit of measurement for weight equivalent to about 50 kg (also spelled *kantar*).



these foods were typical Ottoman products and had been found in the customs accounts of Saxon cities since the early sixteenth century. For instance, raisins (*uvae passae, Wellesweinberren*) were regularly imported to Sibiu during the sixteenth century, but their quantity varied from year to year. Rice was introduced from Southwest Asia to Anatolia and to the Balkan Peninsula by the Turks and was a typical Ottoman product in the early modern era. In Sibiu, however, rice was known and bought starting from the sixteenth century and is mentioned in the Transylvanian limitations lists from 1627 and in the Braşov customs tariffs from 1654. In the customs records of Cluj, rice was mentioned in 1617, in one merchant's transport of 200 pounds of rice brought from "Turkey," as the scribe recorded. In the following years, the quantities of rice passing through the Cluj customs grew to about 20–25 *kanthars* (approximately two tonnes) each year. However, it was not consumed locally, but taken further to Hungary.

Princess Anna Bornemisza's cookbook (1680) offers several ways for cooking rice. Among her recipes, there is one for rice cooked "the way the Turks like it," namely sweetened with honey, raisins, and almond milk.

According to the 1627 price limitations, there were two types of olive oil imported to Transylvania, from Vienna and from the Ottoman Empire. Olive oil is one of the few items constantly entered in the Sibiu customs records with similar quantities throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, at the end of the seventeenth century, the quantity of olive oil brought in from the Ottoman Empires increased tenfold.

As the seventeenth century progressed, more and more exotic produce reached Transylvania from the south. Coffee was first mentioned in the Sibiu customs registers in 1689; similarly, tobacco started to be known and consumed in Transylvania during the second half of the seventeenth century. Indeed, the appearance of these exotic products in Transylvania was simultaneous with their arrival in other parts of Central and South-Eastern Europe. On rare occasions, shipments coming to Sibiu also included other foods, such as Turkish cheeses and butter, walnuts, or anise (1672, 1673, and 1683).

Merchants passing through the Sibiu customs started bringing in lemons and lemon and orange juice only towards the end of the seventeenth

century, but the court inventories of Gabriel Bethlen demonstrate that the prince regularly ordered fresh lemons, dried lemons, and oranges from Venice during the 1620s.

A cephalopod, either an octopus or a squid, called *habarnicza* stood out among the exotic foods traded in the seventeenth century. *Habarnicza* was first mentioned in Transylvanian noble accounts of the late sixteenth century and in purchases made for Prince Gabriel Bethlen in 1620 and 1625 in Istanbul. It was transported and kept dry, as Anna Bornemisza's recipe indicated: "What can be cooked from *habarnicza*: make a strong lye, put the *habarnicza* in and let it rest for about three nights, it will swell nicely. Wash the *habarnicza* twelve times and let it rest in fresh water to clean off the lye. Afterwards throw it in hot water, clean it, and let it cool. The *habarnicza* has many tails: bind them, put them on a skewer. Roast them quickly and sprinkle with soft butter. Serve dry and warm. It is tasty to eat with pepper. It does not require many ingredients, but it is laborious. It can be fried, according to one's wish: it is tasty just the same."

The culinary practices of the princely court are well documented and they show much familiarity with most spices as well as with exotic foods and delicacies. Regarding other social groups, we can assume that in Transylvania, spices were used as in the rest of Europe: in a medieval culinary style that favoured the strong taste of spices and the mixing of sweet aromas with sour and spicy ones.

### *Flavours and foods*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**B**rought in sacks and satchels, straddling mountain chains, customs stations, towns, and villages, carefully placed on grocery shelves or hidden away in pharmaceutical jars, spices enhanced the flavour of dishes. In the eighteenth century, seasoning involved a combination of spices with strong aromas. Taste buds were tested by strange sensations transmitted with a single bite: sour, hot, bitter, sweet, and fragrant –all combined into one spoonful. Food and drinks, jams and pies took on

different flavours and were sprinkled with a plethora of spices: cloves, cinnamon, saffron, nutmeg, capers, pistachios, bay leaves, ginger, artichoke, rosemary, sweet clover, and many more were added to cooked food. From the boyars' expense sheets we learn what kind of spices they wanted to receive from merchants: *Aga* Caramanlău ordered from Sibiu, in addition to yellow fabrics and threaded velvets, several pounds of nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon and saffron; another boyar, who preferred the *litra*<sup>1</sup> to the pound, ordered bay leaves, capers (from Venice and Egypt), pine nuts, saffron both from Vienna and from Rumelia, and blackcurrants from Vienna – all to be fresh and shipped as soon as possible. In 1803, countless spices passed through customs: allspice, anise, cloves, pepper root, *chebabie* (a kind of pepper), cumin, caraway, cinnamon, walnuts, bay leaves, *sâlep* (orchid starch used for preparing a hot and sweetened beverage), sesame, mustard, rhubarb, saffron, poppy seeds, opium poppy, cassia, cardamom, juniper, laurel seeds and many more. Cardamom was a special spice, used to flavour coffee, but also to make bad breath from garlic or alcohol more bearable. The route the spices travelled was neither short nor easy, meaning that their price increased according not so much to demand as to vagaries of transport. People across Europe were beginning to give up their preference for rich spicy tastes, turning to sweet and natural flavours. Following an Ottoman model, Moldavian and Wallachian boyars employed all these spices, which were still quite expensive, as a sign of social distinction.

With the help of old recipes and cookbooks, we may try to imagine how certain tastes were obtained. For sour flavours, lemon juice was used, sometimes sour oranges, sorrel, sour grapes, Mirabelle plum or gooseberry syrup, rose, carnation, or raspberry vinegar. A sweet taste was obtained with the help of sugar or honey, but also with the natural sweetness contained in various fruits. To obtain a hot, spicy taste, they used red chili peppers, pepper, onion, garlic, ginger, allspice, or a little basil, which added its distinctive aroma. Spicy foods stimulate appetite and this prob-

1. A measure of volume or weight equivalent to a quarter of a litre or of a kilogram.

ably explains the large consumption of meat prepared with many spices. It should be noted that these spices were found especially in boyar kitchens, where the cook knew how to use them, had tried and tested them all beforehand, and could expertly flavour any dish.

The boyar kitchens also used fruits, especially dried ones. When preparing various kinds of meat, the cooks would throw in a handful of raisins, plums, cherries, walnuts, pistachios, almonds, apples, or apricots. The colour seemed to be just as important: yellow was obtained with saffron, carline thistle, and turmeric, red with sandalwood and pokeweed, and green with wallflower or peppermint. Drinks, such as vodkas, would be brightly “painted”, so that the cheerful colours would encourage people to taste them. They were also flavoured with roses, mint, coffee, aloe, leaves of citrus, cinnamon, juniper, lemon, rose petals, anise or cloves. After a skilled cook had given the food a first taste, he would add various spices: versatile basil was mixed with sweet-sour nutmeg, hot and astringent cloves were sprinkled over aromatic rosemary, bitter sage was hidden among fragrant peppermint leaves, and sweet-peppered tarragon accompanied thyme, sour capers, allspice, and sweet clover. And, as if so many aromas, scents, and tastes were not enough, many other herbs were thrown over them, including dill, parsley, and from time-to-time lovage. Sugar and cinnamon were then sprinkled all over. Scented, aromatic, sweet, and fine, cinnamon accompanied beef and carp, vodka and pies, jams and sherbets. However, rose petals gave the supreme pleasure of taste. Dried and sprinkled over the dishes, they added their fine scent to the appetising smell.

The recipe for preparing beef from a mid-eighteenth-century cookbook that belonged Stanca Cantacuzino gave the following instructions: “take the meat and cut it into pieces, then wash it with vinegar, wine, and water, and pass the liquid through a sieve. So put the beef in the pot with that liquid, add salt, pepper, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, thyme, slices of pork loin, some sweetened grape juice, chopped and fried onions, and let it sit for 2–3 hours, then cover the pot with a lid and surround it with dough, and boil it slowly, 2 hours. So, when it is close to boiling, put in small raisins and stop boiling.”



Notice here the cooking technique: the pot is “surrounded” (sealed) with dough, to ensure the preservation of the taste. We might see it as a sort of pressure cooker *avant la lettre*.

Salt was an indispensable element of tasty dishes. However, even though authorities made huge profits from the exploitation of salt mines, this condiment did not reach everyone. The salt mines were under the supervision of the “mine intendants” (*cămărași de ocne*). Mined by convicts and loaded in carts, salt was then shipped all over the country. However, its voyage was difficult and meandering. Residents near the salt mines enjoyed the right to take the salt they needed in their households, “by the bag.” In most cases, although mines were a princely monopoly, their exploitation was leased through the intermediary of the grand *cămăraș* (chamberlain) to various merchants, which ultimately led to an increase

in the price of salt. In order to avoid excessive price increases for such an essential ingredient, princes often set a fixed price (*nart*), which grocers had to display. It seems, however, that the *nart* was often taken merely as a suggestion, not as an obligation.

As for the peasants’ cuisine, it was based on simple tastes, with only the flavour of the dishes themselves. Although they grew freely in the yard, herbs

*Polygonal coffee table with polychrome mother-of-pearl inlays, eighteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century Merchant House Museum, Ploiești, inv. no. 34-15458. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).*



*Oriental ibrik, eighteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – 18-19<sup>th</sup> Century Merchant House Museum, Ploiești, inv. no. 34-13227. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).*

were rarely added to pots and pans. Basil, thyme, sage, sweet clover, tarragon, marjoram, parsley, or coriander were not in everyday use – perhaps because some of them such as basil or sweet clover were used in a series of magical rituals, or perhaps simply because the housewife just followed the recipes passed down to her, lacking the time or inclination to experiment with ingredients that her family might not like. We do not have enough information about the tastes of common folk because very few of them left any record of their culinary preferences. Such sources as we do have tend to be mere lists of expenses or second hand accounts of the frugal diet of the peasants.

## *Coffee time: the social life of a new commodity*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK

In a series of vignettes preceding his *Chronicle of the Land of Moldavia*, known as *O sama de cuvinte* (A record of words), Ion Neculce offers a curious and somewhat amusing story regarding the first Moldavian to encounter coffee. According to him, this took place in 1505, when Logothete Ioan Tăutu arrived at the Ottoman court with the diplomatic mission of surrendering the principality to the sultan's authority and paying tribute. At the Topkapı Palace, a series of intricate ceremonies took place: the Moldavian boyar was taken to the second courtyard, where his shoes were taken off, and then he was seated at table with the grand vizier. The treatment was full of political significance, because by accepting the hospitality of the sultan, Tăutu was implicitly accepting his authority. At the end of the meal, a servant brought a cup of a black and steaming drink, and offered it to the boyar. Not knowing how to proceed and not wanting to offend his hosts, Tăutu raised his cup, uttered a toast in honour of the sultan and the vizier, and gulped the hot coffee down.

Neculce's story is undoubtedly funny and a prime example of "invented tradition", simply because coffee was first brought to Constantinople only in the middle of the sixteenth century; it then quickly became a fixture at the sultan's court and later spread throughout the Ottoman Empire. During the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, a person responsible for preparing coffee at the court had been appointed, called *kahvecibaşı*. Cafes then appeared in all the cities of the empire and by the beginning of the nineteenth century their number had risen to 2,500.

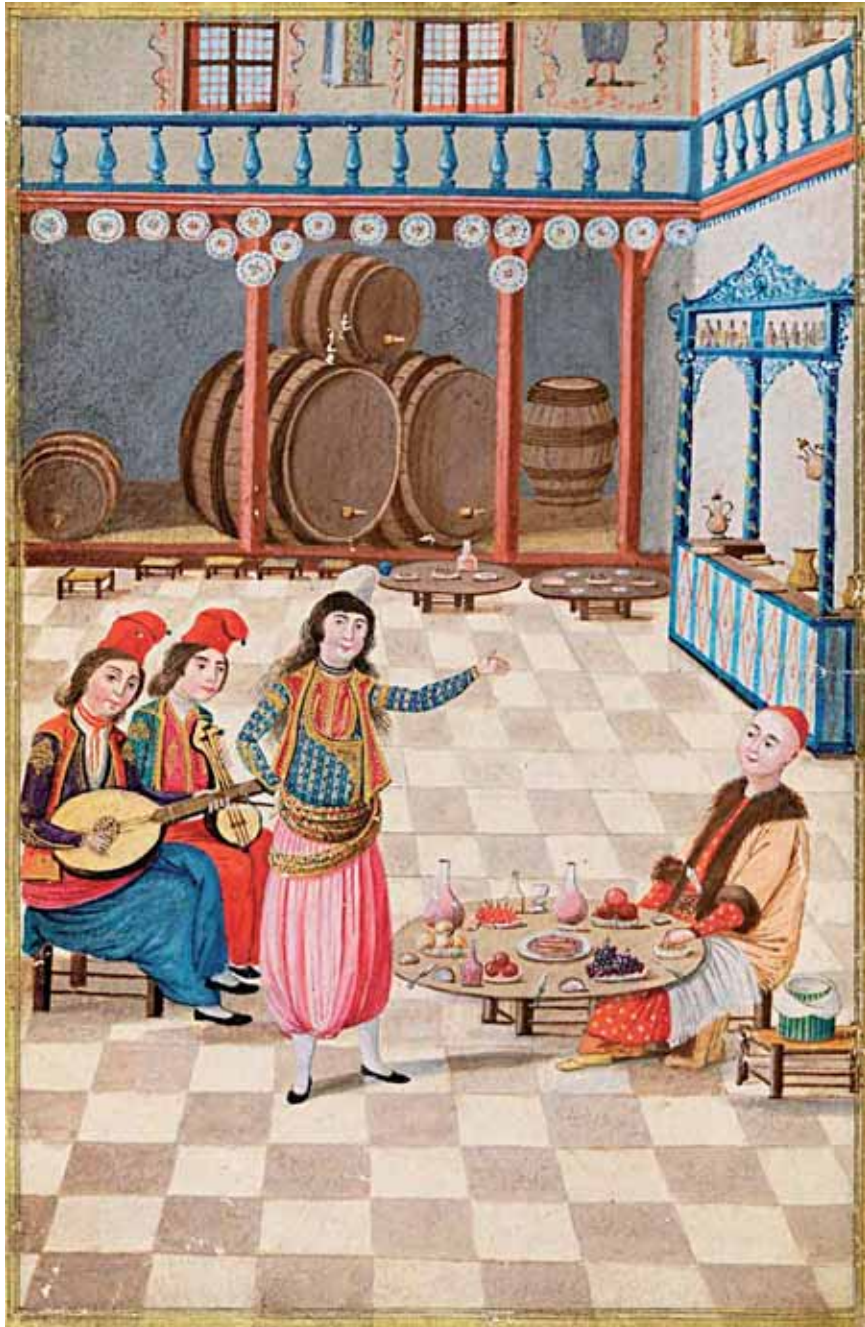
In Moldavia and Wallachia, cafes appeared quite late, with the first documented cafe (*kahvehane*) being established in Bucharest only in 1667. However, we know that most coffee consumers in the principality enjoyed their favourite liquor either at home or, in the case of the dignitaries, at the prince's court. In 1700, the ambassador of the Polish-Lithuanian federation, Rafał Leszczyński, reported that during his visit to the court of Antioch Cantemir he was offered coffee, sherbet, and sweets. Therefore,

by the time Neculce wrote Tăutu's story, his readers had long been familiar with the coffee ritual and they would all immediately understand the extent of the poor boyar's mishap.

The success of coffee and its spread in Southeastern Europe are linked to the Ottoman cultural heritage of this region, where Turkish coffee had long been the most popular drink. At the same time, the spread of coffee demonstrates the complexity of pre-modern political, economic, and cultural interactions. To get to Bucharest, coffee beans needed to be carried over long distances, crossing vast territories of the Ottoman Empire. It should also be noted that the dominance of coffee as a beverage has not been without controversy. Because of it, a series of cultural and religious disputes arose and the authorities were constantly interested in the itineraries this product had in the pre-modern world. Coffee beans can therefore be included among the most contested, but at the same time among the most "influential" consumer products; coffee changed existing habits and created new patterns of social life, connecting daily life to global commercial networks. Indeed, it could be said that the ordinary cup of coffee reflected the transformations taking place in the society of Southeastern Europe.

What can a cup of coffee show us? First, it mirrors the expansion of imperial borders, linking certain regions into a global network. Although coffee originated in Ethiopia, the technique of roasting beans and making coffee comes from Yemen, where coffee was drunk in the fifteenth century as an energiser and as a cure. The global spread of coffee began with the rise of the Ottomans, who conquered Egypt in 1517 and Yemen two decades later. At first, they did not pay much attention to this strange liquor, as their interests in the Red Sea were more about spices and the military threat of the Portuguese, who, after Vasco da Gama's expedition, were building their own empire in the Indian Ocean. Yemen's ports and Cairo, a major commercial centre, played a decisive role in the medieval spice trade by directing imports from India and Southeast Asia to the Mediterranean. This spice route lost its importance in the early seventeenth century but merchants had already found a new commodity that they could send to the Ottoman territories: coffee.





Before reaching Constantinople, Bucharest, or Sarajevo, coffee beans followed a difficult path that began in the mountains of Yemen, ruled by Shiite tribes and difficult to control for the Ottoman governors. From there, they were transported to maritime centres; the most important was the port of Mocha, whose name remained closely linked to the coffee trade. The ships then carried the beans north to Jeddah and Cairo. The latter, a bustling metropolis that rivalled Constantinople, became the largest transit centre for the coffee trade and was under the control of local merchants and Turkish commanders, who sent coffee beans to Constantinople or other centres of the Ottoman Mediterranean. In South-eastern Europe, the coffee trade seems to have been dominated by Armenian merchants. After the Ottomans were forced to leave Yemen in 1635, the coffee trade continued and even expanded. Yemen's coffee dominated the consumer market until the second half of the eighteenth century, when it began to have a competitor in cheap but lower-quality coffee from French-controlled plantations in the Caribbean.

What happened to coffee beans once they reached their destination? The reports of the time mention that they were ground and then boiled in copper vessels covered in brass (*ibrik*), whose specific shape ensured rapid boiling, but also the preservation of taste and aroma. This way of making coffee had been preserved in the Balkans and the Middle East. After boiling, the coffee was poured into small cups and served hot, with sugar, sweets, and sherbet. The addition of milk to coffee was very rare and was discouraged by doctors: Dawud al-Antaki, a Christian doctor in Cairo, warned that milk added to coffee could cause leprosy, and his opinion was taken up by many Western medical treatises.

The habit of drinking hot coffee had some notable consequences. Street vendors who offered various kinds of cold drinks, such as boza or braga, could not sell hot drinks. To enjoy a cup of coffee, it had to be prepared at home or at the cafe. Since many people did not have the necessary conditions, the popularity of coffee led to an increase in the number of

*A beyzade in a tavern, with musicians and dancers, miniature from Fazil Enderuni, Hubanname ve Zennaname, 1793 (Istanbul University Library, T5502).*

cafes in all Ottoman cities. In fact, cafes harmonised living conditions with old habits. In the Islamic tradition, the separation of the male and female spheres was important. Families with large enough houses had a space dedicated to men (*selamlık*) and a space dedicated to women (*haremlık*). In this way, each member of the family could make visits and receive guests of the same sex without violating social norms. However, the delimitation was inaccessible to the majority of the population, who lived in single-room houses. The cafe, therefore, offered an acceptable solution for everyone: men met there with friends and neighbours, while women could socialise at home, in the absence of husbands. Moreover, in urban areas with few meeting places, cafes, along with mosques, became centres of social life.

Cafes were not at all quiet places where customers enjoyed a cup of coffee. The testimonies of the time describe them as crowded and noisy places, attended by people belonging to all social categories. In addition to coffee, customers had the opportunity to get the news and hear various rumours, to discuss politics, to sing, to smoke, to watch shadow theatre (*karagöz*) plays, or to listen to stories and legends. In fact, certain Ottoman chronicles of the seventeenth century, such as the lyrical chronicle dedicated to the revolt of the janissaries and the assassination of Sultan Osman II, in 1622, were written not to be read, but to be recited accompanied by the cobza (*saz*) during these gatherings. Much Ottoman poetry was composed and read in cafes, by amateurs and established poets alike. Cafes offered a wide range of leisure activities and became important public spaces in the Ottoman Empire. As a result, wealthy Muslims and Christians, who could also afford to drink coffee at home, started visiting cafes and had special lounges, usually upstairs, reserved just for them.

Despite their popularity, cafes also had plenty of enemies. Criticism came mainly from two directions. First, their relaxed and noisy atmosphere was a cause for concern for the authorities, who, under the imperative of maintaining order and calm, tried to stigmatise them, calling them nests of laziness and depravity. The Sublime Porte repeatedly ordered the closure of cafes, as happened in 1633, for example, when Sultan Murad IV even decided to behead those who did not obey. Truth be told, the au-

thorities' fears were not unfounded, because two revolts of the janissaries, in 1703 and 1807, which led to the removal of the sultans of the time, began in the cafes of Constantinople. In fact, many cafes in the capital were owned by members of the janissary corps, the elite troops of the sultan, who had established themselves since the seventeenth century as a powerful armed force, determined to defend their own interests at all costs. The cafe owners' involvement in political debates (*devlet sohbetleri*) led the authorities to supervise them so that they could keep them under control.

Therefore, the main concern of the authorities was related to the activities carried out in the cafes, and not the drink itself, while the religious arguments claimed that the new drink was incompatible with the Faith. Most members of the Muslim clergy (*ulema*), like their secular counterparts, disapproved of the atmosphere in cafes, arguing that it led to the proliferation of immoral behaviour and detached believers from religious service; they also did not approve of people of different religions and social conditions interacting there. There were also *ulema* with strict opinions about the drink itself, insisting on the Koran's ban on alcohol, opium, and other hallucinogenic substances. An influential Bosnian scholar, Hasan Kafi Akhisari, argued that "smart people need to stay away from coffee completely, especially since, by continuing to drink it, it harms the body, having effects even when given up." Some went so far as to say that the sin of drinking coffee was greater than that of drinking alcohol, a ban already well established in the tradition of Islam. It should be noted, however, that these views were not shared by all, and scholars who had a more lenient attitude toward coffee challenged Akhisari's puritanical view. Collections of manuscripts of the time also include short folk songs for and against coffee, which demonstrates that the drink aroused the interest not only of the legislators, but also of the population.

The Christian elites of the Ottoman Empire do not seem to have taken a strict stand against coffee; by and large, they followed the Muslim model regarding drinking coffee, as opposed to their disapproval of tobacco. However, they were not in favour of coffee and its spread. For Orthodox hierarchs, the greatest danger was apostasy and the interaction of Christians with Muslims in the same space. As can be seen from a



series of texts on Christian martyrs during Ottoman rule, social activities that crossed religious boundaries were seen as a threat to the Church, embodied in apostasy and conversion to Islam. As a result, texts about martyrs can also be seen as moralising tales in an attempt to discourage Christians from attending cafes.

Eventually, attempts by the political and religious authorities to stop the expansion of the cafe fashion were in vain, and coffee drinking became a daily habit in every corner of the empire. Over time, coffee crossed its borders, but it remained associated with the Ottoman heritage. Cafes also appeared in the cities of Christian Europe, but only much later. Visiting Ragusa in the middle of the seventeenth century, the Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi did not mention any coffeehouse, since the very first one only opened in 1708, while that in Split opened much later, in 1772. In Venice, the most important port of Levantine trade, the first cafes opened after 1660, followed by coffeehouses in London, Paris, and Vienna, where they prospered. The association of coffee with the Ottoman Empire was not lost, however: in England, cafe owners dressed their staff in “oriental” clothes to attract more customers, while Polish poet Wacław Potocki titled a short poem “About the Turkish drink.” As in the Ottoman Empire, the spread of coffee in the West was met with the same objections to moral norms and there were even voices claiming that Christian coffee drinkers could more easily convert to Islam.

After coffee became a constant in Southeastern Europe, new habits and new products were adopted. *The history of Iordache Stavarache, biv vel spătar and bass capichihaia of Wallachia* from 1767 recalls the silver kettle and the porcelain cups brought from China. This was no exaggeration: Chinese porcelain had been highly prized in Iran and the Ottoman court since the Middle Ages, being considered a luxury product due to its quality and appearance. We know that Chinese porcelain became popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Archaeological excavations at Kamianets-Podilskyi, ruled by the Ottomans between 1672 and 1699, support this statement. Despite the short duration of Ottoman rule in the city, it had ten cafes, and archaeologists found more than 100 coffee pots and pans, half of which had been brought from China and 30 from Kütahya, a major pottery production centre in Anatolia, from where

large quantities of cups and other utensils associated with coffee were imported. The consumption of this drink therefore led to the import of other luxury products, which thus entered everyday life.

Indeed, the spread of coffee in Southeastern Europe in the eighteenth century comes as no surprise. Through the lasting changes it brought and its tumultuous history, coffee had more significant effects on everyday life than certain political events. To us it makes sense that Neculce and his contemporaries felt the need to imagine what the first “meeting” of a Moldavian boyar with coffee would look like and why that experience spiced up their daily lives. At the same time, coffee’s resistance in the face of religious prohibitions of the pre-modern period gave it a special aura, which it preserved even during the formation of nation-states. In their infatuation with coffee, representatives of the nation-states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had to identify as “Greek”, “Bosnian”, or “local” (*domăcia*) the same aromatic liquor they all consumed, Christians and Muslims alike.

### *Smoke and social life: consuming tobacco*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK

When you look at those who smoke, you see smoke coming out of their noses and mouths, so that they resemble the people of Fire and the evildoers who will perish for eternity; as the tradition of the Prophet tells us, “at the end of time there will be a smoke that will fill the earth, it will remain over people for forty days, and the faithful will suffer; as for the infidels, the smoke will come out of their two nostrils, from their two ears, and through their two eyes, so that their heads will look burned.”

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the scholar Ahmed Akhsari was not the only one who linked smoking with the flames of hell. The introduction of tobacco to Ottoman society was received with even more enthusiasm than that of coffee, but also with even more controversies. For instance, scholar Yahya Efendi was asked to respond to



*Auguste von Henikstein, "The Interior of a Turkish Cafe," 1825, Constantinople, in the album Costumes et portraits faits à un voyage par la Valachie et la Bulgarie à Constantinople dans les années 1825 par le chevalier Auguste de Henikstein (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*



believers' complaints about the unpleasant smell of smokers' clothes, which disturbed prayer time, especially since there had been people smoking even inside places of worship. Akhisari's position was strict: imams and muezzins who smoked or smelled of tobacco had to be removed from the mosque, even by force, so as not to harm those around them. Orthodox Christian believers, too, shared Akhisari's view, and compared smoking with the flames of hell. A Phanariot ruler successively of Moldavia and of Wallachia, Nicolae Mavrocordat, wrote a treatise against smoking, in which he used the same arguments. Poet Hasan Kafi composed the lyrics of a song to make his opinion known, urging the people of Bosnia to refrain from smoking, because it was a disgusting habit, worse than vomiting in public. In their attempt to end the pastime, opponents of smoking resorted to medical arguments, arguing that, in addition to the unpleasant odour, tobacco made smokers less agile, weakened their bodies, and blackened their teeth. Just as Western physicians referred to Ottoman scholars in their discussion of coffee, so Muslims and Christians in the empire appealed to Western Europeans. In some cases, these ideas took on conspiratorial overtones: Ibrahim al-Lakani claimed that tobacco had been brought to the Ottoman territories by the British, who had discovered, after dissecting a smoker's body, that the bones were black, the heart was dry and full of holes, and the liver was completely burned. "From that moment on," al-Lakani claimed, "they banned people from using it and ordered to be sold to Muslims." In 1681, a Silesian priest also mentioned an autopsy performed in Leiden, whose findings were meant to discourage smoking. Fears of growing tobacco consumption therefore transcended religious boundaries and beliefs.

Those concerned with the spread of smoking had a difficult time convincing their opponents to change their minds once they had embraced tobacco the same way they had embraced coffee and were ready to stand their ground against detractors. The Ottoman chronicler Ibrahim Peçevi complained that there was so much smoke in coffeehouses that nothing could be seen, and the smokers had invented funny songs and lyrics in defence of their habit. A visitor to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople remarked ironically in 1784 that there were "more pipes than rosaries" in the reception hall. Furthermore, the controversies regarding



Left: "Youth with pipe," miniature from Fazil Enderuni, *Hubanname ve Zenanname*, 1793 (Istanbul University Library, T5502).



Right: John Collings, watercolour depicting a wealthy Greek woman smoking a pipe, nineteenth century (inv. no. TE 23072, © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).

tobacco led to an open conflict between Nicolae Mavrocordat and Mitrofan Gregoras, a Greek printer and clergyman who lived for a while in Wallachia. Gregoras's decision to publish a treatise on smoking angered the prince, who disapproved of tobacco, prompting him to set the book on fire. Another famous scholar who tried to defend the new custom was the Sufi sheikh Abdurrahman Sirri. He stated that "ignorant and fools are those who hate tobacco / and do not know what pleasure is." Sometimes the



Tabacco bag, nineteenth century (Bruckenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M1168/15242).

disputes went beyond the theoretical framework and became violent: in 1699 riots broke out in Damascus, after a group of smoking opponents attacked a man and broke his pipe; things got out of hand and the intervention of the local garrison was needed.

While medical science sided with Mavrocordat and Akhisari, most contemporaries agreed with their opponents. One of the reasons was the fact that tobacco, originating from the American continent, quickly acclimatised in the Ottoman territories, especially in Macedonia and Eastern Anatolia, becoming accessible to the poor. In Europe and the Middle East, tobacco was initially associated with the armed forces, as soldiers quickly acquired this habit during military service.

In fact, archaeological excavations in old Ottoman fortresses constantly reveal tobacco pipes. The great popularity of smoking among the poor is also demonstrated by an illustration from the early nineteenth century, depicting a knife grinder sharpening knives with a pipe in his mouth. Moreover, a mufti from Sarajevo, Mustafa Muhbi, stated: "Coffee without tobacco is like sleeping without a blanket."

But how was tobacco consumed? While smoking in the Middle East today is associated with *narghiles* that was not the most popular method

in the pre-modern period, although it was widespread in cafes and among elites. The *narghile* first appeared in Safavid Iran and Mughal India and was quickly adopted by the Ottomans. Peçevi says that at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the pipe was filled with infusion of rose water to give the smoke a pleasant, sweet fragrance, which had the role of fighting critics who complained about the smell of tobacco. However, due to its size, the *narghile* was not easy to transport, it could be damaged if moved, and it took a long time to assemble. Consequently, the *narghile* was rather associated with elite society. That is why the pipe was most often used: either a shorter *lüle* or a longer *çubuk*, the latter being considered more refined. Both could be easily transported, together with the leather tobacco bag. The *çubuk* was also popular among women, who were generally in favour of smoking. In fact, this type of pipe was quite sturdy, and documents show several cases in which, after a dispute, wives beat their husbands with pipes.

The Ottoman habit of smoking extended beyond the borders of the empire. The measure of its success is given by the fact that in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Turkish word *tütün* replaced the word *tobacco* during the seventeenth century. A description of the court of Jan III Sobieski, known for his victory over the Ottomans in the Battle of Vienna (1683), shows that the king's interest in Turkish objects extended to smoking: the court "used to remain for a while after a meal, talking, drinking, and smoking. To sweeten the smoke, they have jars of glass with a *çubuk* passing through it." Hellfire or not, most inhabitants of Southeastern Europe and beyond, Christian or Muslim, wealthy or poor, seem to have enjoyed their occasional smoke.

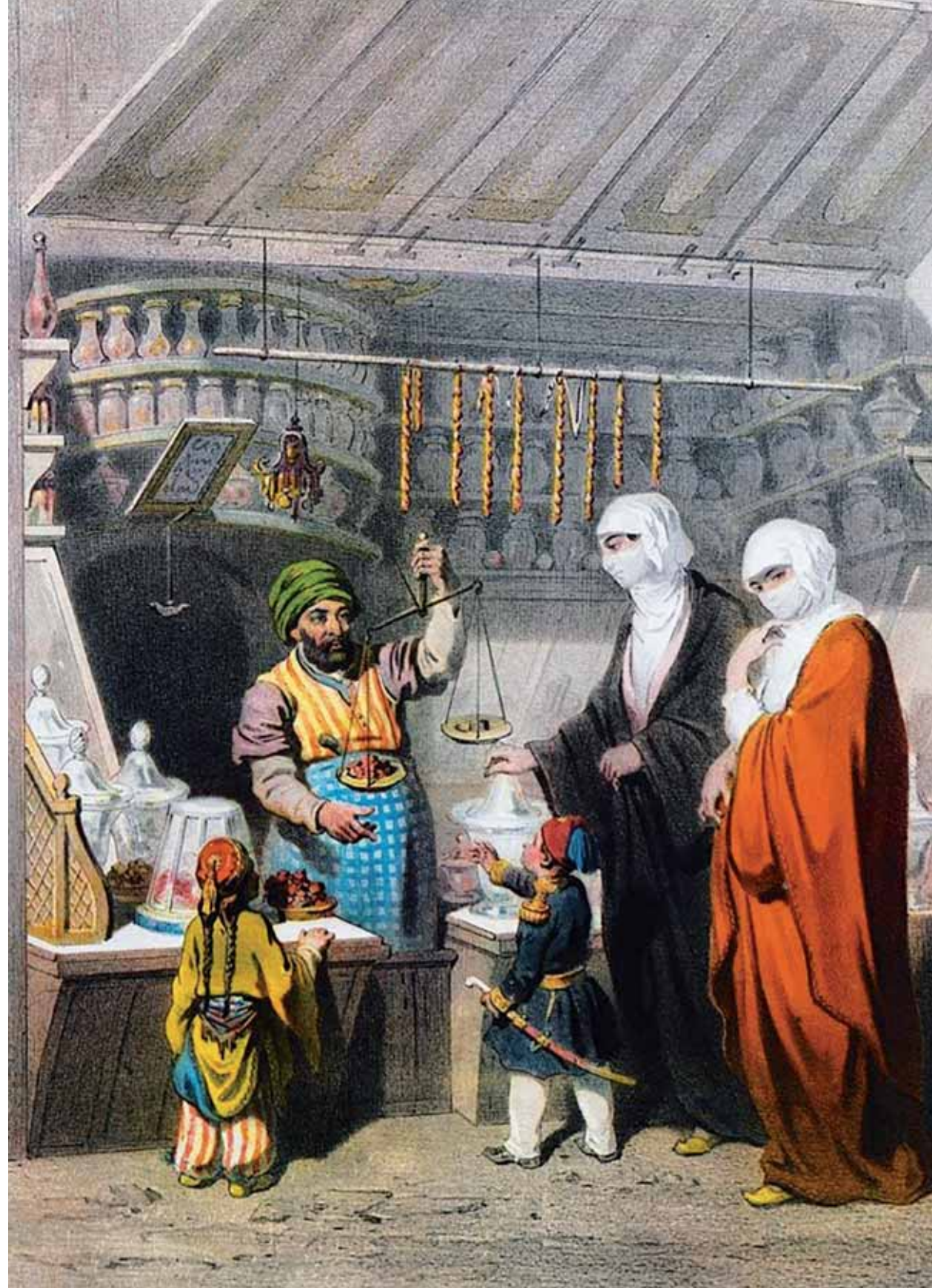


## Delicacies

NICOLETA ROMAN

**F**rom the street and from the shop, at home: special sweets Foreign travellers passing through the towns of Southeastern Europe frequently mentioned sweets sold by street vendors. For example, the Austrian traveller Andreas Magnus Hunglinger von Yngue made an album of illustrations dedicated to these picturesque vendors of the Ottoman realm. Among them, we notice a candy seller, carrying his large tray full of the countless sugary goods that children desired. Gradually, street vendors would disappear, and sweets would end up on the shelves of shops, as Joseph Schranz and Amedeo Preziosi depicted them in their sketches. Then there were those delicacies whose taste, hard to recover, was associated with nostalgia for home and the memory of loved ones, such as parents, grandparents, or friends. Last but not least, there were the culinary treats of modernity. In his *Memoirs*, Radu Rosetti wrote that the sweets made in his parents' house were hard to replace: jams made after grandma's recipe, compotes, quince marmalade and liqueurs, all prepared by his mother. In addition, with some specialists help in handling the alembic, his father would make rose, lavender, and thyme water. He also had the opportunity to taste products specific to Viennese cuisine, such as the crescent roll (*Kipfel*) and the bun (*Semmel*), which were adopted by local bakers as well. Rosetti remembered, for example, the stay of Prince Carol I at his family's mansion in Căiuți and the breakfast prepared for him: "The next morning, when our baker's assistant appeared in the yard with a basket full of Viennese *Kipfel* and *Semmel* on his head, all the members of the princely suite, minor officers and officials, at the sight of these goodies surrounded the lad." It took an energetic intervention for there to be set aside, "for the prince and for the ladies, part of the numerous quantities made."

*Itinerant candy seller, Istanbul, in Joseph Schranz, Le Bosphore et Constantinople, dessinés d'après nature, ca 1850 (Gennadius Library – The American School of Classical Studies at Athens).*







Local or Balkan-specific gastronomy coexisted with the much more appreciated French, Austrian, German, and English cuisines. At times, competition was fierce, and gradually the elites became interested in the new Western gastronomy. However, in Romanian cookbooks published during the nineteenth century, there was a certain tendency to adapt Western cuisine to the specifics and possibilities of the household of local consumers. That is why *Carte de bucate boierești: 200 rețete cercate de bucate, prăjituri și alte trebi gospodărești* [Book of boyar dishes: 200 tried recipes for dishes, cakes, and other household matters], written by Mihail Kogălniceanu and Costache Negruzzi and published in three editions (1841, 1842, 1846), included recipes not only for Brașov biscuits, lemon or red fruit (raspberry, strawberry, cherry) ice cream, and chocolate or coffee pudding, but also for icing (*glas*) and almond cake (*mandelcuhen*), with or without layers.

Members of the elite knew that at any party, either soiree or ball, the meal included a number of desserts: ice cream, candy, lemonade, punch, exotic fruits, and fine cakes. A cup of coffee or tea could not be enjoyed without a cake next to it. The Frenchman Eugène-Stanislas Bellanger noted in 1836 that tobacco and sweets were so sought after in moments of relaxation and leisure that they led to premature tooth decay. On a walk through Herăstrău, ice cream and orange juice were always available in a cafe or a fancy sweet shop, prepared for those who wanted to stop by. It was *de bon ton* for carriages to stop in front of a popular sweet shop so the ladies could enjoy a cone of ice cream.

Refreshments and desserts were also available at the theatre, an institution established relatively late in the principalities, around the middle of the nineteenth century. In addition to watching plays, inspecting the stage and audience through one's lorgnette, and chatting with a partner, theatregoers also had the opportunity to taste various delicacies.

***The Capșa Cakeshop*** Cakeshops and spaces dedicated to eating desserts started appearing in Bucharest during the 1840s. The Elefterescu cakeshop,

*Candy seller, Istanbul, in Andreas Magnus Hunglinger von Yngue, Abbildungen herumgehender Krämer von Constantinopel nebst anderen Stadt-einwohnern und Fremden, aus Aegypten, der Barbarey und dem Archipelagus, Vienna, 1800 (British Library Board, London, General Reference Collection 37/809.m.9, plate XVIII).*



run by Constantin Lefteriu, was among the first such shops in Bucharest, and, perhaps the best known in the early days. The Italians led the way in this field: Giovanni's sold good Neapolitan ice cream cones while Comorelli's had delicious cakes. It should be mentioned that all these products were competing with the Oriental sweets on the market, such as the baklava or the kanafeh.

However, it was the Capșa brothers who won themselves a reputation in this field that went beyond the borders of the country. Aromanian by origin, they opened the confectionery "At two brothers, Anton and Vasile Capșa" on the Mogoșoaia Road in 1852. Vasile Capșa had done his apprenticeship with Constantin Lefteriu, and Anton came with the necessary money. Grigore, the third brother, left for Paris and learned the secrets of the trade from Belissaire Boissier, a famous confectioner and owner of a shop opened in 1827 that was famous for its glazed candies and fondants with various flavours. Grigore returned to Bucharest and joined the other two brothers, adding to the menu French delicacies prepared according to new recipes. The Crimean War threatened the smooth running of the shop, but they managed to stay afloat thanks to Vasile, who crossed the border into Bulgaria and, after various adventures and failed attempts, learned how to prepare fine jams. His wide selection, made from plums, rose petals and many other ingredients, saved the business. After 1856, Capșa was competing against Fialkowski's cakeshop, whose announcement in the newspapers ran as follows:

In this new establishment, decorated with full Parisian luxury, you will find top quality French sweets; the richest and most elegant packaging; candy boxes for the New Year [...]. Fresh pastries are made every day, the most varied *gâteaux-montés*, *petits-pâtés* and *surprises en sucre*. This establishment also has a fashionable salon, like those in Paris, for drinkers of coffee, chocolate, and tea, who from the New Year, will find various French, German, and Romanian magazines to spend pleasant hours.

The cakeshop, the cafe, and the restaurant became leisure spaces where gastronomic delights were combined with the reading of newspapers and

luxury goods accompanied products for a wider market, especially during the festive season. In fact, Fialkowski took advantage of these aspects, making use of a large welcoming space. Another cakeshop trying to enter the market belonged to Antonio Manzoni. However, in addition to owning their own vending place, as did all the others, the Capșa brothers also had a laboratory for preparing all their delicacies. Over time, Fialkowski's shop turned into a cafe, becoming at the same time a place for political debate, while Capșa won renown both as a cakeshop and as a restaurant. Its products were sold in elegant, golden packaging, which offset the inconvenience of the limited tasting space. Soon the brothers obtained ice cream recipes from the Italian Giovanni, and, around the 1860s, their shop offered the most refined selection of products, ranging from traditional Balkan jams to French fondants.

*Chocolate* The opening of a small chocolate business in the Oțetari neighbourhood of Bucharest in 1857 was a significant step. In the newspaper announcement, the owner, Procopian, asked his customers to give up "any prejudice against what is foreign" and to trust his laboratory, "a chocolate factory he has brought from Paris": "Full of confidence in the national common sense of my compatriots [...], I make every effort to further develop this useful enterprise in the future, so that it can provide to the public chocolate of the finest quality and of different inventions and nutritional compositions."

The diversity of the new product was also described in detail:

Health chocolate and with vanilla.

Analeptic and pectoral chocolates, with *sâlep*, tapioca, arrowroot, lime, containing iron, and with acorn coffee from Spain, which are precious foods for the weak, the delicate, children, women, the elderly, recovering after illness, and for nervous people and those with no appetite. Medicinal chocolates with iron hydroiodol, purgative chocolate with magnesium, and deworming chocolate.

The chocolate was distributed to various shops in the capital: Martinovici, on Lipscani Street, Vasile Iodanovici, Rîț and Cristea, Mr. Eduard Rosdorfer's

# CHOKOLATĂ.

Kind o întreprindere se face națională mi folositoare năblikăsi, togi komnatrioșii se kșvin a o înkșraja urin konkurssii mi nreferinga d-lor, desbră-kândăse de ori-șe nreșdigiș nentș ște strein.

Sșbi-semnătsii esuzindăse urin mal mălte sakri-five nekșniare a întreprins întoknierea șnel fabrișe de șokolatș ne kare o adăse din Paris; mi nlin de kon-fiengș in bșnșl simș nașional lal komnatrioșilor sei lmi nș-ne toate silingele șure a dă ne niitor o mal mare desoltare așemntii folositoare întreprinderii, kăș șe noatș nroksra nș-blikăsi o șokolatș de kalitatea șea mal finș mi de di-ferite inșenșii mi kompozitiș nștritișe.

Șokolatș de șănitate mi kș nanilie.

Șokolade analentive mi nentorale, kș Salen, Tanioka, Arowrșst, Limen, ferșinoase mi kș kafea de gindș de Șuania, kare șșnt niute alimente nre-șioase nentș nșroșonele șlabe, delikate, komit, femel bștrini, șkșlăgi dăne boalș, mi nentș nșroșone nș-roase mi kș nșgiuș noștș de minkare.

Șokolade medikamentale, kș idriodol de fer, șokolatș nșrgatiș kș magnezia mi șokolatș nermi-fișgiș.

Înșeșrile șele moderate mi foloășele șe kon-șine șokolata din fabrika Înkoniănsiișii fiind tot d'a-șna nroșnrișș na inșita ne togi Domniș amatori de a 'mi nroksra așest aliment atit de folositor in mal mălte nrișingș nentș diferite le konstitișii kornorale.

Ștabilimentșii fabrișii este la nroșrietatea nro-koniănsiișii Maxalaoș Oșetarișii

Înșinșialele denozite șnde se aflș șokolata șa este la magazinișrile Dșmnealor D. Martinișii in linskant, Basile İodanonișii, Rig mi Kriste la stea-șel alb, la șnișaria d-lor Edșard Jșl Rosdorfor kșr-tea-șeke, ne nodșl Mogowooș la Kșșșleskș mi Minkș, Șl. Aristodonișii, Xevii mi Miler nentșnarsș, la Borde kofetarsș, la madam Tis Marșand de mod Enișkomie mi la Hândșrs a D-lor fragiș Holixroniadi.

“Chocolate.” Advertisement published in *Românul*, year II, April 22/May 4 1858, p. 124 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

pharmacy in the Curtea Veche neighbourhood, Câciulescu and Mincu on the Mogoșoaia Road, Bordea the confectioner, and the fashion merchant Tis, on the Episcopate Street.

Procopian was not, of course, the first producer of chocolate in Bucharest. In 1850, the pharmacy of the princely court, run by Adolf Steege, published an announcement regarding the preparation of chocolate in *Journal de Bucarest*. Made from good quality cocoa, the chocolate was praised especially for its healing properties and the varieties were just as numerous as Procopian’s. In fact, such small enterprises led the way to the opening of Constantin I. Zamfirescu’s famous chocolate factory at the end of the nineteenth century. Chocolate entered the market as a curative product, but soon became a popular dessert.

# LA Câciulescu & Mincu

“LA SOARE,”

Înit kș șkoala Militariș

a șosit de kșrind șrșmștoarele artikole nre-kșm: felșrite Binsriș streine, Șlammant, dife-rite kșalităgi, Bin dășve de Tokay, Bin de Oedinburg, mi Bin alb mi romș de Voslau. Likerșri, Marășkino, Banille, Orang, Parfett-a-more, Ananas, Essenș de Îlani de Îrșaga mi İtalia, Anisset de Bordeaux mi de Am-sterdam, Rakiș de ũrsne Șirbesk (Șlibosig), Șkrșmbit de Olanda, Șardele frangoșenti, Șalam de Beronș mi de Șngaria, Șlșnșii mi limbi ferte mi neferte, Șalam de Șlșnș de Lion mi de limbi. Galantine; Kawkabal de

Ementhal, de Grșier, Harmazan, Gorgongola, Ștrachino, Îlșter, mi formășe de Brie.

Felșrite konserne frangoșenti, Rom Ja-malka romș mi alb, Rom englezesk. Șeait de diferite kșalităgi, Kafele, Zaxar, mi toate alte artikole atingătoare de masș. Șigari de Xanana, Șiron de Pagliano & Roob Laf-fecteur. Șnt-de-İemn frangoșesk okooș 9 let, in șlikle, Șnt de migdale, nre-kșm mi Șleis de Ranișș, de İnș mi kșnișș, Șșutar frangoșesk. Trșfel, Lămș in bștoae mi kș mirantș. Ane Minerale mi alte așemenea artikole. 5

La Câciulescu & Mincu (“La Soare”) announce the arrival of several imported products (*Românul*, year II, 1858 – Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

*Foreign wines, Romanian wines* The memoirs of foreign travellers detail how Romanians gradually adopted Western wines, in addition to eastern and Hungarian ones, and witness the parallel sale of Romanian wines on the European market. The Greek wines often mentioned were from Zakynthos, Kefalonia, and Cyprus, imported along with sugar, spices, and exotic fruits via the port of Galați. Much appreciated by Baron Bruckenthal and the Hungarian nobility, Tokaj wine entered Wallachia via Brașov. The wines of Odobești and Cotnari in Moldavia were exported, particularly to the Russian Empire. A Moldavian boyar proudly pointed out around 1811 that, after a supervised aging, this wine “is the most delicate for noble and refined stomachs than all the wines of the European and White Sea regions.”

Wallachia exported wines to the neighbouring territory of Transylvania; the most appreciated ones were produced in the vineyards near the



Danube and those of Râmnic. Thomas Thornton, British consul in Odessa and an expert on Ottoman culture, considered that “The wines [of Wallachia] somewhat resemble the light Provence wine called *cassis*, they may be drunk even to ebriety without injury to the general health.”

In an 1833 wine ranking by the journalist Cyrus Redding, the first tier included more than twenty varieties from France, followed by two from Spain (Lágrima from Málaga and Amontillado from Andalusia), two from Italy (Lacryma Christi produced in Campania and another wine from the province of Syracuse), a German one (made at Schloss Johannisberger, near the Rhine) and one from South Africa (Constantia, produced in the region of the same name). Southeastern and Central Europe were represented only with three wines, as follows: one from Hungary, where, in the county of Zemplén, there were wines “of a rich, luscious taste,” known as Tokay or Tokay Ausbruch. The second one was from Moldavia, made in Cotnari: “green, and becomes deeper by age; it is nearly as spirituous as brandy, and by many is preferred to Tokay.” The third one was from Cyprus, the “Commandery – thick, rich, and luxurious.” In addition to wine, Redding mentioned in the category of recommended drinks a Dalmatian brandy made from “grape murk [= marc], and aromatic herbs distilled,” and *boza*, a high-quality Turkish beer.

France gradually became a leader in wine exports and between 1847 and 1859, significant quantities of French wine went to Eastern and Central Europe, the United States of America, and to Africa and the colonies. The Southeastern European elite appreciated fine wines, from Bordeaux, Burgundy, and, of course, Champagne. Imports of wines and alcoholic beverages became really significant in Southeastern Europe and Russia after 1860. Historians Kym Anderson and Vicente Pinilla estimate that, from that point until the middle of the twentieth century, consumption of alcoholic drinks in this region would remain one sixth of global consumption but surpassed local production of wine and spirits, thus the significant imports.

In the press of early nineteenth-century Wallachia, advertisements related to the sale of alcoholic beverages were written mainly in French, the language spoken by members of the elite and of the rising bourgeoisie. In 1857, the diversity of imported foreign wines had increased to such an

extent that an advertisement in *Vestitorul românesc* listed only the most sought after:

The best high-quality foreign wines and from the most famous houses, such as Champagne, several qualities, Bordeaux, Chateau Lafite, St-Julien and Medoc, Madéra, Muscat de Lunel, Cogniac, Málaga, Ofner, Menischer, Tokayer, Vöslauer, Villaner, Carlovitzer, Schomlauer, Szexader and old Cyprus, and others.

A variety of wines, together with Jamaican and English rums, Verona salami, chocolate, canned French sardines, and cigarettes were among the products to be found in the well-stocked shop of Martinovici and Asan, on Lipscani Street.

*Dinner with the prince* Serious business was conducted over a good meal, as James Henry Skene, “a British resident of twenty years in the East,” concluded in 1850 when Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei, prince of Wallachia, invited him to dinner to find out more about his recent trip to Bulgaria and to learn about his political views. Apart from the good conversation, the dinner pleasantly surprised him:

Our dinner was most exquisite: truffles from Paris, oysters from Constantinople, and a pheasant from Vienna, all brought fresh by special couriers; and wines in perfection; hock of Prince Metternich’s best vintage, claret warmed, and champagne not over iced; in short, everything was quite as it should be.

The dessert was a vanilla pudding with whipped cream, followed by “Turkish pipes and coffee”; the dinner was set in a relaxed atmosphere, with conversation breaks. The sober clothing of the ruler, his interest in reforms, culture, and fine gastronomy determined Skene to compare him with Harun-al-Rashid, the legendary caliph of the Arab world. Here is how an invitation to dinner with the prince turned into a culinary treat for a foreigner who later fondly recorded the memorable event.

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## PART V

### *Body care: physicians and remedies*

#### *Medicine and cures in the seventeenth century*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

Concern for medicine and the treatment of various ailments with the help of the available pharmaceuticals increased in the seventeenth century. In Europe, the trade in medicines was growing and the number of preparations imported from the Orient or created in the newly established pharmacies was on the rise. Presentations of lists of pharmaceutical products, describing their properties, were printed under the title of *Materia medica*. The trend of expansion in the circulation of medicinal products and various pharmaceutical preparations also manifested itself in Southeastern Europe. On the one hand, a diversification of the dyes and the mineral and chemical ingredients imported from the Ottoman Empire can easily be traced in customs registers and tariffs; on the other hand, larger groups in various communities were becoming interested and more was being invested in scientific therapies and treatments. (It should be mentioned that here I shall not refer to medicinal plants recognised for their healing effects, or to the so-called “old wive’s” cures passed down from one generation to another.)

Important Transylvanian cities, such as Sibiu, Brașov, and Cluj, had certified apothecaries starting with the end of the Middle Ages. For instance, we can analyse the Sibiu pharmacy’s drug inventories from 1531



*Barber's apron, second half of the eighteenth century, Ottoman Empire. In the Romanian countries, as well, the barbers were the ones who provided the first aid for a long time (Applied Arts Museum, Budapest, inv. no. 18043. Photo: Ágnes Soltész-Haranghy).*

onwards. Beyond the network of specialists in the field, regular merchants also handled chemicals, dyes, and medicines and added such products to their trading goods. During the sixteenth century, shipments from the Balkans to Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania included alum, used to fix dyes to textile fibres, and dyes from the Far East, such as indigo or *gallus*, a natural green dye. A century later, imported chemicals had both multiplied and diversified. The Sibiu customs accounts mention a series of dyes: sumac and Venetian smoke tree, camphor leaf extract, Verdigris, lazurite, auripigment, minium (red), and a paint called *karaboi* (probably black). Poisons, whose names are difficult to translate from the seventeenth-century Hungarian original, were becoming known and are recorded as follows: “fish poison” (*halmazlag*), “mouse poison” (*egérmazlag*), and “wolf poison” (*farkasmazlag*). The total annual value of these types of products increased three times compared to the values recorded during the previous century. They also appeared for the first time in the customs tariffs of Transylvania in the middle of the seventeenth century. The tariff of the Wallachian customs at Căineni (“Adetul vămii scaliu de la Căineni”), located on the road

leading to Sibiu through the Olt valley, mentions the “horse load of herbs for cures” and “the horse load of dyes” among the goods for which merchants paid customs duties in Wallachia. The pharmaceuticals and chemicals trade had thus extended beyond the closed network of doctors or pharmacists and had become part of the traditional trade of consumer goods passing along the roads of the Ottoman Empire on their way to Europe.

Venice, the great commercial centre of the Mediterranean, was another important source from where various pharmaceutical preparations could be obtained. Prince Gabriel Bethlen of Transylvania often sent commissioners to buy silk, fine cloth, velvet, and sweets. The lists of expenses for several consecutive years indicate the prince’s appetite for luxury goods and, occasionally, for less common purchases. For instance, a list from August 10, 1627, includes “pharmacy oils” which the prince had ordered from Venice for the palace in Alba Iulia: black hellebore extract, sulphur oil, “stone oil” (petrol), and oil from the human skull, along with various seeds or musk.

### *Italian physicians in The Ottoman Empire*

GIULIA CALVI

**T**he Ottoman Empire was more diverse linguistically than any other modern State: a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-linguistic entity where language was a way of communicating, not of distinguishing or differentiating among peoples. The circulation of medical doctors between the Ottoman Empire and the western part of the Mediterranean offers a vibrant research opportunity. Greek, Jewish, and Venetian physicians travelled to different regions of the Ottoman Empire where they had successful careers treating European diplomats, high-ranking Ottoman officials, and voivodes of the Danubian Principalities. Italian doctor Giovanni Mascellini (1612–1675), a graduate of the University of Padua, offers an interesting case study. He was a physician at the court of Prince Matei Basarab in Wallachia and then personal physician and





Eighteenth-century pharmaceutical chest. According to a document found inside and dated 1787, the owner seems to have been a certain The-reza Kemény (Pharmacy History Collection – Pharmacy Museum – National Museum of the History of Transyl-vania, Cluj-Napoca).

secretary of Constantin Șerban Basarab. Fluent in Romanian and Greek, Mascellini also served as official interpreter for diplomatic missions. Travelling regularly to Constantinople, where his family lived, the doctor was part of the European diplomatic circles there and established close connections with the British ambassador, the Venetian *bailo* (consul), and the Ottoman court. He corresponded with members of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Congregatio de Propaganda Fide) on issues regarding Catholic missionaries in Wallachia and Moldavia, helped with the import of medicines, and travelled briefly to Crimea to treat the Tatar Khan Selim I Ghirai. Mascellini left an unpublished work, *Breve Relatione dell'Impero Ottomano nell'anno 1668* ("Short description of the Ottoman Empire in the year 1668"), dedicated to Grand Duke Cosimo III of Tuscany, and a medical treatise in Latin, *Artis Medicae quae continet*

*methodum et praecepta universalia ad medicinam faciendam summarium* ("Brief exposition of the medical art, which contains the universal method and teachings for the practice of medicine"), printed in Vienna in 1673, and dedicated to Achmet Pasha, at whose court he served as personal physician. The two texts, in Latin and Italian, shed light on the multiple political loyalties of the author, who offered the pasha a short treatise illustrating the basic principles for preserving and recuperating health.

Mascellini is a representative example of the European professional elite that settled in the Ottoman Empire, married into families of dragomans or doctors, and crossed ethnic, religious, and linguistic borders. Members of this elite generally had impressive careers and made fortunes importing medicines and exporting local cures. Being in direct contact with diplomats and politicians, they sent valuable information to Venice

and other European capitals. Mascellini's letters to the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in Rome regarding the situation of Christianity in the Balkans and the Black Sea region emphasise his role as a mediator between the two worlds during important moments in the history of the Ottoman Empire's relations with the Christian powers. His biography is similar to that of other physicians who left Italy for the Ottoman Empire from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century.

Starting with 1550, personal physicians were chosen in Venice from among Christian doctors, who then travelled with the Venetian *bailo* (consul) and his entourage to Constantinople. A doctor would remain in the capital of the empire for about two years, during the tenure of the *bailo*, and received a salary of 100 ducats. Personal physicians accompanied ambassadors to the main Venetian consulates in Damascus, Constantinople, and Alexandria. They were allowed to treat other patients in addition to the consul's family and other Venetian residents. As far as treatment was concerned, the doctors prescribed medication brought from Venice, but also sent home medicines used by the locals. Some of them were constantly in touch with merchants and supplemented their income by trading in various pharmaceutical preparations. For almost two centuries, Italian doctors, mostly graduates of the University of Padua, sustained a long-term cultural transfer by practising their profession in other lands. Seeing patients, prescribing treatments, and working occasionally as interpreters, they formed an elite group that mediated relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. They knew intimately the individuals they treated and were privy to various pieces of information, news (sometimes false), and rumours. Especially in wartime, the political information they sent home in their letters was of vital importance.

*Case study: Michelangelo Tilli* To better understand the role of Italian physicians in the relations between empires, let us consider the case of Michelangelo Tilli (1655–1750), who studied at the University of Pisa. Between 1683 and 1685 he stayed in the Ottoman Empire with the official task of treating Musahib Mustafa Pasha, who had married Sultan Mehmed IV's daughter Hatice in 1675. Mustafa was the sultan's companion and the favourite (*musahib*). In 1683 and 1684, he served as the Grand Admiral of the Fleet and a commander in Morea. It was a relevant diplomatic and

political move to send a promising young physician to treat the Pasha during a time when Christian armies were confronting the last Ottoman attack on Vienna and Eastern Europe (1683) and the Turks were fighting the Holy League in Central Europe.

Tilli's arrival in Constantinople coincided with the Ottoman war against the Habsburg Empire, and the catastrophic consequences of the failed siege of Vienna in September 1683 resonate in his unpublished letters and reports. Indeed, the doctor's letters, which combine political and diplomatic information with medical therapy, botanical observation, and the search for antiquities, show "the plurality of functions performed by early modern medical practitioners." Treating patients, observing, tasting local foods, communicating and eventually collecting both *naturalia* and antiquities required translating between languages and across cultures and these practices are at the core of Tilli's correspondence with Florence. Tilli travelled to Constantinople with surgeon Pierfrancesco Pasquali, arriving in the capital on Good Friday, April 16, 1683. They stayed in the *bailo*'s residence with eighteen members of his staff "all of them very young," including seven dragomans well provided for by the Venetian Republic and six "giovani di lingua" (apprentice dragomans). The doctor brought along the latest medical technology: three thermometers, a great novelty from Florence, where Galileo had first invented them.

While waiting to go to Belgrade, where Musahib Mustafa Pasha was based, Tilli had meetings with senior Ottoman rulers and visited the capital of the empire. Due to his training, he made a good impression, and, with the help of a young interpreter, he treated courtiers, was allowed to enter the women's quarters, and got to know the pharmacists who provided pharmaceuticals to Ottoman doctors, noting that "Turks pay very poorly." Following discussions with scholars and professors in the capital and seeing the European books they had in libraries and the exorbitant price of manuscripts (due to the absence of printing houses), Tilli seems to have been appalled at the poor scientific training of the Ottomans.

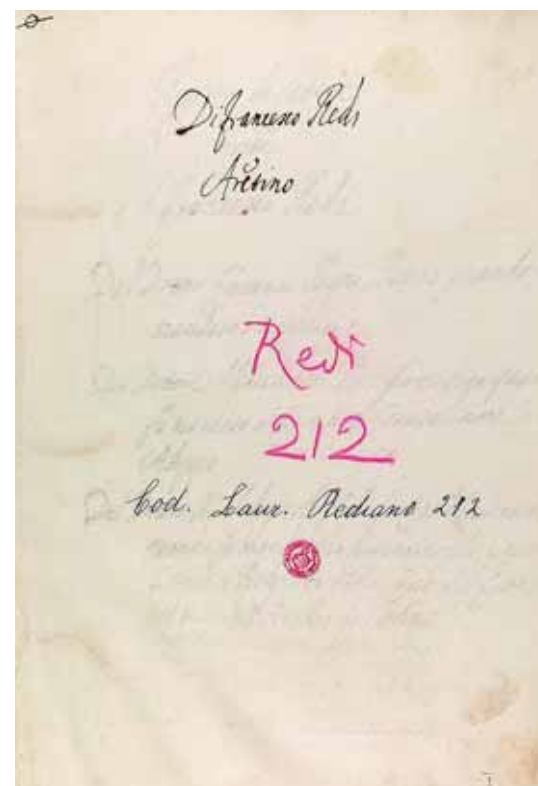
On July 24, 1683, after two months on the road, the doctor and surgeon, together with their entourage, arrived in Belgrade, where they were warmly received at the court of Musahib Mustafa Pasha. Tilli kept a constant record of the patient's progress throughout his stay in Belgrade. Because



the medicines he asked for from Florence were late to arrive, he prepared some medicines from local ingredients, such as animal fat and intestines, cabbage leaves, flowers and butter. He had also brought a number of pharmaceutical preparations from Florence, such as plant and flower essences, various ointments, oils, and human fat extracted under the direct supervision of Francesco Redi, his mentor, in the Fonderia Medicea (the famous laboratory in Florence, where various remedies were prepared). Towards the end of August, rumours began to circulate not only at the court, but also in the city. People became agitated in the absence of news about the siege of Vienna and Musahib Mustafa Pasha sent his men out on minor roads to scout for information. On September 20, after the defeat of the Ottomans, a young dragoman wrote in his diary that the entire court and the sultan himself seemed “to have lost their voices.”

On repeated occasions, due to the military conflicts, the doctor did not receive the medicines he requested from Florence. The remedies, sent from Florence to Belgrade and then to Edirne, had to go through Venice and Split or Ragusa. The small and precious medicine chests were accompanied by detailed instructions and sent via relatives, merchants, and diplomatic agents, or “slipped” into the official correspondence of the Serenissima with the Sublime Porte.

After news arrived from the battlefield, the pasha left Belgrade; a motley procession of soldiers, camels, bedecked horses, and musicians followed, including the unusual presence of the sultan’s daughter, Musahib Mustafa Pasha’s wife, escorted by a suite of ten carriages. “Crossing Serbia and Bulgaria again, we entered Rumelia,” writes Tilli, “where we found that villages and towns were less populated and fodder was nowhere to be found. In Bulgaria, the soldiers burnt and destroyed those poor straw huts that happened to be along the roads. Others had been spontaneously abandoned by the poor villagers, trying to find shelter from the troops and to hide in protected and fertile places, away from the immense open fields.” On November 4, the convoy arrived in Filipopol (Plovdiv), and then left for Edirne. When the Italian doctor stopped overnight in the snow-covered villages, he met poor families of peasants who were fighting for survival. The peasants expressed their religious identity through welcoming or hostile gestures. By February, they finally made it back to Constantinople,



Register of medical correspondence received by Francesco Redi (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, mss. Redi 212, ff. Ir and Iir, reproduced with the permission of MiBACT. Any reproduction without the consent of the institution is prohibited).

and the doctor began planning his return to Tuscany. “I left the Pasha at the beginning of July,” he wrote in his letters to Florence, “and he is free from all pain in the knee and can now pray kneeling down with his head on the ground without the help of all the people that had had to hold him on both sides. I am giving him no medication. He is now holding in his hands a small box with the ointment for nerves that was sent to me via Ragusa and he immediately had the prescription translated into Turkish.”

Tilli’s work, both as a physician and as an informed political observer, was favourably recompensed. The Grand Duke of Tuscany named him director of the Botanical Gardens in Pisa and he later became a member of the Royal Society in London (1708). He spent most of his life in Pisa and his only published work, the *Catalogus Plantarum Hortis Pisani*, was printed in Florence in 1723.

## *Italian physicians in Moldavia and Wallachia*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

Italian scholars and experts in different fields are very present in the cultural and professional life of the Romanian principalities in the seventeenth century. At the court of Constantin Brâncoveanu, we find two well-known Italians in the prince's entourage: his secretary, Anton Maria del Chiaro, and physician Giacomo Pilarino. From a letter of Ascanio Giustinian, the Venetian *bailo* in Pera, we learn that Pilarino was born in Kefalonia and, prior to his arrival at the Bucharest court, had spent some time in Russia. His medical skills and "perfect knowledge of foreign languages" made him a suitable candidate to take part in a number of diplomatic missions. In 1715, Pilarino returned to Padua and set down on paper observations regarding the prevention of smallpox that he had made during his tenure as Venetian consul in Smyrna. He presented his findings to the Royal Society in London the same year, but to little acclaim.

Most Italian physicians who joined the court of a Phanariot ruler would leave Moldavia or Wallachia when their patron was deposed; however, a few remained to offer their services to the local boyars. It was perhaps at the insistence of one such physician that Nicolae Mavrocordat (prince of Moldavia, 1711–1716) decided to vaccinate his offspring against smallpox. In a letter to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Chrisantos Nottaras, dated 19 February 1713, Mavrocordat's wife Pulheria described – with much affection – the children's inoculation and recovery from smallpox: "All the young princes and the princess bow to Your Blessedness and they kiss your holy right hand with devotion; especially Ioan, your godson, who was ill with smallpox and now, with your prayers, has recovered. Because Constantin had smallpox, we vaccinated Ienachi and Alexandru, our eldest son; and all three, with your holy prayers, have passed through this illness with ease."

Italian, French, German, and Greek physicians served the Phanariot rulers and their families. Some of them accumulated considerable wealth in the process, as was the case of Exupère-Joseph Bertin, a French doctor in Constantin Mavrocordat's service, who later became a member of the Academy of Sciences in Paris. Others, however, lost their fortunes and some even their lives in the Danubian Principalities. Such was the fate of

Italian physician Giuseppe Antonio Pisani, who arrived at the court of Constantin Racoviță in Iași in the summer of 1751 to attend to the prince's wife, Sultana. Unfortunately, her condition deteriorated the following December. When Sultana Racoviță passed away in early 1753, Pisani himself fell victim to court rivalries. He was accused of causing his patient's death by the treatment he had prescribed and was immediately thrown into prison. The prince's French secretary, François-Thomas Linchou, who had played a role in bringing the doctor from Warsaw, also fell into disgrace and was marginalised for a time. The chronicler of the period wrote: "they say this Frenchman was the occasion of the death of the prince's wife in his first reign, with a doctor whom he had brought and had introduced to the court, giving him praise for his learning." When he regained Racoviță's trust, Linchou asked Count Heinrich von Brühl, a close confidant of king Augustus III of Poland, to intervene on behalf of Pisani. The French ambassador to Constantinople, Pierre Puchot, Comte Des Alleurs, also intervened in favour of the imprisoned physician, expressing his willingness to take him into his employment in order to secure his release. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing whether Constantin Racoviță released Pisani as he claimed, so the doctor's fate is lost to historians trying to make sense of the diplomatic correspondence between Istanbul, Bucharest, and Warsaw. Pisani's ordeal, however, was not singular. To be a physician and a diplomat at the same time was not for the faint hearted, as both career paths involved using information that was not accessible to others and handling secrets. Suspicions of intrigue and conspiracy always thrived around doctors and death was closer to them than glory.

Physician Nicolo (Nicola, Niculae, Neculae) Ramelli's activity between 1790 and 1819 is much better documented. The file, kept in the archives of the Library of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest, contains documents regarding his activity and correspondence. Letters, prescriptions, contracts, passports, travel documents and statements written in Italian, Romanian, Russian, French, Greek, or Latin reflect not only the linguistic skills of the physician, but also his status within the community. By analysing these documents, we are able to plot and piece together the course of his life.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Nicolo Ramelli arrived in Galați from Istanbul. Finding no employment, he went to Orhei county and



then to Chişinău. On 14 September 1801 the *serdar*'s office of Orhei assigned to him a number of locals, who were to pay him in exchange for the medical services he provided. The circle of patients continued to grow steadily and in 1802 Ramelli was in Chişinău, where other patients, especially craftsmen, were mentioned on his list with the mention that "he has no special payment from the town." Those listed would be exempted from payment of local taxes on condition that they covered the pay of the physician instead. In 1804, the inhabitants of the city wrote him a thank-you letter in the form of a recommendation: "We all, the undersigned, honestly give this testimonial to physician Neculai Ramelli. While he lived here, in Chişinău, in all treatments of the sick that he undertook, he proved worthy. And being satisfied, we bear witness in his favour." The doctor had to gain the trust of the population in order to earn his living. Three years later he was still in Chişinău and his clientele had grown to include boyars and officials. However, the doctor could not cover all his expenses only by practicing medicine, so he started lending money and keeping an inn. Around 1817, Ramelli crossed the River Prut and set up a new practice in Bacău. The physician settled down in the houses of Anton Afloarei, which he promised to repair and maintain, practicing medicine again. While he was settling down in Bacău, his wife Tecla sent him a letter informing him that she had been ill and had had a miscarriage, but that she had survived with the help of her family. Here is a fragment of the letter: "I am happy to find out that you are healthy and you must know that now I am healthy too, but you left Chişinău, I fell ill and lost the baby. You write that you want me to come to Bacău, because you have settled as a physician there. I will come, but you must know that of the money you left me to take out from the places you know about, I took out no money and received no interest, and I have lived till now on my own money, as you know, and with help from my mother." Tecla was the sister of Pietro Savizki, who sent his best wishes and asked his brother-in-law to write back more often. In the same letter, Pietro Savizki mentioned the lines he was to send to Dimitrie Sulima, the archbishop of Chişinău and Hotin.

Recalling his experience in Chişinău, Doctor Ramelli did not want to be again at the mercy of city dwellers, so he signed contracts with Moldavian boyars whom he promised to treat for the sum of 1,200 *lei* per annum. At

the same time, he had contracts with the inhabitants of Bacău, from whom was prepared to accept various products as payment. A list of food products (corn flour, a barrel of wine, etc.) that he received and subsequently sold proves that not all of his patients had money to pay for the doctor's services. Furthermore, even though he had signed individual contracts with the representatives of the local elite, he was asked to help their relatives, friends, and acquaintances too. Here is a letter sent by *spătar* Ioan Sturdza, asking Ramelli to treat the wife of one of his protégés:

To Honourable Her[r] Neculai Ramelli

Relying on the power of true and not false love, I am sending to you the wife of Ştefan the priest whom I have hired in place of the *vătaf* in Iaşi, who asked (since he is employed by me) to leave. Which wife of Ştefan, I ask you to do all that is possible for her needs, because she is suffering, that she may be healed before I am due to leave for Iaşi and I may have no delay in setting out. And I shall remain very indebted to you.

25 April 1817, Solca

Ioan Sturdza, *spătar*

It was not only the local elite who asked for help from Doctor Ramelli, however. In his correspondence we find letters from Giuseppe Manzoli de Cevoli, an Italian living in Galaţi at that time (and who addressed him as his "godfather"), from Louis Blanchaid, a Frenchman living in Piatra Neamţ, and from a certain Louppe R., who urgently needed a purgative, as the following request shows:

*Monsieur,*

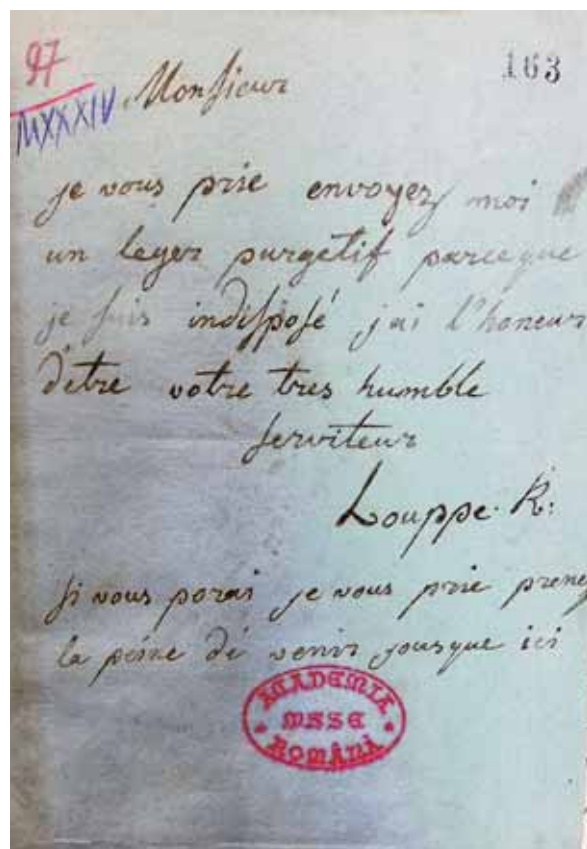
*Je vous prie, envoyez-moi un léger purgatif, parce que je suis indisposé. J'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble serviteur,*

*Louppe R.*

*Si vous po[u]r[r]ez, je vous prie, prenez la peine de venir jusqu'ici.*

*À Monsieur Nicolas, docteur en médecine.<sup>1</sup>*

1. "Sir, Please send me a light purgative, because I am unwell. I have the honor of being your very humble servant, Louppe R. If you can, please take the trouble to come here. To Mr. Nicolas, Doctor of Medicine."



Letter sent by Louppe R. to physician Nicola Ramelli (Library of the Romanian Academy, Historical Collection, MXXXIV/97).

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PART VI

*Social life, family life, leisure time*

*Building prestige: monumental architecture, hierarchies, and social status*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK

In 1722, in the Kağıthane Valley, close to Constantinople, Sultan Ahmed III began building a palace that was to cause controversy among his contemporaries and historians alike. The palace, called Saadabad, was actually a pavilion, an open and welcoming construction, very different from the traditional centre of sultanate power, Topkapı, with its impressive brick walls. The pavilion was surrounded by gardens and small kiosks for court officials. With open spaces, gardens, and relaxed atmosphere, the new building represented a notable change in relation to the massive and sober constructions of Ottoman architecture from the previous period. Saadabad also became the symbol of the Tulip Age, a period of prosperity and calm, inaugurated under the auspices of Grand Vizier Damat Ibrahim Pasha (1718–1730). Thus, the elite left behind the bustling capital and moved closer to the Bosphorus, on the banks of the Golden Horn. The great Ottoman poet Nedim praised the beauty of the palace: “Come quickly, just take a look, the eye is no longer obstructed: Saadabad is now a garden on the hilltop, my love.”

The 1730 revolt against Sultan Ahmed III and his grand vizier marked the end of the palace, whose beauty we can only imagine today thanks to the descriptions and paintings of the time. Its destruction may be interpreted as a reaction to the luxurious and peaceful life of the elites, as a conservative response to the tendencies of Westernization in the early





"Garden scene near Saadabad Palace." Miniature from Fazıl Enderuni, *Hubanname ve Zenanname*, 1793 (Istanbul University Library, T5502).





eighteenth century, and as an outburst of soldiers' anger over the recent defeat in Persia. However, the controversy around the reasons for the destruction of the palace could also be approached from a more encompassing point of view regarding concepts of luxury, social status, and identity in early modern Southeastern Europe.

The dispute over the palace reveals the obstacles and pitfalls associated with analysing old monuments which no longer exist, based on biased or skewed descriptions. For instance, Western travellers drew a comparison between Ahmed III's palace and Louis XIV's Versailles, pointing to the gardens and canals surrounding Saadabad. In fact, the construction of the palace coincided with an important diplomatic mission to France, led by Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi (1719-1720), who, upon his return, composed a detailed report including details about social life, art, and architecture in the French capital. Thus, the argument goes, it was Versailles that served as the model for Ahmed III's palace and, following a series of military defeats, the Sublime Porte came to recognise Europe's military superiority and tried to adopt its models. Therefore, both the construction

*Genre scene, palace near the Bosphorus (detail), in Fazil Enderuni, Hubanname ve Zenanname, 1793 (Istanbul University Library, T5502).*

and the destruction of Saadabad coalesce into the narrative of a failed attempt at Westernization.

Yet, other scholars argue that the model of the Saadabad palace could not have been Versailles, but the residences of the Safavid shahs in Isfahan, built in the form of pavilions surrounded by gardens and decorative canals. The Safavid dynasty collapsed in 1722, and the Ottomans' military intervention in Persia ultimately triggered the revolt that led to the destruction of the palace in 1730. Within this narrative, Saadabad was not a recognition of Western superiority, but rather a statement of imperial strength. By appropriating the style of the Safavids on a larger scale, the Ottomans were also annexing their political legacy. Ultimately, however, Ibrahim Pasha's unpopular military venture in Persia caused both the military revolt and the destruction of the palace.

The controversy over Saadabad's meaning demonstrates the difficulties associated with interpreting architectural monuments, but at the same time shows the necessity of addressing the role of the built environment in exploring social hierarchies, identity, and daily life in early modern Southeastern Europe. By their sheer size, residences, religious buildings, and other forms of architecture framed the stage of everyday life and confirmed the status of their





founders' identity. Their form was shaped at the intersection of politics, social norms, artistic trends, and economic wealth, and their utility went beyond simple living or meeting places into the realm of interpretation and meaning making. In this sense, they constituted the ultimate objects of display, comprising within their walls all other aspects of material culture. As a result, discussing architecture and its role within the material world has to take into account various scales and layers of meaning and social practice.

The first layer takes into account the urban landscape as a crucial site where the imperial power of Venice or of the Sublime Porte was not only exercised, but also displayed, following a particular visual and architectural code. At the same time, inscribing the imperial identity into the landscape did not take place in a vacuum: most towns in the region developed prior to the advent of Ottomans, Venetians, or Habsburgs. Although the late medieval and early modern period witnessed the establishment of some major cities, such as Sarajevo, in most locales, imperial authorities had to insert themselves into the existing urban fabric. The ways they did so differed considerably, focusing on specific landmarks as manifestations of authority and belonging.

The Venetian Republic, which dominated the cities on the Dalmatian coast and a chain of Mediterranean islands, such as Crete and Cyprus, controlled the elites of cities such as Kotor or Zadar, which preserved their own communal institutions and identity. These cities sought to maintain the fragile balance between maintaining good ties with the Republic of San Marco and pursuing their local interests. To some extent, this involved the renaming the cities' most prominent spaces. Thus, the central square in Venetian colonies was retitled after *Piazza San Marco*, the focal point of *Serenissima's* republican culture and identity. The architecture of local palaces also took into account the Venetian style, creating a symbolic and visual resemblance between the metropolis and its colonies. The most prominent visual symbol of a city's connection to Venice was the Lion of Saint Mark, depicted on the Republic's coat of arms and prominently featured on public buildings and gates leading into the city.

The Ottomans' mechanisms of weaving themselves into urban landscapes were different from those of Venice. For a long time, scholars as-

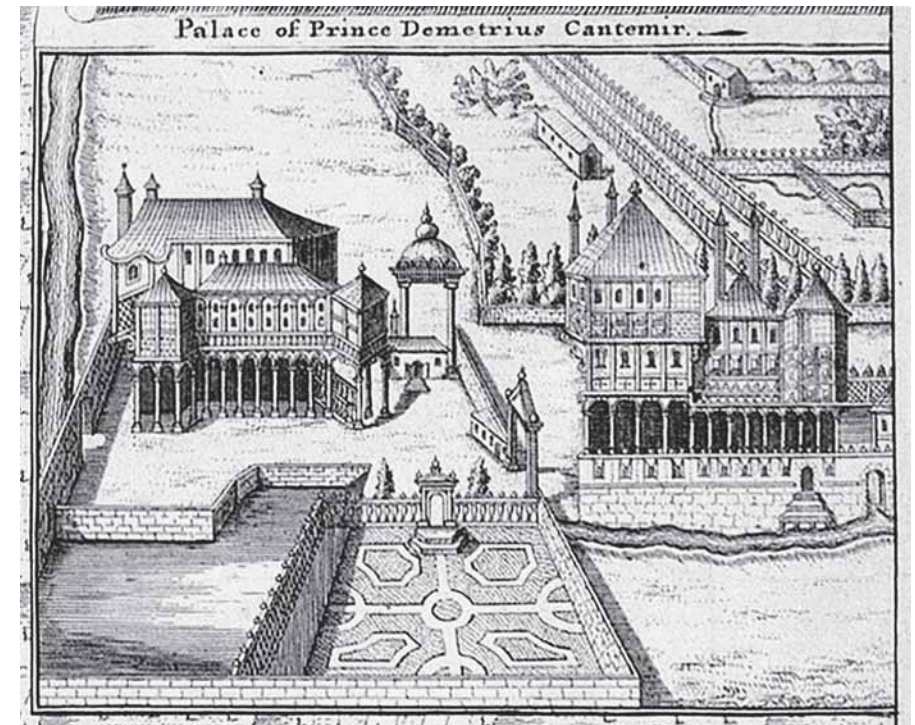
sumed that Ottoman urbanism was merely a variant of the "Islamic city" blueprint, that religion was the sole factor that shaped the cityscape, and that all Muslim cities had effectively the same plan, with a central mosque adjoined by the bazaar, with industries, such as tanning and dyeing, on the outskirts. They also presumed that Ottoman-conquered cities did not have local authorities and that people of different faiths and ethnicities lived in separate neighbourhoods, with no contact between them. More recent scholarship has rejected this view, pointing out various factors influencing the form of cities throughout the Muslim world and drawing attention to the dynamic process that shaped them. A crucial piece in this process was *vakf*, a pious endowment through which a patron set aside part of his property for a specific charitable or religious cause. The sultan, his officials, and ordinary folk alike established *vakfs* to help maintain a variety of institutions and public services, including mosques, schools, public kitchens (*imarets*), baths, and water supply systems. For the members of the imperial elite, the establishment of *vakfs* had another, more immediate advantage since such property could not be confiscated by the treasury and the accumulated wealth thus remained under the control of the family.

Religious establishments constituted the second layer of architectural display. The most prominent building that projected the sultan's authority onto the cityscape was the congregational mosque (*cami*), where the local Muslim community would assemble for the Friday prayer and sermon. As such, they were the largest and most prestigious institutions in Ottoman cities and by the sixteenth century a visual code and clear hierarchy had developed to proclaim the empire's identity. The creator of the empire's visual identity was the chief architect of Suleiman the Magnificent, Mimar Sinan (ca. 1490–1588), who designed buildings that are still considered jewels of Ottoman architecture. Sinan built hundreds of monuments in Constantinople and throughout the empire; in doing so, he established both the basic characteristics of the imperial architectural style and a strict hierarchy that reflected the position of the mosques' founders. The most important are, of course, the monumental sultanic mosques in Istanbul, established as sultanic *vakfs*, surrounded by vast complexes that housed related institutions. In the imperial provinces, mosques were



usually built at the initiative of governors or local officials, but the project depended on the sultan's approval. This approval was not a simple formality, as it had to be determined whether there were enough Muslims living in that community to begin such a construction; if not enough believers came to the new mosque, the sultan's prestige would be diminished. Usually, mosques in the provinces were smaller in size, but their style was similar to the large models of the capital. They did not only serve as symbols of the sultan's power and piety; donations to these mosques increased the prestige of the founders and kept their memory alive. For instance, the mosque built in Sarajevo with Gazi Hüsrev bei's endowment still exists today, and is one of the representative monuments of the city. The more modest religious institutions played the same role: in cities under Ottoman rule, social life was more dynamic in neighbourhoods (*mahalle*) close to mosques, which were also named after the founder. In the eighteenth century, when the power of local officials (*ayan*) increased considerably, the architectural style of provincial mosques changed, giving up the hieratic, "classical" style of Mimar Sinan. The local leaders kept the association with both the empire and the community to which they belonged, introducing new elements in the architectural repertoire.

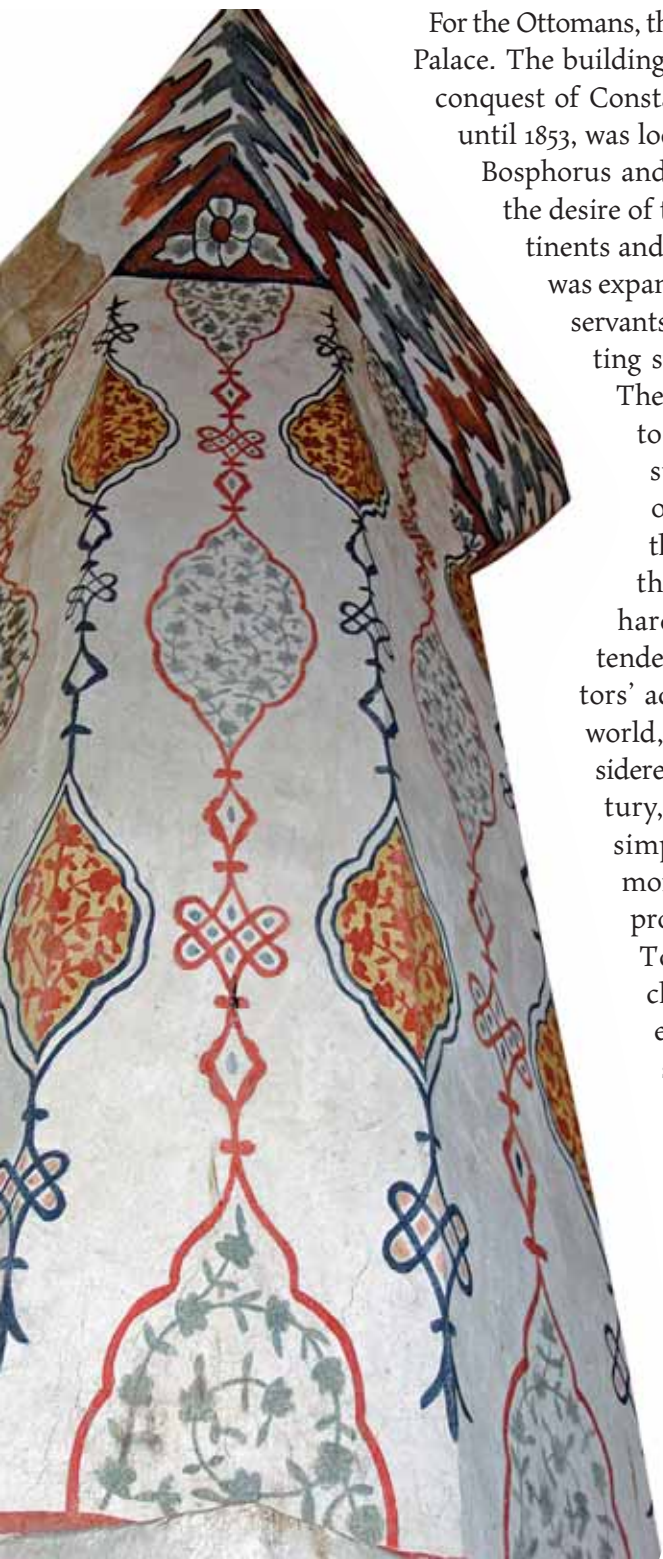
Efforts to leave a confessional and political imprint on the cities of Southeastern Europe materialised differently, depending on the situation. Travelling from Bosnia to Ragusa, Evliya Çelebi called the Dalmatian port "the town of stone"; from the description we realise the expectations the Ottoman traveller had when visiting a city. Crossing the Danube aroused the same surprising reactions: the Syrian Orthodox priest Paul of Aleppo was overwhelmed to see churches and hear bells when he arrived in Galați. The rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia chose to build places of worship in order to increase their prestige. In 1640, when he traversed Moldavia with a Polish-Lithuanian delegation, the nobleman Zbigniew Lubieniecki visited the church of the Holy Three Hierarchs in Iași, mentioning in his writings that the Moldavian rulers built monasteries in their capital. Vasile Lupu wanted to surpass his predecessors and, "not sparing any money, as they told us, he spent over 250 thousand guilders" on the church's construction. Even if he did not like the ruler and was dissatisfied with his reception in Moldavia, Lubieniecki still praised the quality of the ornaments and the



*The drawing of the palace in Istanbul by Dimitrie Cantemir, in the volume The History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire, trans. N. Tindal, 1734 (Carol I Central University Library, Bucharest).*

beauty of the building. He had to admit that he had been impressed by the grandiose project of the Moldavian prince.

The third layer of visual exposure is residential architecture; in this case, cultural differences, pragmatic motives, and the wealth of the owners led to great variations in style. The size of the house, the decorations of the façade, and the internal design of the space were meant to reflect the status of the owner and to provide an environment appropriate to the rank. The houses of the elites were vast: in 1670, Ömer Pasha, the governor of Diyarbakir province, had over 200 paid servants, in addition to protégés, servants, and family members. A massive building that could accommodate everyone was therefore a necessity, not just a symbol of prestige.



For the Ottomans, the ideal residence was the Topkapı Palace. The building, begun by Mehmed II after the conquest of Constantinople and sultan's residence until 1853, was located on the hill overlooking the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn, symbolising the desire of the sultans to rule “over two continents and two seas.” Gradually, the palace was expanded to make room for numerous servants and officials and to provide a setting suitable for imperial ceremonies. The palace had four inner courtyards to which access was gradually restricted: the first courtyard was open to almost everyone, while the third and fourth were reserved for the sultan, his servants, and the harem. This arrangement was intended to impress and to increase visitors' admiration for the master of the world, as the Ottoman sultan was considered. However, in the eighteenth century, the Ottoman ceremonial was simplified, moving away from the monumental and hierarchical forms promoted by the topography of the Topkapı Palace. The period was characterised by a growing preference for suburban gardens and seaside palaces, which allowed for a more pleasant lifestyle and freer socialization. The sumptuous houses built on the seafront (*yalı*) had large windows and im-

*Fresco from the church of Stelea monastery, Târgoviște (Photo: Lidia Cotovanu).*

pressive decorations. Such a house usually had one or two floors and a central hall (*sofa*), from where one would enter rooms with specific purposes, such as the coffee lounge (*kahve odası*), the library or the room for listening to the singing of birds (*bülbülhane*). The terraces were also very popular spaces. The interiors were decorated with sofas, pillows, velvets, and carpets. As we have seen, the Ottoman tradition involved the separation of the sexes, and the houses were divided into a space dedicated to men (*selamlık*) and a space dedicated to women (*haremlık*); the idea was not to exclude women from the public space, but rather to protect them from the foreign gaze. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the wife of the British ambassador to Constantinople, provides relevant details on the social life of the female elites in the capital of the empire. Since not all families could afford to separate their living space, respecting this tradition was in itself a symbol of social status and wealth.

The architectural style of the capital spread and influenced the appearance of buildings throughout the empire, but in the case of residential architecture we cannot speak of the homogeneity specific to religious constructions. An empire boasting “seven climates” and therefore including a considerable diversity of climatic conditions, in fact supported a variety of architectural forms of expression. Nonetheless, the movements of members of the Ottoman elite in the empire and the links of local elites with the authorities of the capital contributed to the spread of specific customs and elements.

This tendency, which transcended religious boundaries, is also present in the Danube principalities. The Italian traveller Niccolò Barsi likened the splendour of the court of Moldavia in 1640 to the splendour of the imperial court in Constantinople, while Miron Costin mentions that Vasile Lupu decorated his palace with ceramic tiles, doubtless brought from Kütahtya or Iznik. The Turkish scholar Evliya Çelebi also praised the good taste of the voivode as he passed through Iași, while the Pole Zbigniew Lubieniecki jokingly remarked on the expansion of the princely court, which sometimes led to less than practical solutions: “I understand that he has no other reason than for the world to admire him [...]. Everyone eats separately: he, his son, his wife and daughters, and they all have separate kitchens. I hope he at least sleeps with his wife.” This Ottomanization of



the domestic space was not limited only to the prince but was adopted over time by the boyars and merchants of Moldavia and Wallachia. The oldest surviving houses, such as the Melik House in Bucharest, illustrate this concept and point to social practices similar to those of their Ottoman contemporaries.

We thus reach the fourth layer of the visual programme, that of the ornaments. As a rule, the role of decorations has tended to be neglected by the history of art and architecture, although decorations have played a central role in building identities, self-representations, and assigning new meanings to canonised forms. The Ottomanization of the Danube principalities is most evident at this level of decoration. In 1645, Vasile Lupu founded a church in the courtyard of Stelea monastery in Târgoviște, as a sign of reconciliation with the Wallachian ruler, Matei Basarab, after a series of armed confrontations. Vasile Lupu chose to erect the church near the monastery, built by the merchant Stelea, because the burial place of his father, *vel ağã Nicolae Coci*, was there. It seems that Vasile Lupu was very generous and, according to Paul of Aleppo, he built a “very large and tall [church], with two proud towers and many crosses [above], which they told us that it took seven hundred Venetian guilders to cover. Its iconostasis is a Russian work, it shines brightly, and has three doors.” The church was damaged in 1658, but Mihnea III restored it immediately. It is striking that the restored frescoes did not follow the local iconographic tradition, but consisted of a repeated pattern of knots and floral motifs, inspired by Iznik pottery and found in sultanate mosques. We do not know for sure if the original paintings looked like this, but it is clear that Mihnea III, a protégé of a high Ottoman dignitary, sought to convey a message about his identity by using these Ottoman forms. The popularity of these ornamental forms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be seen in many churches in Wallachia and Moldavia, paralleling the political assimilation of the boyar elites to a common Ottoman culture.

Finally, the fifth layer, less visible, concerns infrastructure. A conclusive example is the construction of wells, which in eighteenth-century Constantinople were often the result of donations made through the institution of the *vakf*. Sultan Ahmed III initiated a huge project to restore the water supply system, building a reservoir in Büyükdere to provide drinking

water to the neighbourhoods of Pera and Galata by means of a system of wells built with pious donations from the members of the sultan’s family, through the same institution of the *vakf*. The facades of the fountains and the reservoir had the names of the donors inscribed on them, along with praises in verse. The infrastructure project mirrored the sultan’s political authority which symbolically flowed together with the water from the reservoir to the fountains and wells established with donations by his officials and favourite subjects.

Unlike Constantinople, Iași did not have a drinking water distribution system in the eighteenth century, the water being brought by *sacagii* (water carrier). Starting with Grigore II Ghica, the rulers of Moldavia supported the modernization of the infrastructure. Progress was thwarted several times by natural disasters or political change, but in the second half of the eighteenth century, the city was provided with a water supply system, albeit a small one. The project bears the imprint of Ottoman influence, taking place in parallel with an expansion in the construction of fountains in Constantinople. The imperial capital provided building materials and technical knowledge with the help of two Albanian *sulugi*, Dima and Constantin (who supervised the works in Iași from the 1730s to the 1770s). For example, in 1766, the Ottoman authorities sent to Iași four hundred lead pipes needed for repairs. Most of the water fountains built during that period have disappeared, but it is clear that they were reproductions of the popular models in the Ottoman capital. Two surviving examples, which flank the bell tower of St. Spiridon’s Church, show the direct connection with the Ottoman space. Inscriptions in Romanian, Greek, and Ottoman Turkish accompany the fountains, praising Prince Grigore III Ghica for his contribution to the city’s water supply. The use of the three languages refers to the dignities held by Grigore III Ghica: prince of Moldavia, former member of the Greek cultural elite, and grand dragoman of the Sublime Porte (1758–1764).

The water supply system in the capital of Moldavia is generally seen as a sign of modernization and European influence, but in fact the project bears the imprint of the strong Ottoman imperial model, inextricably linked to the Phanariot rulers of the two Romanian lands.

## *Sufragerie, sofră, and the oriel (sacnasiu)*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

Understanding the interior design of houses from the past is a rather difficult task. In Moldavia and Wallachia, there are not many documents that can help us understand the role of women and men in decorating their own homes. There is some information to be found about beds, benches, tables, chairs, sofas, divans, stoves, and shelves, but less about who chose them or about how and why certain items were chosen. Was it primarily for their utility, or for their aesthetic qualities? Regarding the interiors of the eighteenth century, answers are long overdue. The historical archives offer some clues to interested historians about the place spouses called “home.” Especially, when “home” was a zone of conflict and the spouses argued over the goods with which the wife had “populated” the house, that is, part of her dowry, while the husband had “depopulated” it, by selling his wife’s dowry at the village pub or in the local neighbourhood (*mahala*). But what goods for interior decoration did a typical dowry consist of? Dowry lists always had a section entitled “bedding items.” Thus, the bride would bring into the house covers, sheets, large and small pillows, towels, blankets, quilts, and duvets, all listed in groups of 6 or 12. The bedding reflected very well the social condition of the house in which it arrived. For instance, when she married Costache Ghica, Măriuța Cantacuzino brought in an expensive duvet of woollen cloth and a silk mattress, a silk duvet, a down-filled comforter covered in red atlas, 2 large down-filled pillows, 4 small pillows filled with duck down, pillow covers and bed sheets (some “heavy”, some “light”), tablecloths, napkins, and towels. As an add-on, there was also a “large mirror”, for which a cover was woven. In addition to these items needed for the newlyweds’ bedroom, the bride, who was marrying for the second time, also brought in items to be used for making and serving food. Made exclusively from silver, they were mentioned in the dowry list under the heading “tableware”: “24 silver knives, 25 silver spoons, 2 candlesticks, one silver coffee tray, 12 tombac *zarfs* cups with their *fincans*, a jam bowl with its own soon, a silver salt cellar, a silver incense burner, a silver



Oriental-style brass lamp (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century Merchant House Museum, Ploiești, inv. no. 34-2096. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

Bottom: Wooden and mother-of-pearl scrapers (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Bellu Mansion Museum, Urlați, inv. no. 34-3688. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

watering can, 24 tin plates, 24 tin bowls, 12 pots with lids, a washing bowl with pitcher, 2 vodka containers, one large, one small.”

Descriptions from narrative sources and lithographs help us reconstruct the interiors of past houses. Exhibits in various European museums also contribute to our understanding of how objects were placed and enable us

to observe the influences of the Ottoman style. Given that the Ottoman world has been attracting increasing interest for several decades, we have discovered a number of reconstructed interiors in many of the museums visited. A series of architectural and decorative elements in Hagi Prodan’s house in Ploiești, which has become the Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century Merchant House Museum, in the Melnik house in Bucharest, or in the Marcu Beza – Hortensia and Vasile G. Beza collection in the Museum of Art Collections in Bucharest; these restored houses or interiors can be compared with similar elements in the Athenian home of the rich merchant Emmanuel Benakis (today the Benaki Museum) or even in the







Oriel (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century Merchant House Museum, Ploiești. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

guest room of a Christian merchant of Aleppo, recreated at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. The objects gathered in the various museum collections differ in value and in age, of course, but they have much in common in their visual impact..

The main room of a house, the living room, which in modern Romanian we usually call the *sufragerie* (from the Turkish *sofracı*), is a place of meeting and conversation, and its arrangement is amenable to both. Marița and Ivan Hagi Prodan decorated their living room according to the fashion of the time. Ivan Prodan was also influenced by the interiors he had seen during his trip to Jerusalem. From there, the rich merchant brought a large icon, painted on canvas. The title of *hagi*, added to his name, certified that he had made this pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The living room of the house was extended into a bay (Romanian *sacnasiu*, from Turkish *şahnişin*) with large windows that let the warm sunshine on oriental carpets, velvet pillows embroidered with geometric motifs, and sofas placed directly on the floor, illuminating the carved wooden ceiling and the ivory inlaid coffee table. The protruding bay is an orien-



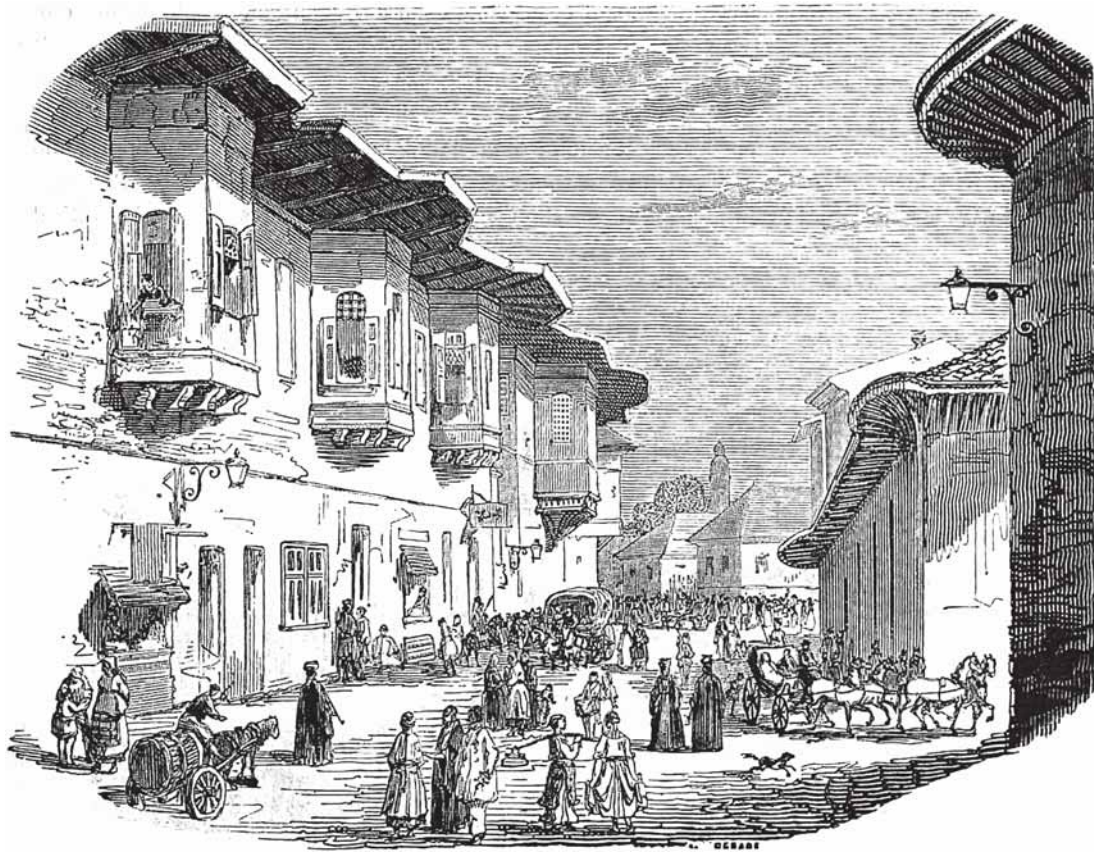
Narghile (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology – Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century Merchant House Museum, Ploiești, inv. no. 34-6738. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

tal-inspired architectural feature that decorated many of the homes of wealthy merchants in Southeastern Europe. Easily noticeable in urban architecture, the oriel is closed with a *geamlâc* (*çamlık* in Turkish), that is, an oriel window providing a wide view of the surroundings.

Numerous accounts confirm the important role of the bay: sitting on sofas and smoking, boyars and merchants contemplated the hustle and bustle of the street or watched passers-by while enjoying their coffee.

It was in such an oriel, in the autumn of 1814, that Dimitrie Foti Merișescu remained locked when he got lost in the house of the boyar Grigore Băleanu. Leaving the salon (or *sufragerie*) to go on the balcony (as he calls it), the young man had to wait for several hours until he was discovered and “rescued.” Meanwhile, the daily social rituals were taking place in the salon. The boyar drank his coffee, tasted fruit preserves, puffed on his narghile, and all the while received his servants to give them instructions to follow throughout the day; the canaries that the young Dimitrie Merișescu took care of kept him company. It was also in the salon, that the boyarress, Maria Băleanu (née Brâncoveanu), received her

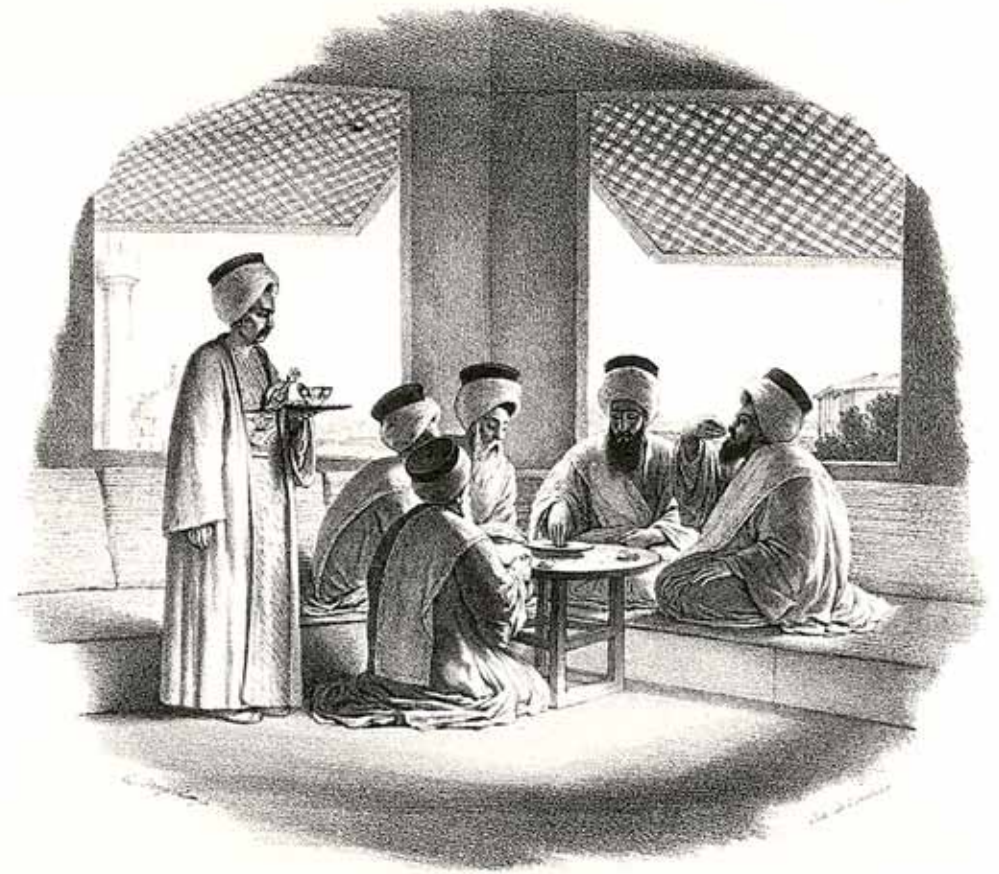




Charles Doussault, "Street in Bucharest", in *L'illustration*, 1841 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

acquaintances. Moreover, the salon was an ideal place to receive merchants and assess goods. When she married off her daughter, Maria Băleanu did not go shopping on the muddy streets of the city, but called the merchants to the mansion from Băneasa, asking them to bring the best and most refined clothes and ornaments. Once they arrived, they lined the salon with fabrics, shoes, jewellery and ribbons, an opportunity to look, try and match: "They filled the salon with merchandise. Many ladies and gentlemen came out, as if it were a fair. They chose, they bargained," wrote Merișescu, temporarily in the role of a merchant's journeyman.

The *sufagerie* and the *sofra* (a low table or tray used as a dining table) were central pieces in the organization of meetings that took place in the homes of famous people. Two lithographs from the same period give us

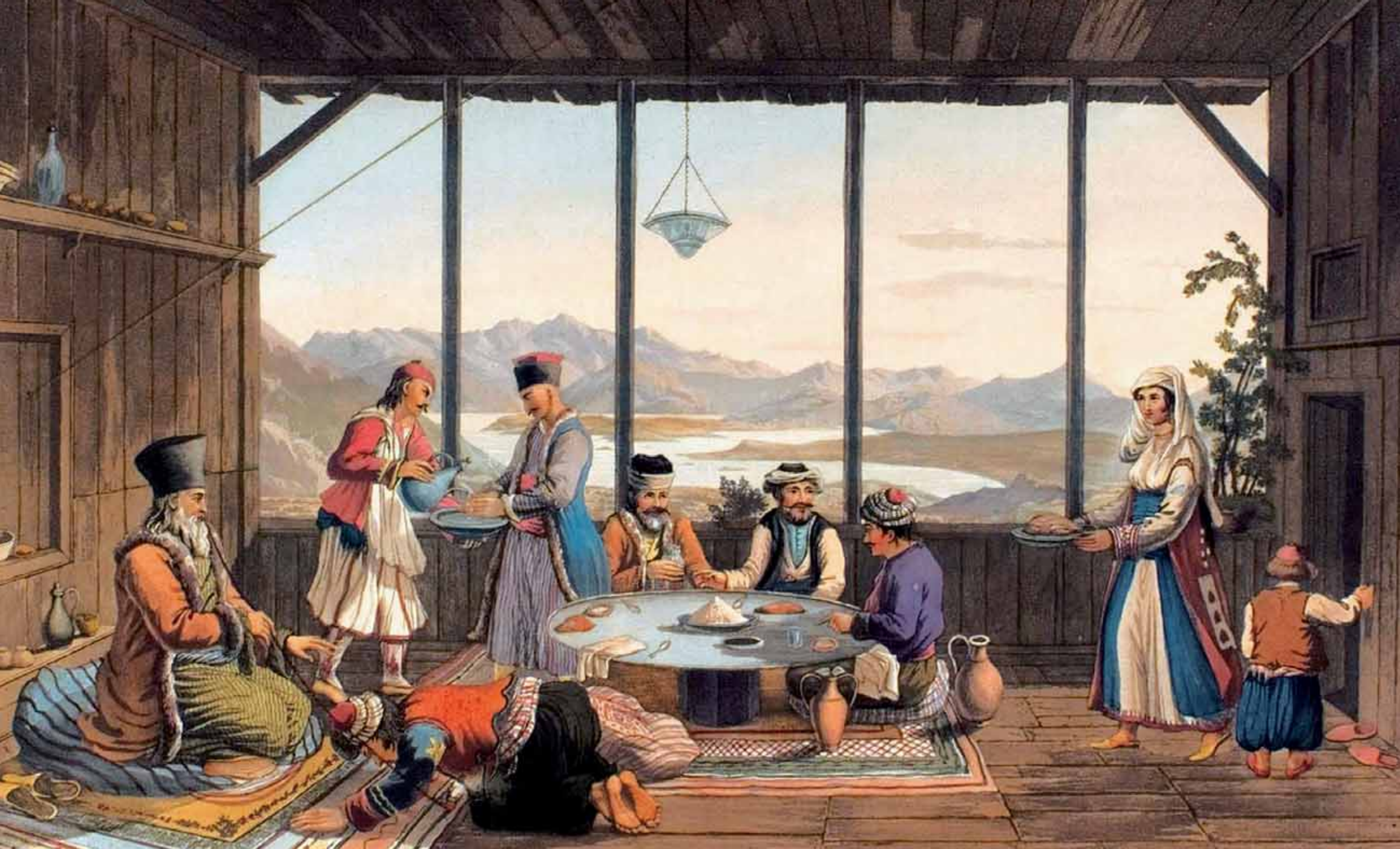


"Lunch at the Governor of Athens", in Louis Dupré, *Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople*, Paris, 1825 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

the opportunity to enter two different houses and observe how meals were served around the *sofra*. The well-known painter Louis Dupré described the lunch served to the governor of Athens and his guests, at which he was present as an eyewitness, as follows: "They had towels over their shoulders: a number of servants were behind them, standing, and ever ready to pour water [for washing]; they ate the rice with a little spoon, but all the other dishes with their fingers. The meal was short and very simple. When they had finished, they washed their hands and mouths with the greatest care. All this was done with a grave and solemn air."

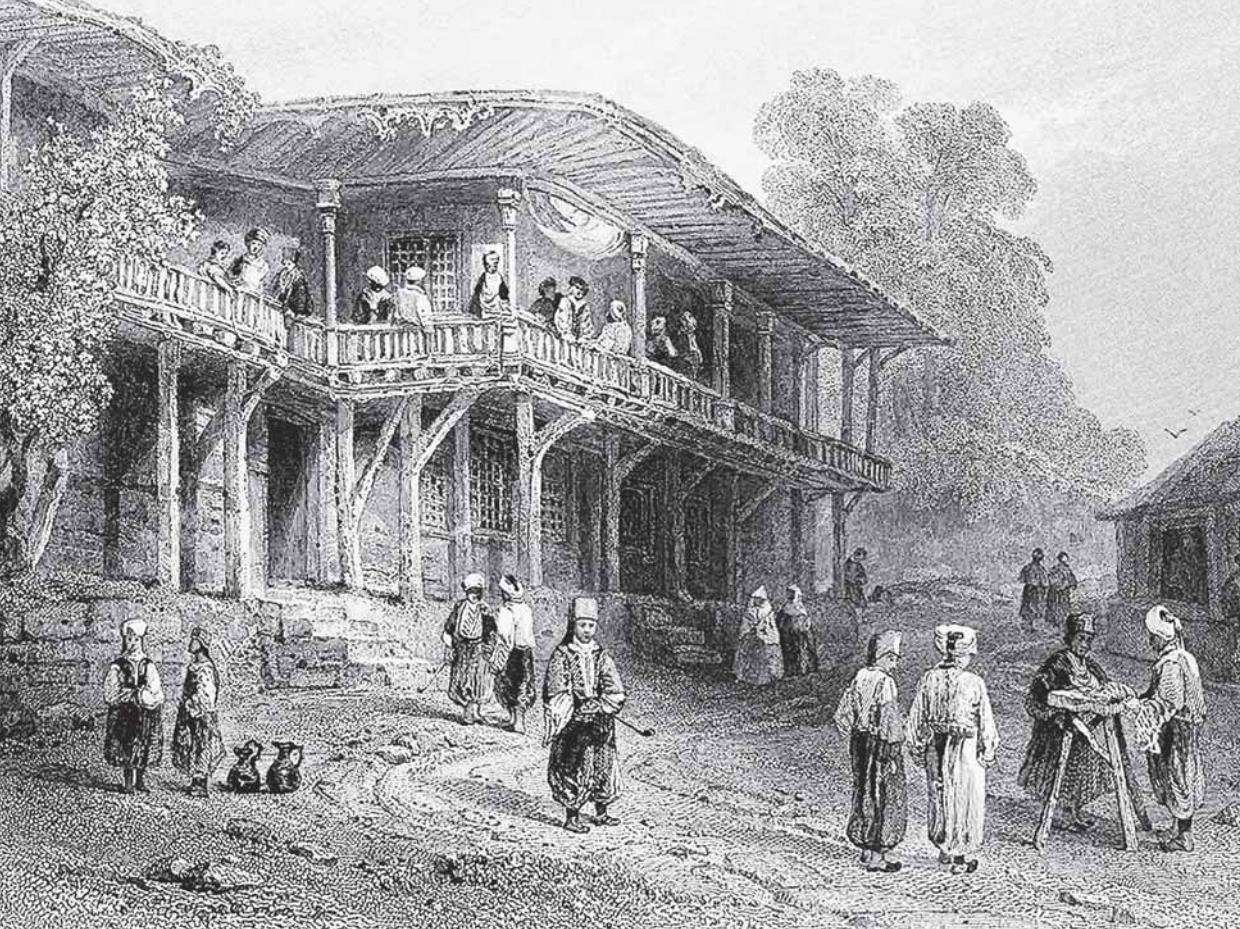
Louis Dupré's story is accompanied by an illustration showing the five diners: Mehmed Effendi, the governor of Athens, and his guests, dressed in Ottoman garb and seated Turkish-style around a *sofra*. Around





*"Dinner at Chryso, near Delphi, in the house of the bishop of Salona", in Views in Greece, from drawings by Edward Dodwell Esq., 1821 (Heidelberg University Digital Library).*





*“Turkish Cafe at Rusciuc”, engraving by William Henry Bartlett, in William Beattie (ed.), The Danube: Its History, Scenery, and Topography, vol. 2, London, 1844 (Rusciuc is now the Bulgarian town of Ruse).*

the same period, in 1805 Edward Dodwell, an Irish painter travelling in Ottoman-ruled Greece, describes more or less the same ritual: “Before sitting down to dinner, as well as after we rose from the table, we performed the ancient ceremony of washing our hands. A tin basin is taken round to all the company, the servant holding it on his left arm, while with his right hand, he pours water from a pewter vessel on the hands of the washer, having a towel thrown over his shoulder to dry them with. This ceremony is performed not only before and after meals but is practised by Greeks and Turks before commencing their prayers [...]”.

The scene described took place in the house of the bishop of Salona in 1805, and, like the dinner witnessed by Dupré, is the subject of an illustration.

The low round table around which the diners sat Turkish-style, the *sofra*, would give the Romanian language the word *sufragerie*, which is still used today, albeit in competition with the more recent English loan-word “living”.

### *Domestic comfort and social prestige: Turkish carpets*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

**T**urkish carpets kept in Romanian museums and especially in the Saxon churches of Transylvania bear witness to the intense trade in oriental products in Southeastern Europe starting with the fourteenth century. In addition to cotton, silk, and rice, wonderfully coloured wool and silk rugs decorated with plants, animals, and geometric shapes were coveted products throughout Europe. Used as ornamental objects, either placed on tables or hung on walls, laid on benches or on floors, Ottoman carpets were a constant part of European imports of Turkish goods.

We find them in the customs registers of Sibiu and Braşov starting with the beginning of the sixteenth century, and we can trace them in official documents without interruption in the following centuries. Hundreds of carpets passed through the Sibiu customs every year during the seventeenth century, some of which remained in Transylvania, while others made it to the markets of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Hungary. Armenian merchants were famous for the carpets they imported from Anatolia. Interest in these carpets declined during the eighteenth century and many of them were lost due to poor storage conditions. Nonetheless, they were rediscovered in the early twentieth century, when they caught the attention of collectors. In turn, this led to the development of a profitable trade, and important pieces in the Transylvanian inventories were sold.

The first types of Turkish carpets in Christian Europe were named after the painters in whose paintings they appeared: “Lotto” and “Holbein” carpets. After the 1600s, prayer mats with one or two arched niches became popular, as did those with columns; they were preserved in large numbers in the Lutheran churches in Transylvania, which is why specialists in classical oriental textiles came to refer to them as “Transylvanian carpets”.





Today, the Uşak region in southwestern Turkey is indicated as the place of origin for this type of carpet, traded throughout Central Europe. The so-called “Persian” carpets, mentioned in Transylvanian sources from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries most probably referred to a double niche type of carpet, similar to other Turkish carpets.

The princely palace of Gabriel Bethlen (1613–1629) in Alba Iulia had carpeted walls. An inventory of his palace from 1625 mentions sixteen “red” (*skarlat*) carpets, but Bethlen collected over 250 Turkish carpets during his lifetime. The prince’s envoys to Constantinople were instructed to buy silk carpets and rugs with Turkish motifs. Carpets were collected by the wealthy, too. Such was the noble woman Stanca Buicescu, also known as Sára Bulceşti, daughter of Preda Buicescu and Anna Szalánczi. Born and married in Transylvania, she kept her father’s name and was the owner of a large fortune, as evidenced in her testament from 1696, thirteen years before she passed away. In addition to an impressive collection of jewellery, silk clothes, and expensive fabrics, money, and real estate, Sára had forty carpets: “3 divan carpets” and “37 red carpets.” Her situation was



not unique, as Turkish carpets were part of the usual decor of elite homes.

In pre-modern Transylvania, Turkish carpets were prized objects, used not only as decorations, but also on special occasions. Noble families laid them on tables, benches, or in carriages. The prince or city representatives often gave a “red or white” Turkish rug as a gift to ambassadors and distinguished guests. Turkish rugs were also given to the married couple at the weddings of wealthy families. Furthermore, documents show that in Transylvania, but also in the western parts of Hungary, the coffins of nobles were also covered with such carpets. Indeed, Turkish carpets were frequently mentioned in wills and descriptions of funeral processions from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and, in Lutheran or Calvinist churches, wealthy families donated carpets to decorate the pews, after embroidering their names on the margins to ensure their prestige. It was a form of gaining social credit, especially found in small rural communities. In the nineteenth century, the floral and ornithological motifs specific to the Ottoman carpets were adopted by small workshops both in the Balkans and in the Romanian principalities, thus being transferred to the popular culture of kilims and hand-woven carpets for family use and small trade.



*Carpet from Anatolia (National Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).*

*Previous page. Up: Turkish wool carpet (Romanian National Museum of Art, Oriental and Decorative Art Section, inv. no. 1553/980).*

*Bottom: Transylvania type carpet (Applied Arts Museum, Budapest, inv. no. 7967. Photo: Ágnes Soltész-Haranghy).*



## *Music, dance, and the elite of society*

NICOLETA ROMAN

### *I. Listen to the music...*

Classical music was a constant presence in the culture not only of the Ottoman Empire, but also of Southeastern Europe, if we consider only the compositions of Dimitrie Cantemir or those of Luka Sorkočević from Ragusa, in the eighteenth century. However, it became accessible to a wider audience, and especially to the bourgeoisie, only a century later.

Musicians are travellers par excellence, and those with recognised studies and creations aspired to have the privilege of composing for an imperial or royal court or to enter under the protection of a rich patron. In other words, they wanted a secure income, stability, and long-term public recognition. Starting with the 1830s, musicians had the possibility of gaining financial independence by touring through Europe and America. They thus managed to cultivate a loyal public and to build an image.

*A tour de force in Southeastern Europe: Franz Liszt in concert* Franz Liszt was not the first musician to take on a long European tour, but he excelled in stage presence and charm, and had immense success; his passion for music, almost unmatched at the time, led him to perform three or four times a week. The extraordinary impact of his concerts and the exaltation he aroused among European elites led to the creation of a term that summarises his performances, *Lisztomania*, created by Heinrich Heine, his contemporary. Liszt was admired, sought after, and intensely applauded for his overwhelming presence at his concerts. He travelled through many countries and cities, and in some places, he returned again and again with fresh shows.

Southeastern Europe was the last stop in the eight-year series of tours that Liszt began in 1839. Preparations for this last stage in his European tours began as early as 1844–1845, when he wrote to the poet and librettist Franz von Schober that he wanted to start the series of concerts in Vienna, and that this would mark the end of his career as a virtuoso pianist. He



Alcide-Joseph Lorentz, caricature of Franz Liszt in *Le Charivari*, 1842 (Bibliothèque nationale de France).

wanted to get to know this region better, but also to return to Italy as a composer.

These two major projects, the tour in Central and Eastern Europe and the composition of an opera with a libretto in Italian, which he aimed to present for the first time in Milan, would not be fully completed.

Austrian Josef Danhauser's painting presents Franz Liszt playing a piano made by Conrad Graf, with a bust of Ludwig van Beethoven on



top. The listeners seated in armchairs are probably Alexandre Dumas *père* and George Sand, with Victor Hugo standing behind them. This first group symbolises the influence of French culture on the Hungarian pianist. The Italians Niccolò Paganini and Gioachino Rossini, virtuosos of the time, showcase the imprint of Italian culture in the professional life of the pianist. A portrait of Lord Byron is on the wall, in the background. Finally, Countess Marie d'Agoult, a writer and Liszt's life partner until he met Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, is also present.

In 1846, Liszt began his last major European tour in Austria and gave recitals in Vienna, Sibiu, Bucharest, Iași, Cernăuți, Constantinople and Odessa, ending his tour in Tsarist Russia. As his biographers note, it was during this period that he started his relationship with Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, one of the richest women in Russia. For Franz Liszt, South-eastern Europe was a space for professional affirmation, because the West was already familiar with his music. In the spring of 1846, Liszt gave concerts in Vienna, Brno, and Prague and, after a short period of rest, he left for Zagreb in July. The recitals in Transylvania brought him the appreciation of the public and problems with the authorities due to the chosen repertoire. Although the main pieces were composed by Gaetano Donizetti (*Lucia de Lammermoor*), Vincenzo Bellini (*Norma*), Gioachino Rossini (*Wilhelm Tell*) or Franz Schubert (*Die Forelle*), the pianist also played compositions with a patriotic message. For instance, the Saxon nobles present at the recital in Sibiu disapproved of his interpretation of Rákóczi's *March*, which also attracted the attention of the imperial agents who had been following him. In December 1846 he played in Bucharest, hosted by the grand boyar Mihail Ghica; at the beginning of the following year, he also performed at the palace of Prince Gheorghe Bibescu. The reception in the boyar's house was worthy of the pomp and mirage of the Ottoman Empire, with torches burning and his host greeting him in oriental costume, on the sofa, with treats and sweets.

According to A. Hoffman and Nicolae Missir, Liszt was “the romantic virtuoso of great adventure who captivates the audience primarily through the intensity of emotion.” One feature that connected his performances in Southeastern Europe is that the Hungarian pianist sang for both the elite and for the general public. At the concerts held at the invitation of

the prince, of the dignitaries, or of the grand boyars, the entrance was restrictive, and the tickets were expensive. However, Liszt also gave free concerts, which “democratised” the public's access to classical music at a time when national identities were taking shape before the revolutions of 1848. We do not know if Liszt got to know members of the young Wallachian or Moldavian generation, but it is certain that they admired the pianist without reservation. Cezar Bolliac wrote in *Curierul românesc* in December 1846:

The artist and the keyboard were one, his gaze was extinguished and animated in a somnambulism, by mystical ingenuity, and his hands mechanically beat the chords that brought all the voices of creation to songs, varied by this creative genius at divine concerts. Liszt does not play the piano like the others in the world of music; he has a way of his own, a method of his own. I always said that music is for voice only, and more or less for this or that instrument, but I had not heard Liszt, I had not heard this pianoforte that includes all the instruments invented and not yet invented, and notes that the human voice cannot descend to nor rise to.

To say anything more about this colossus admired by the whole of Europe would be a waste of time. Do you want to know who Liszt is? You have to listen to him. He plays with your heart, embraces it, lifts it up and moulds it to his liking.

Iancu Văcărescu dedicated a poem to him, published in the February 10/22 issue of the *Bukurester Deutsche Zeitung*, in a translation by Eric Winterhalder,<sup>1</sup> and in the Viennese newspaper *Die Gegenwart*. In Bucharest, the Hungarian pianist saw again the painter Carol Popp de Szathmary, whom he had met during his journeys through Italy in 1839–1840.

In January 1847, Liszt left for Iași. Arriving in the capital of Moldavia, he was hosted by the treasurer Alecu Balș, in whose salon he gave a concert and a matinee. Especially for this occasion, an Erard piano had been

1. Eric Winterhalder (1808–1889), economist, journalist, writer and politician of Austrian origin. He took part in the 1848 revolution and wrote for the liberal newspaper *Românul*.





*Josef Danhauser, Franz Liszt am Flügel phantasierend (bpk/Nationalgalerie, SMB, Eigentum der Bundesrepublik Deutschland/Andres Kilger).*





Niccolò Livaditti, Portrait of a young girl, Ilinca, 1845–1846 (Ion Ionescu-Quintus Prahova County Museum of Art).

brought from Paris. At the third concert, Liszt was received with verses, cheers, and flowers. It was already known that he took advantage of his tours to find inspiration in folk music, borrowing local musical motifs, and to meet other musicians (Mihail Jáborsky in Timișoara, Alexandru Flechtenmacher and Barbu Lăutaru in Moldavia, Nicolae Picu in Bukovina). From his voyages through the Romanian space, he gathered enough elements to create his *Romanian Rhapsody*, which was rediscovered by musicologist Octavian Beu in 1930, in the archives of the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna. During a concert in Iași, Flechtenmacher conducted the New Theatre orchestra playing Josef Herfner's *National Overture* and his own *Moldavian Overture*; at the end, Liszt improvised, performing variations on Moldavian folk music.

As everywhere, he won hearts and entered into dialogue with his audience. One young woman, by name Ilinca, even showed him her portrait in oriental costume, wearing clothes that were, as historian Sorin Iftimi informs us, already out of fashion, and were probably her grandmother's, passed down in the family. A *mise en place* on canvas. The young woman was dressed in European style when she conversed with the pianist and showed him her portrait painted the previous year (1846) by Niccolò Livaditti. To preserve the memory of this special moment, she wrote in French on the back of the painting: "My portrait, done by Mr Nicolò Livaditti, very much pleased Frantz Listz [sic], who was kind enough to express his feelings of admiration". When Liszt left Iași, the Austrian consul Eisenbach sent Chancellor Metternich a report regarding the pianist's activity in Moldavia. It seems that, after the incident in Sibiu, he could not escape the vigilant supervision of the authorities. After a quarantine stop in Galați, he continued his tour with performances in Constantinople and Odesa.

Liszt's concerts in Constantinople were a real triumph, a moment in which he accepted the requests sent by two powers: the Sublime Porte and Russia. His arrival was arranged, it seems, following discussions between Mustafa Reshid Pasha and the poet Lamartine. A former ambassador to France and a pro-Western reformer who made a decisive contribution to the adoption of Tanzimat<sup>2</sup>, Mustafa Reşid Pasha was grand vizier at

1. Reform program aimed at modernising the Ottoman Empire (1839–1876).

the time. Upon arrival, the Hungarian pianist was greeted by Ottoman officials and taken to the Çırağan Palace. He conversed with Sultan Abdülmeçid in French and performed twice at the Ottoman court. The Sultan was so impressed by his performance that he awarded him the order Nişan-ı İftihar, a decoration inlaid with diamonds, as well as other precious objects. It is said that another pianist then passing through the capital of the Ottoman Empire changed his poster and name so as to be mistaken with Liszt and to receive the same honours. The news about Liszt's success quickly reached the Russian embassy in Constantinople. He was therefore invited there for a recital and the Erard piano that he had received from Paris was transported from the palace to the embassy. The artist's performance did not go unnoticed in the French capital, where the magazine *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* published a detailed note, from which we present the following:

The Sultan listened to these [musical] pieces with growing interest, full of amazement and admiration. After addressing his most benevolent words, H[is] M[ajesty] expressed his desire to listen to him again the next day. Indeed, last Wednesday Liszt went to the palace again. It goes without saying that he was, as the first time, full of dynamism and verve, and his interpretation aroused the same astonishment. H[is] M[ajesty] offered him as a souvenir, as a sign of great appreciation, a tobacco case covered in diamonds. (July 11, 1847)

After his success in Constantinople, Liszt set out for Odesa, where he made the same impression. The news reached Paris again and satirical magazines were quick to take it up, claiming that thanks to his music alone “cholera has quickly moved away from the shores of the Black Sea.”

In addition to sold-out concerts that generated waves of enthusiasm, like other artists of the time, Liszt also played for charity. A large part of his concerts took place for the benefit of cultural and musical societies, schools, kindergartens, or the poor. As a sign of gratitude, the cities and towns where he played for philanthropic purposes offered him titles of honorary citizen, diplomas, or small gifts. However, Liszt had always been a generous artist irrespective of his financial situation. For instance,

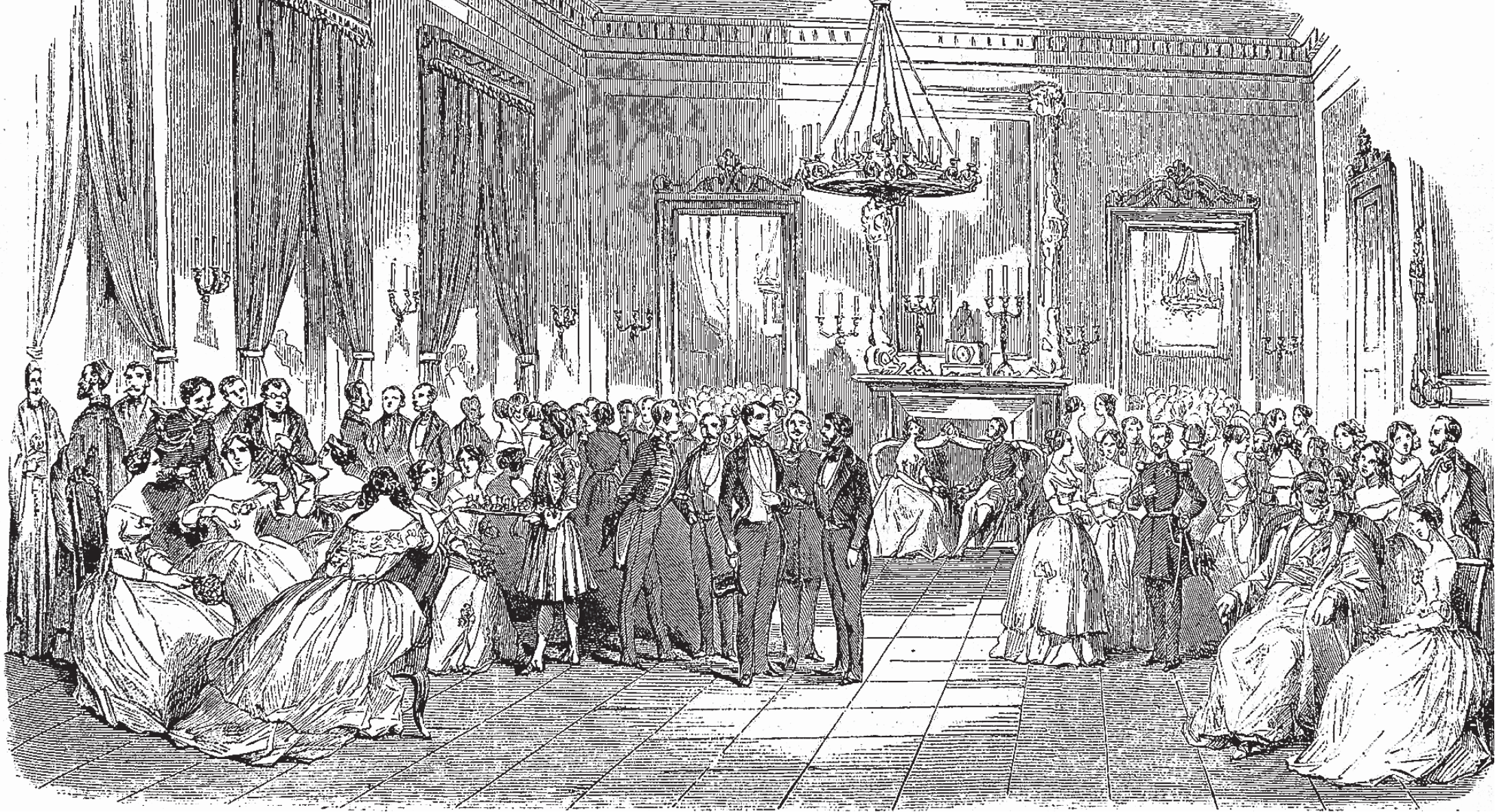


Auguste Édouart, Mlle. Louise Bourlet, her sister, Mlle. Alex. Burlet (who appears to be practicing a dance step), the Baron de Bourlet de Saint Aubin, and his wife, the Baroness, performing a piano piece, January 26, 1832. In *Recueil. Collection de Vinck. Un siècle d'histoire de France par l'estampe, 1770–1870, vol. 90, Monarchie de Juillet* (Bibliothèque Nationale de France).

he played to support the victims of the floods in Hungary (1839), those left homeless after a great fire in Hamburg (1842), and to raise funds for the completion of a bronze statue of Beethoven in Bonn (1845).

At the age of 36, with a concert activity that is hard to match, Liszt retired in full glory. He had made his music known, along with the works of other famous composers, even in the farthest corners of the continent, and in doing so, he had shown interest in national music societies and encouraged local artists. His tour was also a dialogue between cultures: a correlation between the Western European spirit, whose product Liszt was as an artist, and the specifics of the places he visited, which inspired him as a composer.





Charles Doussault, "An evening at the princely palace, in Bucharest," in *L'Illustration*, nr. 287, August 26, 1848, p. 393 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

## II. ... and dance

Ballroom dancing could be taught at home, with the help of parents, but a teacher was always needed if one was to learn the steps correctly and move graciously on the dance floor. The instructor would correct the dancers' posture, teach them how to bow, to synchronise their steps with the music, and to follow the etiquette of a soiree or musical reunion.

**Ballroom dancing** At the dawn of the nineteenth century, in Southeastern Europe, the beginnings of a cultural change determined by the new trends in dance, music, clothing, and literature can be noticed; this phenomenon had, of course, deeper roots. The opening of foreign consulates in the Romanian principalities, at the end of the eighteenth century, had a



significant role in this regard: it allowed the faster penetration of ideas and supported the mobility of Western Europeans, giving them the opportunity to practice their professions there. In these conditions, the opportunities for artists were also on the rise. Dance teachers from the West were among them, looking to attract as many customers as possible. In the principalities, their first clients were the boyars and the members of the royal family. The British consul William Wilkinson noted around 1820 that the Romanian elite had a taste for waltz, contredanse, and Polish music, while the Romanian *hora* (folk dance) or dances specific to the Phanariot era enjoyed less attention. He admitted that the ladies played the piano quite well and preferred German music, and he considered the men unskilled dancers. Oriental clothing, still in vogue, proved “a great obstacle to perfection in the accomplishment.” Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, dance began to be appreciated by the petty boyar families and the emerging bourgeoisie. The ruler’s palace was a point of reference on such occasions, bringing together the most important representatives of the elite, together with foreign envoys. Among the famous artists who performed in the principalities was Johann Strauss II (1847–1848). He was impressed by the refinement of the members of Romanian high society, who spoke fluent French and German. Moreover, Strauss dedicated a composition to Princess Maria Bibescu. Grand boyar families were also patrons of competing artistic salons. The grand boyar Iordache Filipescu, for example, passed for a picturesque host “in his large boyar costume, with a noble head, framed by a white, long, and neat beard, surrounded by a swarm of young and pretty dancers, whose clothes, and long ribbons, [and] charming hairstyles harmonised so well with the gentle physiognomy of the majestic old man.” Diplomat Anatoly Demidov, the author of this description, was wrong about the position held by the boyar, but the image he captured was true, in line with the observations made by the British consul Wilkinson in the 1820s. The West was expanding its influence on Romanian society through manners and dance.

Social events required large rooms and a remodelling of the living space to be suitable for hosting them. In a boyar house, especially if the

*Ion Negulici, [Portrait of a woman indoors], drawing, n. d. (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*





owner was of high rank and held public office, the salon was the central space of the house. Emulating the local elites, who were interested in the artistic education of their children, many parents invested in dance lessons. Charles Doussault, a talented Frenchman who provides much information about Wallachia during this period, offers an example:

The young girls came wearing ordinary clothes, and the *scurteica* was tolerated. A large red Turkish sofa reigned around a large room painted to imitate stone. Four tallow candles were reflected in tinplate mirrors with polished facets, while a three-armed oil lamp came to complete this splendid illumination. The mothers, crouched in various picturesque positions, talked familiarly on a sofa, with rosaries in their hands, and formed the background of a painting whose lively foreground was populated by the young girls. The orchestra consisted of a panpipe and a violin held by two gypsies as black and curly as brahmins on the banks of the Ganges, while a thin small-pox marked little man jumped around in the middle of the contredanse, pushing one, directing another, and incessantly chanting the measure, with the eternal words: one, two, three, four, five; one, two, three, four, five... and the young dancers, thin and pale, as you are at the age of eighteen, with stiff arms, holding tight the sleeves of their clothes, sweating large drops, with frowning eyebrows, like men engaged in important business, were performing the *échappés* and *si-sols* and *assemblés* with a serious preoccupation which, in my mind, removed any idea of pleasure. The young girls did not seem to have any more enjoyment and to abandon themselves to this occupation, so dear to the youth of our country [France]. When the quadrille was finished, Vasilachi [the dance teacher] fell on the sofa, still sweating, casting a glance of satisfied superiority in my direction, while the orchestra awaited his orders for a waltz or mazurka.

Ballroom dancing had also been part of the program of boarding schools for girls. Ambitious parents, who wanted to climb the social ladder, invested in the education of young women to make sure they would marry well and have a prosperous future. Dance instructors taught at home as well as in boarding schools, and their advertisements in the press of the



Ball gown, nineteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology, Ploiești, inv. no. 34-11833. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

time were more and more numerous after 1830. In Bucharest, Emilia Petrovici announced in 1856 that she was opening a dance school and that she would teach on Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays. The following year, another teacher, Mr. P. Goldberger, made himself available to wealthy families, stating that he could also teach at home, specialising mainly in currently fashionable dances (*les lanciers à la cour* and *l'alliance*). In 1858, just before the unification of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, dancing master A. Adeson announced to the Bucharest public that he had returned from Paris and brought “the newest dances,” adding a whole list: the Cerito and Pepita quadrilles, *lanciers à la cour*, *alliance*, Warsaw, Sicilian, Tyrolean, and imperial. A good education required knowledge of two foreign languages (in the first place, French), rules of etiquette, dance steps, the ability to play an instrument, notions of painting, and a sufficient general knowledge (history, geography, literature) to be able to carry on a conversation with ease. The emerging bourgeoisie coveted the status of the boyars and its members sought to become part of this social category, including through matrimonial alliances.

Music and dance teachers played an important role in organising musical soirees, balls, and social events with foreign guests, as can be seen from the surviving documents. For instance, a musical score book demonstrates the collaboration between music and dance teachers and their clients. An example is the musical manuscript no. 2575, recently edited (*Muzici ale saloanelor din Principatele Române în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* [Salon music in the Romanian Principalities in the first half of the nineteenth century], 2019), which belonged to a German-speaking musician employed in Bucharest. The document reflects the particularities of the place. In addition to notes in German, there are marginal notes in French, a language used by the Romanian elite since the time of the Phanariots. One dance is called *Wallaque all Fillipesku*, while an adaptation of a traditional *horă* is titled *Mademoiselle Szaftiki de Bibesku*. Reinterpretations of local folk dances can be found along with social dances such as the waltz, quadrille, Cracovienne, and *écosse*. The score book demonstrates the clients' interest both in what they liked and in what they needed to know. Their musical preferences may in fact be an indication of their status, suggesting a bourgeois clientele.

In a comparative analysis of the salons in the Romanian principalities between 1830 and 1860, historian Dan Dumitru Iacob has shown that in Moldavia there were eighteen salons, the vast majority private; in Wallachia the situation was different, as music, dance, and concerts took place mainly in public spaces. This explains the large number of performance halls or gardens where such events could take place. One of the popular places was the Warenberg Garden, where Romanian and Italian arias



Textile bag, nineteenth century (Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology, Ploiești, inv. no. 34-9061. Photo: Vlad Paraschivescu).

were sung in the evening and, after 1850, “music bands” could also be heard. While Mr. Warenberg prepared the events and invited the musicians, Mrs. Warenberg hired to those who wished “a rich collection of all kinds of ball costumes.”

In a guide from 1816, London dance master Thomas Wilson, author of several specialised works and owner of a dance academy, wrote that the ball etiquette required that the first dance should be a minuet opened by the highest ranking pair dressed in clothing appropriate for the occasion. He further emphasised the importance of courtesy bows at the beginning and at the end of each dance and recommended that the organisers display the rules imposed by etiquette for everyone to see, in order to avoid any inconvenience. For a newly hired or relatively unknown master of dance and ceremonies, this recommendation must have been of real use. However, by the second half of the nineteenth century, these etiquette rules were no longer followed: the minuet was replaced by the waltz, and in South-eastern Europe and in the Romanian lands, where there were no manuals or other books dedicated to dance, etiquette mattered even less.

## Hunting

NICOLETA ROMAN

The library of the Romanian Academy preserves a beautiful engraving from the end of the eighteenth century, signed by Paulus Pitritsch, which depicts the Phanariot prince Nicolae Mavrogheni (1786–1790), in a carriage drawn by stag.

The exotic image draws attention to a character who, according to the chronicles of the time, threatened boyars by recounting his dark dreams in order to ensure their obedience. He also amazed his contemporaries with the procession that accompanied him through Bucharest. Resorting to the memories of his ancestors, Ion Ghica describes Prince Mavrogheni's suite as follows: After lunch, in a gilded chariot pulled by four stags with golden antlers, he went out for a ride surrounded by servants with white

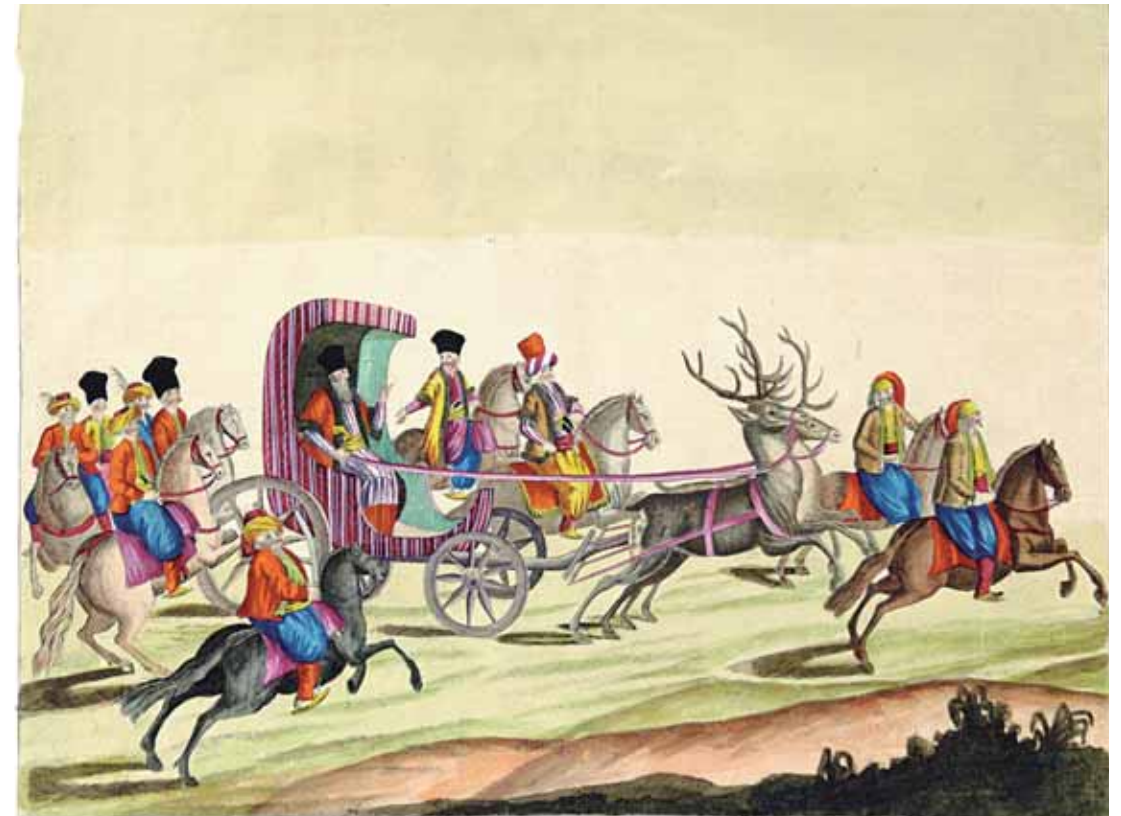


skirts and round sable *işliks* on their heads, by Arnauts and jesters with long caps of mottled cloth, adorned with fox tails and bells, who danced *köceks* [a Turkish dance] around the princely carriage, made faces at passers-by, and insulted women with shameless words and gestures.

In a Bucharest that resembled a large garden, Mavrogheni's afternoon ride to the sound of bells to drink his coffee and smoke his pipe in the kiosk next to the church he had founded seems to be a truly oriental mirage. But, at the same time, Mavrogheni's ride, which is the basis of Pitristch's illustration and Ghica's note, has the air of an expedition. We inevitably come to the question: what is the role of the stags? Their image, a symbol of opulence, also reminds us of a practice that we see undergoing transformations in the premodern period: hunting.

At this point, some clarifications are needed regarding the relationship between hunting and various social classes, considering the defining elements (season, weapons used, etc.) and the purpose of the activity. For the members of the elite and their guests, hunting was a social opportunity that included moments of rest to dine and admire the landscape, but especially to discuss and analyse various political issues. In Western Europe, the hunt always ended with a banquet, for which a good part of the game was cooked. At the same time, hunting involved certain equipment, a ritual, and the presence of associated staff. In the West, as elsewhere, a hunting party usually went after deer, wild boar, and foxes. Painters in the service of the social elites or princely courts reproduced the meetings organised on the occasion.

Hunting at the Ottoman court was slightly different from the perspective of cultural specificity. Documentary research by historian Tülay Artan has shown that the sultan would go hunting near the capital accompanied by a whole suite, including women from the harem and dignitaries. Hunting dogs were highly prized; they were brought from distant places (Poland, Russia, Moldavia, and China) and cared for in special rooms in Üsküdar. The records indicate a preference for the greyhound (*tazı*) and the spaniel (*zağar*). Falconry was practised by Turks, Hungarians, Poles, Serbs, and Russians, and falcons were among the gifts received by the sultan. In the winter of 1612–1613, Sultan Ahmed I, a good horseman, instructed the head of the imperial guard (*bostancıbaşı*) to prepare the



Paulus Pitritsch, The Flee of Prince Mavrogheni in Bucharest because of the Austrian Troops coming, on November the 9<sup>th</sup>, 1789 (Library of Romanian Academy, GA18II/2937).

ground for a hunting expedition. The hunts took place in stages, at Kurdkayası and Karaağaç (near Edirne) or at Çömlek (where there was a special hunting lodge – *kasr*). The peasants in the area were called to drive the animals to the place where the sultan hunted, receiving a reward after each hunt. At Çömlek alone, 18 deer, 150 rabbits and 40 foxes were hunted on a single occasion. Afterwards, sumptuous banquets were held in tents and the chronicler who recorded the events pointed out that during the hunt the sultan did not neglect his religious and state duties, so his subjects had no cause for concern.

Hunting weapon made probably in a German workshop in the first half of the seventeenth century (Universalmuseum Joanneum, Landeszeughaus, no. inv. RG 1026, Graz).



At the other end of the social hierarchy, hunting was focused on the consumption of meat and the processing of hides and pelts. Taxes, duties, and exports were directly related to the processing of these raw materials in order to make garments or accessories. There were also rituals related to the practice of hunting. For instance, when a bride left for another village, a fee in the form of a marten fur was customary in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the practice was subsequently adopted by Romanians settled in Galicia and also by those in Bucovina and northern Moldavia. At the same time, wolves would be hunted when they posed a threat to households and farm animals. In fact, in the nineteenth century a series of legislative measures were passed to limit their numbers.

Hunting weapons varied according to the animal hunted and the financial resources and rank of the hunter, ranging from axe or spear to firearms and elaborate traps. Members of the elite particularly liked firearms decorated with mythological scenes dedicated to hunting.

Regardless of the situation, however, there were two common elements: hunting parties were seasonal and followed certain rules; hunting was supposed to cull excess game and to restore balance in nature.

Hunting continued to be appreciated and “reinvented” in Western Europe as a leisure occupation; however, things were different in the east.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Ottomans had almost given up hunting, which they only practiced occasionally or when entertaining high-ranking foreign guests. Travel narratives and memoirs are a good source of information in this respect. The French architect, painter, and engraver Antoine-Laurent Castellan (1772–1838), who travelled in the Ottoman Empire and was sent on an assignment to Constantinople to document the repair of Turkish ships, recorded some significant facts. If traditionally hunts had lasted several days and had gone all the way from Constantinople to Edirne, during the reign of Selim III (1789–1807) interest in this activity decreased considerably, and Castellan believed it would continue to do so in future. Hunting parties were organised during the visits of important foreign guests, out of the need to facilitate cultural dialogue and/or diplomatic negotiations. If visitors wished to go hunting, they needed to contact the head of the imperial guard (*bostancıbaşı*), who would make the necessary arrangements.

Hunting was no longer organised with the splendour of earlier times: Castellan refers to the Seljuk era, when 400 retrievers and greyhounds were used, each wearing a dog collar and a coat embroidered with gold and pearls. For him, accustomed to the French cultural model, the Ottoman example was a showcase of alterity. He was further othering the



Ottomans when he mentioned the unusual case of an individual leaving his fortune in his will to his beloved dog. Even though Castellan's perspective should not be taken *ad litteram*, it indicates that the Ottoman Empire had entered a new era of diplomacy, of reforms, and of efforts to put an end to internal revolts and wars. Moreover, the sultan showed a special interest in everything related to culture and art, and was himself an acclaimed poet and composer. The loss of past power and military defeats could be associated, in the Frenchman's view, with this last aspect. Starting with the 1700s, the sultans preferred no longer to go on the battlefield, but were represented there by their viziers, so that a possible

defeat would do less damage to their image in the eyes of European diplomats and of their own subjects.

As for the Romanian principalities, the situation seems to have followed a similar course. In the Middle Ages, the chronicles recall numerous hunting parties, usually organised by a *vătaf*. The *vătaf* was chosen from among the members of the elite and was in charge of guarding the prince and maintaining public order. Neagoe Basarab is said to have held the office of *vătaf* before ascending the throne of Wallachia (1512). Greyhounds were then used to hunt large game: aurochs, bison, or wild boar. Later, the Italian secretary Anton Maria Del Chiaro



Pipe decorated with hunting motifs, 1770 (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M 1364/2358).

wrote in his work dedicated to Wallachia that Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu had borrowed the sultan's custom, and that a hunt was a real expedition. A little later, from Dimitrie Cantemir's remarks in his *Descriptio Moldaviae*, we can see that the princely hunt followed certain norms, taking into account, at the same time, religious holidays:

They decided on four intervals during a year, which precede four fasting periods of the Eastern Church, in which the inhabitants of the country of whatever rank: boyars, soldiers, nobles, townspeople, and merchants, are obliged to take part in the royal hunt. In those days, several thousand peasants are gathered from the neighbouring villages and are ordered to enter the forests and chase the beasts. The hunters wait in the fields around the forests, some surrounded by hunting dogs, others laying traps, and they easily catch the game startled by the peasants' howls. But in order that the zeal of the hunters may be greater, the prince promised a reward for each wild animal: whoever catches a rabbit gets a backsheesh (for that is what they call these small gifts in Turkish) of twenty-five silver coins (*aspri*), whoever catches a fox sixty, the wild boar is paid for with an imperial, the bear with a guilder, and the deer with eighty silver coins. At the end of the hunt, the clean animals, which are good to eat, are taken to the prince's kitchen or are divided among the boyars and important dignitaries; the unclean ones: foxes, wolves, bears, wild cats, dogs, and other such animals living in the mountains of Moldavia are left to the servants who make a pretty good profit selling their pelts. [...]

That is why, if occasionally attracted by the beauty of the weather or the place, the prince wants to take his pleasure, he plans a hunt with his court servants and his soldiers, who are always bound to follow him; however, this should not happen so often as to give the impression that he is spending on killing wild beasts all the time that it is his duty to dedicate to the affairs of the country.

All social categories took part in the princely hunt, but not all of them benefited from the same advantages. Princes granted a financial reward





*Denis van Alsloot (cca. 1570-1616), Landscape with forest and elegant hunting party, oil on canvas, undated (Universalmuseum Joanneum, Alte Galerie, Graz, on loan from Kaiserschild Trust, inv. no. L 63).*



depending on the hunted animal, but kept for themselves and the boyars the animals considered noble, such as bison, wild boar, and deer, while ordinary game went to the servants. Under these conditions, hunting was seen as a court-specific activity, an event that faithfully reflected the social hierarchy. At the same time, it was necessary to respect the hunting seasons, the fasts prescribed in the Orthodox calendar, and the good conduct of state affairs, without turning this pleasant way of spending free time into a habit.

During the Phanariot period, very few of these customs were preserved. Later, in *Scrisori către Vasile Alecsandri*, in the letter “Tunsu and Jianu” written in 1882, Ion Ghica recalled a hunting party on the estate of his father, the boyar Dimitrie Ghica, whom he associated with Iancu Jianu. A rebel against the state, Jianu was a former outlaw at the beginning of the nineteenth century who became a boyar, and Ghica’s epistle confirms and traces the origins of his legend. Born in an Oltenian provincial boyar family, Iancu Jianu had been raised by his father on his estate “without [giving him] education in Greek and without the ambition to make him a competitor with the great boyars’ sons for public office. He had raised him in the proximity of the plough, with horses and with the rifle; in summer, he worked the field, in winter he hunted bears and black goats; he became renowned for his skill in riding and in hunting; he count mount without putting his foot in the stirrup or his hand on the horse’s mane, and he could shoot a bullet through a ring.” In this context, hunting is not a social pastime, as for the elite, but an activity needed for putting food on the table. Jianu’s excellence in hunting brought him closer to the boyars, and Ghica’s father and our character strengthened their friendship by hunting together often. In Ghica’s letter, we see Jianu unexpectedly arriving at the Ghiculești estate where he was invited to dinner and to the surprise of those present *polcovnic* Ioniță blowing the hunting horn. After “sipping their coffee” and “smoking their pipes,” the boyar gave “orders and instructions for the next day, for that was only a prelude to hunting.” At dusk, the next day, the feast began:

In the evening, by candlelight, a cart full of young and old wolves, foxes, and rabbits arrived with the hunters in tow. In the middle of

the courtyard, Mistress Ilinca had placed a cask of wine since daybreak, around which she had lit four barrels with hemp tow soaked in fuel oil; ten girls, each at her hearth, were roasting rams and boiling polenta; a gypsy with a cobza sang the story of Alimoș.

Pletea and Manta unloaded the game cart.

They put a bed of thorns on the end of a barrel, on which they placed the rabbits with their noses and ears to the outside and their feet in the centre; from the four corners of the base stuck out the furry tails of four foxes that were tied together by their necks to a pole fixed in the middle of the pile of rabbits. On a small round table, five wolf cups stood on their four feet with wide-open mouths towards the hunters, and above them, two fierce she-wolves tied back-to-back to the pole that was fixed in the table; it thus formed a kind of hunting monument, somewhat in the form of the modern water fountains adopted in the capitals of civilised countries.

The outlaw ballad of Toma Alimoș had the gift of sensitising Jianu, a guest with a youthful past like the character in the old song. Alimoș was like Jianu, a rebellious boyar, and his name means “eagle,” a symbolic reference to the audacity of the outlaw bands. Agility and knowledge of weapons were features they both shared. However, beyond the outlaw ballad, befitting an activity with warlike aspects like the hunt, something else may be observed. Ion Ghica records the combination of oriental customs (coffee and pipes) with local ones, in contrast to the western model. The hunt takes place on the boyar’s estate, with his close acquaintances and his servants, and the feast is accompanied by minstrels performing old songs. Thus, the estate with its vast forests permits a freedom of action, a preservation of traditional hunting rituals, and an intimacy of socialization. It is a space that, in the absence of officialdom, encourages the abandoning of rigid etiquette. In another letter to Alecsandri, “Bârzoș”, written in 1885, Ghica also writes about the boyars’ habit of keeping fierce dogs or even wild animals: he tells, for instance, how boyar Costache Cornescu kept a bear near his mansion and of the fights between wild beasts and trained dogs:

Our boyars at that time were almost all great hunters and famous horsemen; they liked Arabian and Hungarian horses; their carriages were pulled by six or eight Romanian horses as fast as dragons; they kept dogs, wolves, bears, eagles, crows, nightingales, cranes, all kinds of birds and beasts in their yards and in their houses. To name just a few celebrities, I will mention Grigorie vodă Ghica's mastiffs, as big as calves, which he fed to make them fight to the death with bears. When such shows took place, everybody from Bucharest hurried to Colentina whatever way they could, on foot, on horseback, in a cart, in a carriage, in a gig; they brought snacks from home, and the field from Obor to Plumbuita looked like a fair. The emotions of the womenfolk at these fights were as vivid as those of Spanish ladies watching the fights *de los toros*..

Emotions and practices show the changing role that hunting acquired over generations. As Ion Ghica puts it, “the unrest all around the country” and the events of 1821 “had made the string of bravery resonate in the young Romanians. They began to like weapons, hunting, and riding; the boyars’ sons took on a kind of air of *cabadai*, a term they adopted themselves and which had the meaning of heroes.” Boyars involved in the Revolution of 1821 sought to reform the society from which they came, seeking to tap into the modernising promises of the Occident. Young people let themselves be caught up in the tumult of those years and thought they were *cabadai*, making a habit, as Ion Ghica further observes, of wearing pistols and a yataghan at the waists. In a historical analysis of violence, historian Robert Muchembled considered the idealization of a role to be “a kind of collective exorcism,” in situations where a generation dislocates the existing order. However, this brave rise of the young did not last long. The Organic Regulation period and the second half of the nineteenth century would bring to light another tale of hunting in Romania, associated with the names of Nicolae Golescu and Alexandru Odobescu.



Children represented in the votive painting of the Church of the Assumption, Sinaia Monastery, Prahova County, the work of the painter Pârvu Mutu – 1693 (Photo: Nicoleta Roman).

### *Hide and seek: Children in family portraits, newspapers, and parents’ diaries*

NICOLETA ROMAN

Children have always had a special place in family and society. Among daily worries and concerns, the joy brought by the birth of a baby would be recorded on the margins of prayer books or accounts ledgers. Faced with the constant struggle for survival, trying to cope with plague epidemics, poverty, and war, the vast majority of people could hardly find the time to analyse or express their feelings. City folk and well-to-do villagers who could read and write occasionally expressed their concern for their children. For instance, on 15 June 1803, a father wrote down that “our son Micul was born during the reign of voivode Constantin Ipsilanti, who took the *dijmă* [tax] from the boyars.” In this case, the parent associated a family event with an economic and political





Anonymous, Sophia von Brukenthal, 1749–1753 (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, no. inv. 520).



Engravings published in 1816 and 1817, with the same accompanying text (“Straw hat. Percale dress and trousers”), in *Costumes parisiens de la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et du commencement du XIX<sup>e</sup>* (Bibliothèque nationale de France).

one, relevant to the whole community. A certain Șerban Andronescu, *stolnic* and son of a priest, whose notes have been brought to light by historian Ilie Corfus, showed his care for his loved ones and his interest in the changing times. On the night of 27–28 September 1792, Andronescu expressed his sadness at the death of “my much-loved wife Ecaterina,” with whom he had lived for nine years and with whom he had had three children, “one of whom, Antonică, died some two years ago and two are alive.” Birth, illness, and death were moments when the parent voiced his feelings more than usual. Happy or difficult moments encouraged him to stop and analyse his own life. Șerban Andronescu associated infections with death: the plague had killed his wife, and in 1840, his brother’s



Child's bonnet, eighteenth century (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, no. inv. M1270/9330).

nephew Nicu, already a young man, whom “I loved too much,” died of typhoid fever. These records complement the votive portraits of the ruling families, the nobility, and the merchants in the Romanian space. The visual representation of children is static, mostly found in donor/votive portraits, where parents are accompanied by their children; this style of work continued into the first part of the nineteenth century.

In the Romanian lands one cannot speak of a lack of affection or attention towards children, so much as of a culture and a representation different from the West. Place of birth, social class, and education led to different experiences; thus, it would be more appropriate to speak of “childhoods”, not of a single model of childhood with well-defined elements in society. In the following pages, the situation of the elite and to those who aspired to achieve this status shall be discussed. In Southeastern Europe, cultural representations of children, whether in literature, memoirs, or art, become more numerous starting with the nineteenth century.

**Family portraits** It was the members of the elites and, later, of the bourgeoisie who had the financial means and therefore commissioned visual representations that reflected their prestige and strengthened their social position. The child was initially depicted in group portraits or with one of the parents, and later together with his or her siblings or alone. The painting captured a given moment in time and the painter tried to satisfy his clients, that is, the parents, by adding something particular to the child and by following the trends of the time both in form and content. Portraits became symbols of family relationships and reflected the fluctuations of fashion and material culture in children's lives.

French fashion magazines, much appreciated by the Romanian elite, introduced notions and illustrations of children's clothing starting with the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1816 and 1817, *Journal des dames et des modes* included two images that would later be part of an extensive, twenty-volume study by the director of the publication, Pierre Antoine Lebourg de la Mésangère, suggestively titled *Costumes parisiens de la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et du commencement du XIX<sup>e</sup>*.

The images are relevant from two points of view. First of all, they showed small children, about two or three years old, alone, without an accompanying adult, thus indicating that attention was directed exclusively towards them. The infant became the central character. Secondly, the images depicted a unisex outfit, consisting of long shirt and white trousers. The gender of the child was marked by objects belonging to the material culture of the time: the sword, the belt, and the top hat, in the case of the little boy, and the round hat, with a ribbon and fingerless gloves for girls. The hats were made of straw, while the dress and trousers were made of percale. The cut of that costume would be a constant in children's fashion, to be seen throughout the nineteenth century.

The family portrait made in 1836 by the Hungarian painter Josef August Schöeffer during his stay in the Romanian principalities is a convincing example. A wanderer with a clientele in Constantinople, Vienna, Odessa, and even India, Schöeffer was primarily a portrait painter. In 1835–1836 he worked in Wallachia, and the following year he moved to Moldavia. His painting *Family scene in a park*, now at the Art Museum in Craiova, dates from this first period. The young father, who looks at us with his two children, was also portrayed separately (*Portrait of a man*). Here, there are books in the background, a reference to his status and training. In both paintings, he is depicted in a romantic attitude and wearing the same bourgeois attire, including a pocket watch and a tie made of similar material to his black velvet jacket. In the family scene, the children are portrayed in different poses, but wearing similar costumes. The girl, older than her brother, is sitting on her father's lap and is wearing a white dress and white pants, with a pink ribbon behind her clasped hands, matching the shoes and the lace at the neck. She is holding a bird in her hands and is looking at us playfully, with a smile. On the opposite side is her younger brother, in white trousers and a long, blue shirt; he is wearing a fur coat





*Josef August Schöefft, Family scene in a park, 1836 (Craiova Art Museum).*

*Previous page: Josef August Schöefft, Portrait of a man, n.d. (Craiova Art Museum).*

and a bonnet on his head and is holding a flower in his hand. As the title suggests, this is a family in the park in a moment of relaxation.

The daughter seems more detached from the other two protagonists and looks directly into the eyes of the viewer. The father supports the son's body and his attention is divided between the viewer and the boy; in his turn, the boy rests a hand on his father's shoulder and seems interested in something distant. In addition to the very similar clothing of the young children (long dress/shirt and white trousers), there are a series of defining elements for the characters in the portraits and there is a certain connection established with the viewer.





*Anonymous, Family portrait, n.d. (Art Museum of Craiova).*

The family group portraits provide additional information, as they reflect both the modernization of society and the parents' aspirations to status change. The anonymous *Family Portrait*, made at about the same time as Schöefft's painting, in the Craiova Art Museum collections, displays a static composition: a compromise, we could say, between the traditional style of votive portraits and the new Western influences.



*Niccolò Livaditti, Vornic Alecsandri with his sons Vasile and Iancu, 1845 (Moldavia National Museum Complex – Art Museum of Iași, inv. no. 1319).*

The head of the family is probably a merchant from the Balkans, dressed in a typical oriental costume; his children, dressed in Western clothes, surround him. Three boys of different ages stand on one side or the other, one of them holding a book in his hand. Behind the merchant, there is a young woman with a pink ribbon at her waist and the thoughtful appearance of a Balkan George Sand. A little girl in a beige dress, with a





white collar, holds a small bird in her palms and leans lightly on her father's chair. One of the brothers holds his hand on her shoulder: the daughter is under the protection of the family. The painting conveys the idea of solidarity among family members and captures the age differences between generations. Parents invest in their children, who wear Western clothes, are educated, and now have a family portrait to prove the parents' status and feelings. These are ways to gain social status and to climb up into the world, while also keeping in touch with one's origin and, above all, the economic source of all these transformations.

Through portraits, parents urged their children to abide by Christian teachings, morals, love of country and family. They were meant to preserve the unity of the family and are reminiscent of votive portraits and the discourse of testaments. For instance, *vornic* Alecsandri asked Italian painter Niccolò Livaditti to include the following piece of advice in a portrait showing him together with his sons Iancu and Vasile: "Do not forget God and your parents, do not become an administrator of property and guarantor, be faithful to your country and your rulers, never put off till tomorrow what you can do today, help the poor."

However, painters were not only influenced by their clients' expectations. They were up to date with fashion trends and with the literature of the time. Newspapers, engravings, and lithographs influenced their working techniques. In Western Europe, the emphasis was on representing the interior of the house, together with recreational and educational activities. In the wake of urbanization and industrialization, the bourgeoisie made up most of the readership of magazines such as *Journal des dames et des modes*. In the Romanian lands, the bourgeoisie was making its presence felt starting from the 1830s, a period when the printed press also started to proliferate. Taste and preferences therefore varied across the continent. However, Schöefft's example with his *Family scene in a park* shows us that the local bourgeoisie had become a consumer of this type of art, appreciating more and more representations of family scenes, free time, and portraits of children. Other examples from the same period are Frantz

*Jakab Marastoni, Mother with her children, 1837 (Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, FK 3110).*





Petit courrier des dames, 1836. Picture of a family showing the tyranny of fashion, even in the private sphere (Düsseldorf: Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek).

Neuhauser the Younger's *The Family of a Saxon Librarian in a Biedermeier interior* (1831) and Constantin D. Rosenthal's *Anica Manu with her Child* (1848), both in the collections of the National Museum of Art of Romania.

Jakab Marastoni, an Italian painter settled in Pest from 1836, created works similar to those by Josef August Schöefft. Marastoni's painting *Mother with Children* is in line with Schöefft's style, but the setting is indoors. The prosperity of the family and maternal care are the two essential aspects of this portrait.

In the absence of local magazines and specialised stores, wealthy city dwellers and elites ordered their clothing from the West, following the



Journal des dames et des modes, 1832. The illustration depicts a mother with her daughter in a family setting, wearing clothes in tune with the fashion of the time (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).

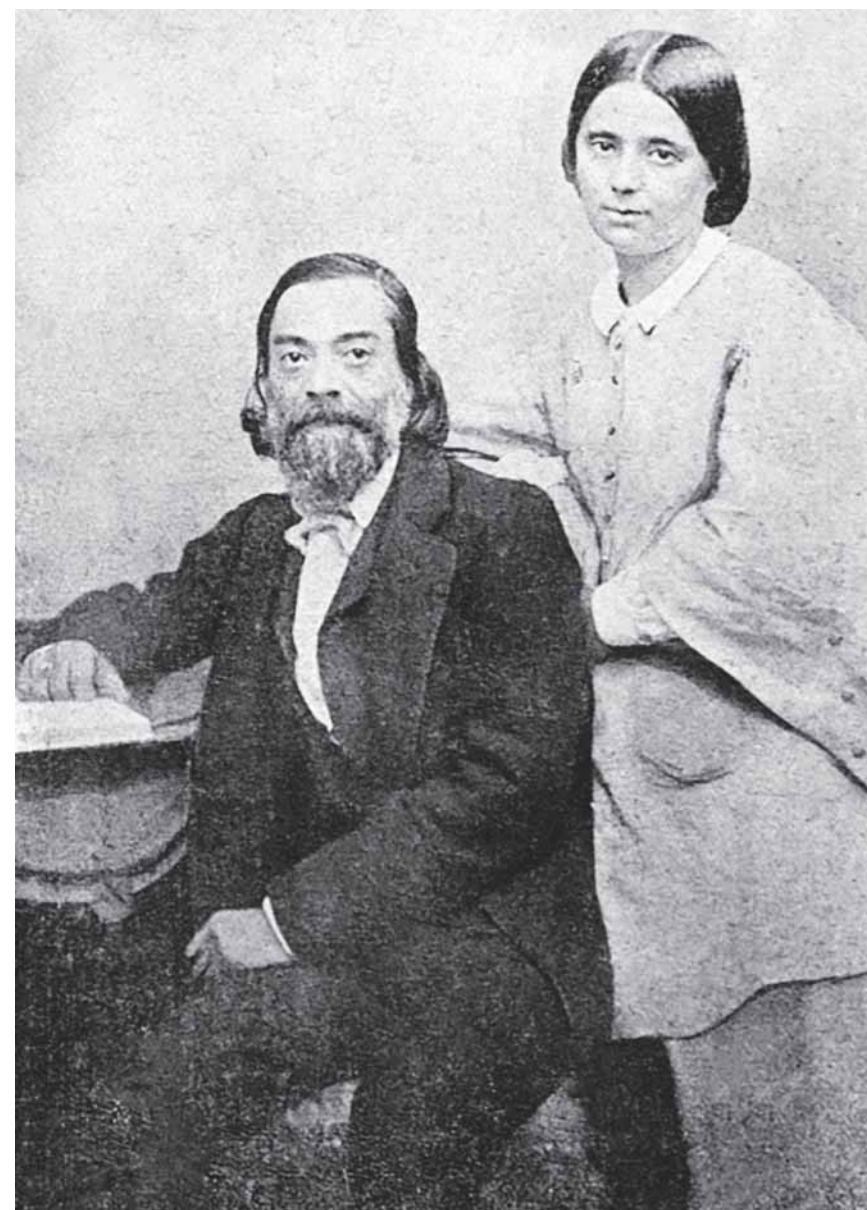


recommendations of French newspapers. Although they preponderantly followed the French model, children's products were still sold in general stores together with merchandise for adults. As mentioned above, in 1841, the recently established *Cantor de avis și comers* (Counter of announcement and commerce) in Bucharest ran an advertisement that Petru Picolu's shop sold "various good hats, made out of rabbit fur and silk, for men and children."

*Mid-nineteenth century: children in parents' diaries* The 1848 revolution brought about a series of changes: the new generation grew up under the influence of national ideals; a fact observed by Constantin Alexandru Rosetti (1816–1885) in his writings. Together with two other likeminded families, the Brătianus and the Golescus, the Rosettis would form the political elite of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The writings of C.A. Rosetti are remarkable for the way we see him move from political and professional concerns to caring for loved ones, including his affection for his wife and children. In an analysis of his *Journal*, writer Dana Dumitriu identifies three micro-novels that unfold in parallel and sometimes overlap: his love for his children, his passion for women turned, after marriage, into tender love for his wife, and the "novel" of the 1848 revolution. C. A. Rosetti benefited from the instruction offered by private teachers, wrote poems, and with the help of his teacher, Bernhard Stolț, translated passages from Byron, Lamartine, and Victor Hugo. Together with Eric Winterhalder, he ran *Pruncul român* [The Romanian Infant] and edited the liberal-radical newspaper *Românul* [The Romanian]. He was also a second lieutenant of cavalry, worked in the administration, contributed to the founding of a printing house and was among the leaders of the 1848 revolution in Wallachia. He led a bohemian youth, which ended after his mother's death; he then married Marie Grant.

The national aspirations nurtured by the 1848 generation were constantly intertwined with his family life; his Guernsey-born wife of Scottish origin, whom we know in Romania as Maria Rosetti, became a symbol of the era: C. D. Rosenthal used her as the model for his *Revolutionary Romania*; her first child, a daughter, was named Sofia Libertatea (Liby). The defeat of the revolution in Wallachia sent the family into exile (1848–



C.A. Rosetti and Maria Rosetti during their period of exile, in the commemorative volume *Lui C.A. Rosetti la o sută de ani de la nașterea sa (1816–1916)*, Bucharest, 1916 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).





MAGASIN DES DEMOISELLES

Engravings with family images. On the left, illustration from *Magasin des demoiselles*, September 25, 1853. On the right, *Le Follet*: *Courrier des salons*, nr. 1884/1854. The engravings are made by J. Desjardins and an anonymous artist after the works of the well-known illustrator Adèle-Anaïs Colin-Toudouze (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).



LE FOLLET

Boulevard St. Martin, 69.  
*Coiffes d'enfant, au Zéphyr, 11, rue Capucines; Parfumeries Société Hygiénique, 2, de Rivoli 63  
 1, Argyl Place Regent Street, Londres.*



1857); one of their sons was born in Paris and was named Vintilă Jules Ștefan: “Vintilă, because it is an ancient name of ours and somewhat lost. Resurrect it with glory, my son! Jules is Michelet’s name. He gave it to him. Be as great as him, my son! Be Romanian, as he is French. Ștefan is a name dear to Romanians. It is also the name of my beloved friend Ștefan Golescu. Be like him, devoted to Romania.”

The two parents, Constantin and Maria Rosetti, surrounded their children with boundless love. On January 3, 1853, Constantin wrote in his diary some of his wife’s thoughts, to which he subscribed: “Oh! I had and will have a place for them in my heart. It sometimes seems to me that this heart was made entirely to be the children’s cradle.” Indeed, the parent carefully followed the gestures and the behaviour of the little ones. A year earlier, on Liby’s fourth birthday, he had bought her toys and left them at the foot of the bed, so that she could find them the next morning. He was restless all night and woke up at half past four to catch his daughter’s reaction. To his disappointment, the little girl’s delight did not last long: “Happiness lasted only ten minutes and an hour later she was no longer playing with them.” For all that, the next day he wrote to his friend Ion C. Brătianu that his daughter was “sublime, as she has never before been.”

Life in exile included both joys and hardships. From the summer of 1853, C.A. Rosetti gave up writing regularly in his diary, the only records being related to the birth of their children: Horia (1855), Elena-Maria (1857), and Anton (1859). The celebration of the New Year (1856) with friends, “when we toasted and sat up with all the children up until 2.30,” was the only exception. His notes became similar to Șerban Andronescu’s lines quoted at the beginning of this exploration. Rosetti’s affection for his children remained constant, but he lost the habit of writing about his feelings. However, details from his personal life appear in his correspondence with his wife, close friends, and collaborators. While in Paris, the Rosetti couple read the newspapers, and even though society events were not a constant part of their activity, the toys they gave to their children were probably the ones depicted in the pages of *Magasin des demoiselles*, *Le Follet* or *Le petit messenger*.

The Rosetti children had endearing nicknames and were showered in gifts; their wishes were fulfilled. Constantin Rosetti, including in letters

to friends, called Libertatea by the pet name “Bișeta”. On her return from exile, Maria Rosetti hired a governess through the Lutheran pensionnat. The couple’s pampering of their children was well known among their friends. Sabina Brătianu, the children’s playmate, later remembered “Mother Rose”, as she called Maria Rosetti as a child, and said her only flaw was “her extreme weakness towards children. Not only did she not oppose any of their whims, but she did not allow those close to scold them in the slightest or to draw attention to them.” All the testimonies of those close to the Rosetti family emphasise the affection with which the parents surrounded their children. Within the same social class, other families also displayed their “parental love”, but without the effusions of the Rosettis. Parental love does not manifest itself in the same way, because it depends, naturally, on each parent’s personality. Colonel Lăcusteanu recorded in *Amintiri* [Memoirs] his feelings about his sons’ illness and death and about moments in his daughters’ life and outlines an overall perspective on the life of the household. In his correspondence with his wife, Paulina, Vasile Alecsandri constantly asked questions about their Mîrcești mansion; when he was away, he sent dolls home for his little girl. In 1865, Maria Rosetti published a magazine dedicated to family relationships, childcare, and pedagogy, suggestively titled *Mama și copilul* [Mother and child]. Although it did not have a long print run, the publication played its part in shaping Romanian society.

Towards the end of the century, children began to occupy a significant place not only in the private writings of their parents, but also in the press and in society in general. Although the little ones had always been at the centre of family life, the formation of their personality now took on greater importance; their needs were discussed and met. Of course, the state also intervened in the matter through educational and social policies. Material culture changed as the Southeast European cultures came closer to the West. Within half a century, notable changes could be observed in children and in childhood. The bourgeoisie increased its ranks, upholding family values, and emphasising the role of children.

*From another age:  
the Christmas tree and the children of yore*

NICOLETA ROMAN

When we think of the long, snowy winters of long ago, we imagine carol singers braving the frost in the hope of tasty rewards for their efforts. Carolling “with the star” was often seen by foreign travellers as a curious but charming custom that brought to the fore the religious significance of Christmas. From behind icy windows, the carollers were looked upon with fondness and invited inside, to warm up and to delight the hosts and guests; most often, they received pretzels, apples, and glazed walnuts, but sometimes a few coins would be slipped into their pockets. This was their gift, the Christmas gift, a custom that connected the world of the *mahala*, the urban neighbourhood, to that of the village. The atmosphere in the houses where they were invited was welcoming; there was the omnipresent smell of a warm, fortifying drink called *salep*, made from milk, honey, and dried orchid stalks. The Christmas tree, with its richly decorated branches, attracted everybody’s attention. This was a novel custom imported from the West, which spread in the Romanian lands in the nineteenth century. The custom had become popular in England thanks to the royal couple, who were depicted with their children around a decorated fir tree, a tradition which Prince Albert had brought from his native Germany.

The tree was initially decorated with walnuts, dried orange peels, and miniature wooden and tin toys. Paper, tinsel, and glass ornaments would be added later. The Christmas tree accompanied the winter holidays until *Bobotează* (the baptism of Jesus Christ). The addition of candles, usually extinguished with a wet sponge, was for a long time a source of concern for the safety of the home and people.

The anticipation of toys and gifts enlivened the children. However, Father Christmas was not known to many of them. In Russia there was a

*“Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle”, in a supplement of The Illustrated London News, December 1848 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).*







Charles Doussault, "Winter Customs: Children with the Star," in *L'illustration*, 1843 (Library of the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucharest).

folklore character who successfully replaced him: Babușca, a grandmother-like old woman. For Romanians, Christmas meant family reunions around the festive table; the magnitude and abundance of these events manifested themselves differently from one social class to another. Decorating the Christmas tree was, as I mentioned, a Western custom, and the French traveller Ulysse de Marsillac noted that it "tended to replace some local traditions that have their charm," which he described with enthusiasm: "Then, on Christmas day, a kind of travelling theatre, which they call *Vicleim*, starts appearing on the streets. It is a kind of frame adorned with silk curtains with golden fringes [and] coloured ribbons, which represents, with greater or lesser fidelity, the blessed cave in which Jesus was born. In the past, the *Vicleim* was the largest event for two weeks after Christmas.

There was the princely *Vicleim*, which was taken along the streets at night, escorted by torches and accompanied by the guard of honour composed of the ruler's Arnauts, armed with scimitars and pistols and dressed in their rich suits of red cloth. This splendid *Vicleim* was taken only to the prince's palace and to the grand boyars. There were performances reminiscent of our medieval "mysteries". Artistically made dolls enacted all the scenes of the incarnation and birth of the Lord. Angels were seen coming from heaven, the shepherds leaving their sheep and heading for the manger, the Magi bringing their precious and symbolic gifts. Regarding these gifts, someone told us this morning that five grains of the incense offered to Jesus by the Magi are kept on Mount Athos."

*Vicleim* indicates a cultural communion of Romanian and Greek traditions based on the common Orthodox faith, but also different experiences of the winter holidays, depending on social class. Poor children roamed the streets or alleys in search of sweets or a few pennies; the habit of carolling "with the star" delighted everyone with its picturesqueness and joy, although it was not the only tradition of the time. In contrast, children from bourgeois or boyar families sang carols in the pleasant atmosphere of their parents' homes. In return, they did not expect sweets and a few coins, but toys and clothes bought from the new stores on Podul Mogoșoaia or even from Paris and Vienna. Even though it was gaining followers, the gradual spread of new Christmas customs, from the north to the south of Europe, was not, as Marsillac wrote, regarded kindly by everyone.

The grand boyar families preferred to spend the winter holidays in the city, associating them with a long party, lasting for ten days. The holidays were an occasion for reunion; the joy of the moment and good cheer would often be immortalised in family portraits. Due to the intense preparations and etiquette rules imposed by the events, some children, such as Princess Anne-Marie Callimachi, would later remember the entire winter holiday period as a very conventional one: "A scintillating, overornate Christmas tree, touching the ceiling, surrounded by a display of innumerable presents, was approached with such ceremony and gave scope to so formal festivities that the carefree joy of the holidays was spoiled for me. I developed then, and retained, a violent distaste for all that

## Recommended reading

Christmas paraphernalia.” Daughters of the bourgeoisie or the petty boyar class, such as Sabina Brătianu, however, recalled a different atmosphere, profoundly patriarchal and of a touching intimacy. The Christmas tree was adorned by the adults in great secrecy, so as to be a surprise revealed to the children on Christmas Eve. Unlike Anne-Marie Callimachi, Sabina Brătianu learned to appreciate “all the trivialities connected to Christmas” and was happy to sing carols and to enjoy the festivities and the sweets received. The children’s presents were placed by their beds on New Year’s Eve, where they discovered them the next day. Their impatience was so great that they always wondered “why New Year’s Day was so long and the night so short.” It was at the end of the nineteenth century that Father Christmas came to the attention of children, accompanied by an entire consumer industry and a story full of enchanted characters, from Rudolph the reindeer to the elves and the house at the North Pole.

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PART VII

*Fashion, luxury, and the transformations  
of Southeastern European society*

*From “old” fashion to “new” fashion  
in pre-modern Transylvania*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS

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The Transylvanian writer and memoirist Péter Apor published in 1736 a history of the transformations in Transylvania, which had been under Habsburg rule since the end of the previous century, and described for his contemporaries the way his forebearers dressed. He wrote about men’s fashion the following: “People of that time wore long coats, also called boyar coats, made of good cloth, lined with fox fur. Nobles and aristocrats wore cloaks even in summer, lined with velvet or gilded material, or with Venetian velvet.”

For the Baroque generation, which imitated the fashion of the Viennese court, preferring short clothes and fine lace collars, the style of past centuries had been almost forgotten, so Apor’s explanations were necessary. Before the 1700s, through the influence of the Romanian principalities (note Apor’s use of the adjective “boyar” in the quotation above), Transylvanian men dressed according to Ottoman fashions.

Indeed, a lesser-known point is that Ottoman clothes, known to Europeans for their length, vivid colours, and the fact that they were worn in layers, were appreciated outside the borders of the empire. For example, Ottoman kaftans inspired the long sleeveless overcoats down to the ankles, with fur hems, worn by men in Central Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Similarly, Hungarian and Polish nobles wore heavy





*Anonymous, Portrait of Samuel Herbert von Herbertsheim – father, 1740 (Art Museum of Braşov).*



*Anonymous, Portrait of Samuel Herbert von Herbertsheim – son, 1740 (Art Museum of Braşov).*





*Anonymous, Portrait of Sara Elisabeth Herbert von Herbertsheim, 1767 (Art Museum of Braşov).*

silk and velvet, brought in by merchants from the Ottoman Empire, because they were used to make shorter waistcoats, decorated with buttons and silk threads, worn under the overcoat. The best known political figure who adopted this Ottoman-inspired fashion was Stefan Báthory, prince of Transylvania (from 1571) and, through his marriage to Anna Jagiello,



*Franz Anton Bergmann, Anna Maria von Huttern, last quarter of the eighteenth century (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. 1470).*

king of Poland (1576–1586). These long sleeveless cloaks were worn in Poland in parallel with clothes made according to European fashion.

The Ottoman influence on men's clothing can also be traced among the Transylvanian Saxons, as tombstone portraits and costume albums show.





Johann Martin Stock, Portrait of Count Sámuel Teleki, with the bust of Baron Sámuel Brukenthal, 1787 (Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, 55.1606).



Johann Martin Stock, Anna Maria Hutter von Huttern, the wife of the mayor of Sibiu, 1787 (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. 1140).





Walking stick with sword and richly ornamented scabbard, eighteenth century (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M1109/2096).

Along with the same heavy coats, the Saxon elite, too, wore tall boots made of fine red or yellow cordovan leather. The transition from Ottoman to Viennese-inspired clothing was not without controversy. After the 1700s, those seeking positions within the Habsburg administration quickly adopted “German” clothes, as the court fashion was known at the time. Overcoats were shortened and the fur trimming gradually disappeared, giving way to two-row buttons, silk waistcoats, velvet jackets, and lace collars.

As portraits illustrate, this transition process also affected women’s fashion. The portraits of Anna Maria Hutter von Huttern, the wife of the mayor of Sibiu, to be found today at the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, are a case in point. The skirt with apron and the blouse, worn under a stomacher, had already become part of the Saxon “traditional” outfit, similar to the clothes worn by Hungarian women. Later, this style was integrated within the traditional folk costume. Accessories, such as tassels and belts with oriental motifs, are suggestive of Balkan influence. The so-called “German” fashion,



Man's waistcoat, eighteenth century (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, inv. no. M1195/7723).

which included the wig, the low neckline, and the crinoline, promoted a uniform aesthetic model in the Habsburg Empire, connecting local elites to the trends coming from the main European capitals. Thus, Ottoman-inspired fashion was quickly forgotten, and the garments of the past remained mere curiosities in costume albums. In the Romanian principalities, on the other hand, during the eighteenth century the Ottomanization of the boyars’ clothing became much more pronounced.

### *The princes’ colours*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

**O**n 12 January 1817, Prince Caragea gave an order reserving the colour white for the princely court, thus forbidding all boyars and merchants from wearing clothes of white atlas: “Because the white atlas and the white covers of coats and other clothes covered with fur (irrespective of material) is to be worn exclusively by those so entrusted by the princes and governors of the people, as opposed to their subjects; here, therefore, I order that nobody else may wear white atlas in any sort of garment. And other white materials for coats and other garments, only their highnesses, the princely sons and daughters are allowed.”

The order, read by the grand *postelnic* to all “grand and petty boyars,” also included a punishment: “Whoever, man or woman, should know that if found wearing such clothes, the garments will be destroyed.” Not long after the order was passed, the boyar lady Tarsița Filipescu put on a turban, an atlas dress and a white overcoat, got into her carriage and started parading in front of the princely court. Her attitude angered Prince Caragea, who observed that “only *Vorniceasa*<sup>1</sup> Filipescu showed herself to be foolish, not understanding, and disregarding our princely orders, so that she dared not only to wear a white atlas dress, but also to pass with this kind of clothes, without the slightest shame, by our princely Court.” Thus, on 21 January 1817, Caragea ordered that the lady in question

1. *Vorniceasa* = the wife of a *vornic*. A wife had the right to bear her husband title.





*Anonymous, Miniature of the prince of Wallachia, Ioan Caragea (Benaki Museum, Athens, inv. no. ΓΕ\_9239. © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).*

*Previous page: Pavel Đurković, Portrait of Barbu Văcărescu, 1824 (Romanian National Art Museum, Gallery of Modern Romanian Art, inv. no. 522).*





be apprehended and stripped of her clothes in public. *Vorniceasă* Tarsița Filipescu was never caught, nor punished, because she belonged to a great boyar family, with influence in circles close to the prince. Around 1841, when the *vorniceasă* was already old, but just as proud, she scolded the ruler and the members of the Public Assembly, who had refused her a pension. Her perseverance and her appeals in all directions made the boyars give up in the end, and her desired pension was granted.

Colours were used to emphasise social status, prestige, and a particular place in the social hierarchy. The Ottoman authorities employed colours to mark the position of Muslims in relation to other groups within the empire. Green, yellow, and white were colours attributed to the people of Allah and forbidden to the Christian subjects of the sultan. In his famous work *Tableau général de l'Empire Ottoman*, the Armenian Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson wrote that "white and green are the most representative colours for the Ottomans." If white satin was specific to the Grand Vizier, green satin was reserved for the pashas of three tails, in their capacity as representatives of the sultan in the provinces they administered. The green muslin turban was worn only by sharifs, descendants of Muhammad. (The use of green later expanded, and it became a dominant colour among Muslims.)

Following the example of the sultans, Phanariot princes tried to impose the same rules in order to strengthen their position in relation to the local elite. Ioan Caragea reserved white for himself, arguing that it was an old tradition in great empires. Marc-Philipp Zallony writes in an essay dedicated to the Phanariot rulers that they had been given the right to "adorn" their *kalpak* with white atlas, while the boyars were entitled to red atlas. A distinction may also be observed regarding footwear: the Phanariot princes, unlike the boyars, had the right to line their slippers with red cloth. However, the attempt of Ioan Caragea to appropriate the colour white in 1817 came rather late, given that society was turning towards French fashion and abandoning Ottoman garb.

*Anonymous, Ienăchiță Văcărescu, watercolour on ivory (Prahova Museum of History and Archaeology, Ploiești, inv. no. 6.4-9253).*



## French fashion and Voltaire, the one hated by God

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

The Russian-Ottoman War of 1806-1812 contributed greatly to the transformation of Southeastern European society. The six-year-long presence of Russian armies in the Balkans produced visible effects in both dress and behaviour. Clothes, manners, and customs changed significantly due to the influence of Russian officers and the willingness of the local society to embrace new trends. Trips to Sibiu, Vienna, or Paris became fashionable and facilitated the assimilation of the new model, known or defined by contemporaries as “French.” Books, the press, and individuals could travel much easier from Bucharest to Paris and from Geneva to Iași. In letters to his sisters, Mihail Kogălniceanu wrote not only about reading Voltaire, Racine, Corneille or Chateaubriand, but also about hats, bonnets, shoes, scarfs and many other “luxury goods” fashionable in France, where he went to finish his studies between 1834 and 1835.

However, not everyone appreciated the change, the new fashion, or the new readings. In Bucharest, deacon Ioan Dobrescu, from the Batiștei neighbourhood (*mahala*) of Bucharest, scared by the plague that haunted the city, wrote with fear: “Well, what do you see? Women with uncovered heads and cut hair, stripped to the waist. People had forsaken their costume and taken up a foreign costume, like the heathens; some dressed like the Germans, others like the French, others in other ways, with short hair and curls like women. Then we mingled with them, and the more educated read their books, some in French, some in German, some in Italian. And in came the teaching of Volter, the one hated by God, whom the heathen had as a god. And we had no regard for the holy fast days anymore. There was always meat on the table. We went to church as if to a show, each with better clothes than the other, the women with all sorts of devilish adornments. In short, pride took up residence in Bucharest. We no longer believed in God, but in walls, clothes, deceits, good food,

Tayyib and Tahir dressed in European garments. *Manuscript W.666,1721* (Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA).







Zahari Zograf, "The Frenchified women". Church of St. Nicholas, Bacikovo Monastery, Bulgaria, interior painting, detail (Photo: Lidia Cotovanu).





Velvet embroidered ilic (yelek) with gold thread, late eighteenth century – front and back (National Museum of History, Romania, inv. no. 236155).

Embroidered cloth pipiri, late eighteenth century – front and back (National Museum of History, Romania, inv. no. 53057).



drunkenness, and above all open debauchery.” Change caused concern and fear. While in Bucharest deacon Dobrescu cunningly cursed Napoleon Bonaparte, calling him “a bad part,” in 1840 in Plovdiv, Rumelia, Zahari Zograf painted the women of the Bulgarian elite dressed in the latest French fashion at the Last Judgment. Zograf was one of the most famous church and icon painters of the time. He painted himself in three churches dressed in an oriental costume, with a paintbrush in his hand. In 1851 he was commissioned to paint the church of St. Athanasius on Mount Athos.

In spite of all opposition, however, French or European fashion, reading, and travel visibly transformed Southeastern European societies. Traditional voices, especially among the clergy, tried to attach negative connotations to the changes taking place by using one of the most important tools of progress: the press. “It is a terrible thing if one sees a lot of masquerades: to turn the church into a dance hall during some hours; your heart aches when you see most men and women not coming to church for what they ought to come for, but only to show off their clothes and accessories and to decide the time of their evening dates,” wrote bishop Dionisie Romano in a moral exposition accusing the new ways that dominated Wallachian society, published in march 1840 in *Vestitorul bisericesc* (The Church herald). Indeed, the changes brought by the new fashions, the new readings, and the new manners more than visible. The church hastened to denounce and sanction them.

Ottoman costume was not abandoned abruptly or indeed completely. Certain garments were retained and integrated into the new fashion, either because of their beauty or due to personal taste, and sometimes simply because of their usefulness. The *fermenea* was one of these; it was appreciated by the young aristocrats of Southeastern Europe. It appears both in the portrait of Anka Topalović, made in 1837 by the Serbian painter Katarina Ivanović, and in the portrait made by the French artist Charles Doussault of a boyar woman from Bucharest (1844). The velvet fabric is decorated with beautiful gold thread embroidery showcasing the richness and elegance of the piece.

However, some of the “oriental” elements had a different fate and remained in history for centuries, adapting to new social and cultural circumstances. Slippers are a convincing example in this regard. Embroidered



with gold or silver thread and adorned with semiprecious stones, slippers (Romanian *papuci*, from the Turkish *papuç*) become exotic pieces that carry with them the stories of the *One Thousand and One Nights*. In Berlin, Mihail Kogălniceanu had been invited to the salons patronised by Frederica, princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz and duchess of Cumberland. In the autumn of 1836, the two met again in the resort of Swinemünde (today Świnoujście, Poland), where Kogălniceanu was being treated for his ailing stomach. Among the many things they discussed were Oriental slippers, which seem to have ignited the princess's imagination. The young Kogălniceanu quickly wrote home, asking his sisters and father to send him right away some "women's slippers" like those "made in Constantinople," "embroidered with gold and pearls." Two weeks later, he was still asking his sisters to send him the slippers he wanted to give to the princess, respecting the "exact" foot size mentioned in the letter. Unfortunately, by the time the slippers arrived Princess Frederica had already left the spa. Kogălniceanu gave one of the two pairs to another lady: "Les souliers ne sont pas si bien beaux, mais pour Berlin ils le sont assez," he wrote in December 1836. He then left the spa to return to his studies, just as Princess Frederica had retired to spend the winter on one of her estates, in London or perhaps Hanover, without having received the slippers requested by Kogălniceanu: "Je n'ai pas encore eu le temps d'en donner une paire à la princesse de Cumberland." However, as mentioned before, one pair of slippers had been given to another lady from Berlin high society, who had received it with delight: "...une autre paire j'en ai donné à une dame chez laquelle je vais souvent en société; elle en a été bien contente."

Even today, in any modern Southeast European market, slippers are the most visible commodity. Each nation tries to appropriate them, reinventing traditions and creating separate histories. Made of leather or cloth, wood or maize leaves, embroidered or sculpted, slippers have been considered "local" commodities for centuries. Like Princess Frederica in times past, the buyer is enchanted by the originality and exoticism related to the centuries-long tradition of the slippers, once brought from the Ottoman Empire, even though today's label is likely to read "made in China."

*Katerina Ivanović, Portrait of Anka Topalović, 1837 (Matica Srpska Gallery, Novi Sad, Serbia).*





The switches in fashion were influenced by the political changes taking place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including the French Revolution, the Greek Revolution, the Serbian Revolution, and the modernization period of Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire. The printed press offered the world the image of these social and political shifts, along with its reports of the events that led to the outbreak of the Crimean War (1853–1856). Reading the accounts of the time and looking at the images on the pages of newspapers, researchers have before their eyes an extremely diverse world, in which cultural differences are highlighted to a greater or lesser degree depending on the journalist. South-eastern Europe had undergone a series of reforms and metamorphosis, whose results must be examined carefully, leaving room for nuances and interpretations.

*“Luxury is expensive, and cheap”*

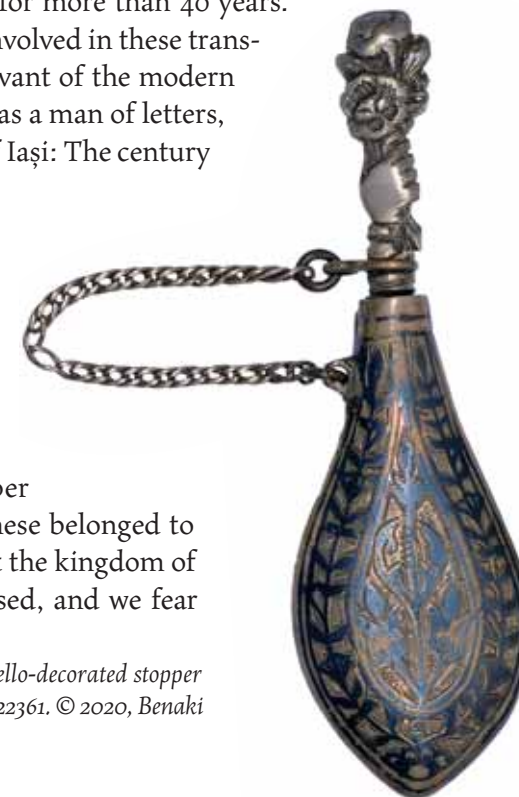
CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ

The eighteenth century was crucial to the debate over luxury. This term with negative connotations, predominantly associated with vice, ruin, or waste, began to be seen differently. In the Romanian principalities, the term as such (Romanian *lux*) was not used. Metropolitan Gavriil of Moldavia directed his criticisms against heavy fabrics, embroidered with gold and silver thread, against ornaments and embroideries of all kinds, but without relating them to luxury, because he was unfamiliar with the term. The foreign visitor, coming from a world where luxury had been well defined, immediately identified with one word what the natives associated with wealth or opulence. Luxury was, therefore, linked to expensive fabrics, embroidered with gold or silver thread, ermine and sable furs, gold decorated Viennese carriages, gold jewellery and diamonds, and many other things exhibiting something of the magic of fashion, originality, and extravagance. When the term started to be used at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it defined fashion, tastes, and the society. Expensive jewellery and clothing continued to outline luxury, but

only in a process of social differentiation in which education and manners ennobled the elite. The emergence and development of the press generated debates in Romanian society: does luxury corrupt or does it stimulate the economic development of a society? In the Romanian principalities the question appeared late, but in countries such as France or England it had already been the subject of fierce debates. On the one hand, Jean-François de Saint-Lambert wrote an essay on luxury in 1764 and an entry on the subject for the *Encyclopaedia* coordinated by Denis Diderot. He tried to reconcile the modern view emphasising the role of luxury in economic growth with the older opinion, which linked luxury to moral values. On the other hand, David Hume and Adam Smith believed that luxury contributed significantly to the economic development of a society, and their views would influence the debates of the following century.

On 3 February 1846, the newspaper *Albina românească* published a representative article for the changes that had been taking place in the Romanian lands for more than 40 years. Costache Negruzzi, directly involved in these transformations, both as a civil servant of the modern state that was being built and as a man of letters, wrote the article “The shops of Iași: The century keeps growing”:

There was a time when in the shops of Iași you could only find striped cloth and yellow slippers. Where were *glacés* gloves, lacquered boots, and rubber braces? For Moldavians, these belonged to the realm of fairy tales. But the kingdom of slippers and cloth has passed, and we fear



Silver bottle used for makeup, with niello-decorated stopper (Benaki Museum, Athens, inv. no. ΓΕ\_22361. © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).

that soon the *işlic*, this queen of hats, will perish, unless some philanthropist preserves it – well wrapped in tobacco so that the moths will not eat it – in some cabinet of antiquities. Today the *Gibus* hat is enthroned on our heads and the tight frock coat has taken the place of the wide *anteri*. We civilised ourselves in our dress! Little by little we shall civilise ourselves in other ways too.

But many are crying out against luxury:

— Luxury is ruining us! Luxury will extinguish us!

— You, sir, who still wear beard and Turkish trousers, cry out against luxury without knowing what luxury is. Have you taken a course in political economy? Do you know that luxury is the soul of a state? Then why are you shouting so much? Luxury is expensive, and cheap.

The extract captures the relationship between luxury and social distinction, directly linked to the education of tastes. By referring to political economy, Negruzzi demonstrates he has read some specialised books by the time of his writing. Nonetheless, he was in any case an acute observer of the world in which he lived, indulgently emphasising the obvious gaps between appearances and changes of substance: “We civilised ourselves in our dress! [...] we shall civilise ourselves in other ways too.”

### *The fashion stores*

NICOLETA ROMAN

**F**ashion is both for gentlemen and for ladies, but it is so changeable that what is in vogue in one season is nowhere to be seen in the next; this explains the continual renaming and reinventing of articles of clothing. Merchants used to travel abroad for six to eight weeks at a time, on trips called *taxiduri* (from Modern Greek *taxidi*), to renew their inventory. Itinerant traders sold their products quickly, seeking customers at inns or boyars’ mansions. Settled merchants had shops with iron shutters. In the middle of the nineteenth century, in the capital of Wallachia,

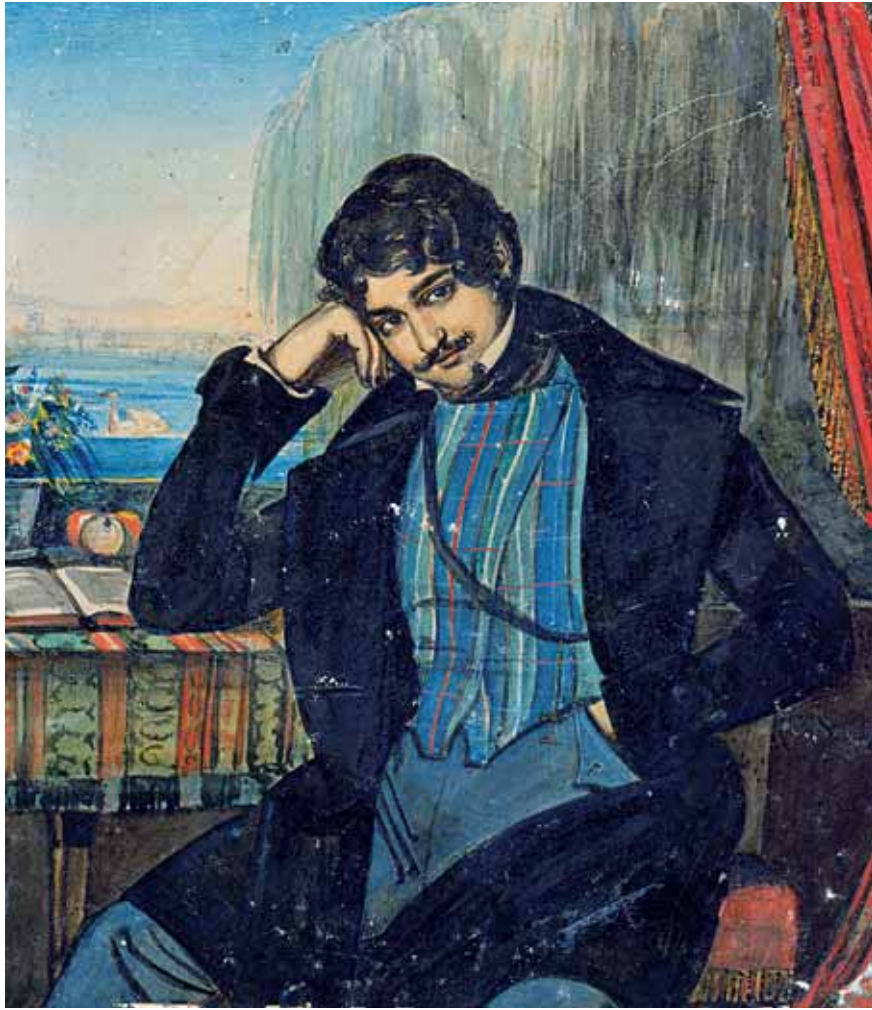
there was an increase in the number of specialised stores, with clothing and accessories, for both men and women. The transition from the old-style shop to the modern store stocked with the latest items of clothing was gradual, and both types of outlets coexisted for a while. They were located especially on Calea Mogoşoaia, in areas already recognised as belonging to the Bucharest merchants, and were held, for the most part, by foreigners, who brought high quality consumer goods.

*Men’s stores* An unconventional and Bohemian figure, Pantazi Ghica (1831–1882), lawyer and former secretary of Nicolae Bălcescu, officer in the Ottoman army during the Crimean War, and, at the same time, a young boyar with taste, considered that a man had to spend about two hundred guilders a month in order to maintain his status and image. If the gentleman was in love, the costs would go up and he would have to borrow a lot of money from acquaintances to be able to cover the expenses. A gentleman’s wardrobe should not be without frock coats, overcoats, shirts, gloves, waistcoats, and ties. A carriage worth 65 guilders was essential, as were cosmetics, such as eau de cologne, *vinaigre de toilette*, tooth powder, and gardenia perfume, costing more than 100 guilders. With a touch of irony, Pantazi Ghica noted that, in order to please the ladies, men had to follow fashion trends: “Wear close-fitting, tight clothes, made according to the latest fashion; wear such tight boots that your eyes pop out of your head. Put on shirts so fine that the sun’s rays can be seen through them and covered in so much stitching that they no longer have any patch of smooth fabric.”

Foreign tailors, especially of German origin, were numerous at the time, while men’s clothing stores were expanding to meet the needs of demanding clients such as the young Ghica. A romantic man with a bourgeois air or belonging to a boyar family would often wear a black suit with a white waistcoat and silk tie. The few items of masculine jewellery included watches, decorations, and signet rings. When they appeared in paintings, men had a sober background behind them, usually reflecting their profession. Gentlemen preferred quality materials, and fashion stores had to be sure to order from sources that would emphasise their social status.

For instance, in 1858, Iosif I. Korbuly men’s clothing store, housed “in the houses of lady Castrişoaia,” near the Capşa’s confectioners’ shop,





C. Sauchacz, [Portrait of Costache Negri (1812-1876)], drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

advertised in periodicals that they had brought from Vienna and Paris a “rich assortment of clothes made according to the latest fashion, for the autumn and winter.” Moreover, they informed customers that they now received new merchandise twice a month, much faster than in the past. Indeed, the clothing brought followed the latest trends and, in addition



Anton Chladek, Costache Faca, undated drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

to clothing, gentlemen could also find “two phaetons on sale, made by the best manufacturer in Vienna, of unparalleled reliability and elegance.”

Men’s fashion means not only suits, but also accessories and other goods: the pocket watch, toiletries, or the phaeton for outings in the open air. The *À l’Union* store, in front of the Crețulescu Church, sold primarily



*Giovanni Schiavoni, Portrait of a Man, 1844 (Moldavia National Museum Complex – Iași Art Museum).*



*Constantin D. Rosenthal, Portrait of a Man, 1843. The work depicts Constantin Socolescu, a friend of the artist (Moldavia National Museum Complex – Iași Art Museum).*





*Anonymous, Anton Farra, diplomatic representative to Constantinople in the first half of the nineteenth century, undated drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*

*Previous page: Novak Radonić, Konstantin Nikolić, lawyer from Novi Sad, 1854 (Matica Srpska Gallery, Novi Sad, Serbia).*



men's shoes made of plain calfskin and "French satin" ankle boots. The former cost between 3 and 4 guilders (the applied varnish made them more expensive), while the ankle boots were sold for 3 guilders and 4 pounds per pair. Among the most original articles, there were "English socks, short and long, made of cotton and Scottish thread (*fil d'Écosse*)."

But clothes were the most sought after. The items on offer in the stores and the adoption of new trends lead to a certain uniformity of appearance. The sober colours, the attention to detail, and the neat appearance were aimed at transmitting the idea of elegance and seriousness. Portraits of the time, from those of diplomats to those of artists or minor servants, also highlight the uniformity of men's suits. It was the materials that differed and consequently so did the price. Men's stores proliferated and offered a wide variety of goods and shopkeepers also tried to cater to the needs of those outside the capital by placing ads in journals and magazine. Newspapers circulated and were, therefore, read by elites and city dwellers. For instance, G.M. Crisianovski had a "ready-to-wear men's clothes store" in Zlătari Inn, no. 22, across the street from the Sf. Ioan Inn and the Constantin Vodă Inn. His newspaper advertisements also targeted customers from the provinces, and he was willing to take orders from the counties of Wallachia. The clothes in his shop followed "the latest French and English styles" and the materials were made in "the leading industrial cities in Belgium, Germany."

*Women's stores* Things were not much different for ladies. For them, too, fashion meant clothes and accessories, and in their choice of stock, stores paid attention to the foreign, and especially French, press, which established the trend for each season. Dresses, discreetly matched with ribbons, shawls, and artificial flowers, brought to the fore another type of beauty. The materials were fluid and shiny, without being ostentatious; the colours were simple but effective. Muslin, silk, voile, and lace took centre stage. The style adopted by wealthy and less wealthy customers was similar, but the materials and accessories differed.

*Charles Doussault, Portrait of Miss Eliza Blaremborg, in the magazine Boabe de grâu, no. 12/1935.*







*Giovanni Schiavoni, Woman on the terrace [Mrs. Constantiniu, née Petcu], 1843 (Moldavia National Museum Complex – Iași Art Museum).*



*Miklós Barabás, Portrait of the wife of Sándor Nikolics the Elder, née Ágnes Manasz, from Hodoni, 1858 (Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, inv. no. 5294).*



Konstantin Danil, Eufemija Kezan, née Jagodić, 1829-1831 (Matica Srpska Gallery, Novi Sad, Serbia).

Eliza Blaremborg, headmistress of a boarding school in Wallachia, and Mrs. Constantiniu from Moldavia, shown in the painting *Woman on the Terrace*, had similar outfits in the portraits made during the same year by two foreign painters, Charles Doussault and Giovanni Schiavoni. With curly hair and bare shoulders, both women are portrayed on a

terrace. They wear dresses that indicate different seasons and, according to the materials they were made of, different financial means. Miss Blaremborg wears a simple and light summer dress without many ornaments: a flower with a brooch, mesh gloves, a handkerchief. Mrs. Constantiniu wears a dark blue and red dress and a delicate shawl, both made of high-quality materials. Mrs. Nikolics wears a similar outfit, with minimal accessories, in Miklós Barabás's portrait from 1858.

The transformations in the fashion of the nineteenth century can also be traced in votive portraits. Representatives of two different generations offer striking contrasts in the frescoes of All Saints' Church in Râmnicu Vâlcea. Young Gheorghîța Ristache Ioan has a sober attitude and wears accessories with a Victorian look: a fine lace cap and, surprisingly, an umbrella. Next to her, Bica Lahovari Ioan wears a turban on her head and a shawl on her shoulders, both specific to the old Phanariot regime. The context of the representation is important, as the church became an important religious centre in Oltenia, where the flags of the 1848 revolutionaries were consecrated. Votive portraits in this case showcase the transformations of society. The umbrella became a common accessory in the 1840s, and its presence framed young Gheorghîța in a world of the bourgeoisie, which paid attention to etiquette. In the Victorian era, the middle classes wore gloves and carried fans and umbrellas in imitation of the aristocratic style. All these items, together with garments, were readily available in stores opened in the capital and later in provincial cities of Wallachia.

In Bucharest, the *À la Ville de Lyon* store presented itself as the best place for purchasing silks. French fashion, which young women read about in French newspapers, reached the capital of Wallachia. In fact, the Lyon company had branches throughout Europe and opened its Bucharest outlet in 1858. The goods brought in consisted exclusively of "silk dresses, novelties of the season, with two skirts, flounces and *quilles*, *taffetas unis*." Any self-respecting woman should pay them a visit because the store was "known so well in the elegant society of all the capitals of Europe." Fashionable clothes were closer to the buyer, who no longer had to travel to or order from abroad in order to get them. Thanks to these stores, the latest fashionable garments became available to the female public, even if the prices put limits on their accessibility.







newspaper *Românul* that in her shop one could find velvet coats, *negligée* dresses, trousers, skirts, collars, gloves, hats, lace veils, stockings, and handkerchiefs. Moreover, there was a whole range of “pearl coiffures in all colours and jewellery for banquet balls.” Perfumes, delicate “scents for kerchiefs”, cosmetics such as the so-called “rouge of Athens”, and the like were among the products made available to buyers. Three attributes recommended Mrs. Villacrosse’s store: novelty, quality, and affordable prices. Mrs. Vernaz lived very close to the store, in Mr. Oteteleşanu’s houses on the Mogoşoia Road.

### *A tale of jewellery*

NICOLETA ROMAN

Precious stones and jewellery had always been a point of attraction in this part of Europe, whether it was women’s adornments, oriental ornaments worn by men, or the complex accessories of high clerics’ vestments. Opulence in the Southeastern Europe is described with a mixture of admiration and disapproval in foreign accounts, diplomatic reports, and works focused on Ottoman manners and costumes. In the visual chronicle artist Jean-Baptiste Van Mour made for the Marquis de Ferriol, the French ambassador to Constantinople in the early eighteenth century, the Ottoman court was described in its entire splendour, where jewellery emphasised wealth and local culture. Following the line opened by Nicolas de Nicolay, his works would fascinate the Western imagination and inspire a new fashion, known as *turquerie*. The jewellery associated with court costumes took central stage in this chronicle.

For example, the sultana, Greek women, and men from the same milieu wore slightly different but always-impressive belt clasps made of gold adorned with precious stones. Reserved for the elites, belt clasps were mainly worn by the inhabitants of Pera and by the Phanariots. The Swiss master of pastel portraits Jean-Étienne Liotard, also known as the “Turkish painter,” was one of the famous painters associated with the growing demand for *turquerie* and included belt clasps in his paintings of

women. Most of the time, the women were posing relaxed on a couch or occasionally standing. They wore white dresses with small flowers and the waist covered by a large, round, plated silver belt clasp (*pafta*), such as the young woman smiles dreamily in a portrait entitled *Woman in Turkish dress*, today in the Pera Museum. At the Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw we find the portrait of a woman with a slightly more thoughtful face: *Lady in Turkish dress, with a fan*. The belt clasp, found in both paintings, is a marker of cultural and social status. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu adopted it and added it to the English elite’s wardrobe. However, in England, the belt clasps were modified to fit the sobriety of their own costume: still made of gold, they were smaller, less ornate, and square or rectangular in shape. Liotard’s models were mostly wealthy Greek women from Constantinople or Izmir and their portraits show the journey of the belt clasp from the Ottoman court to the bourgeoisie.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, belt clasps were no longer in demand in the regional market. They had become precious heirlooms in the dowry lists of the time. Even the jewel-bedecked belts of boyar men survived only as remnants of a bygone era. However, diamonds and pearls were worn with grace, in sets or single pieces, according to the trends of Paris and Vienna. For instance, as one dowry list shows, a provincial Romanian boyar gave his daughter a collection of different accessories mixing patterns and materials from both the East and the West, “a string



Pafta (heftel) Transylvanian workshop, first half of the seventeenth century (National History Museum of Romania).



with fifteen large diamonds and twenty-six smaller ones; a pair of earrings with thirty small diamonds and two large green stones; a bracelet weighing eight *drams* (ca. 25 grams), adorned with stones, also from Vienna; a ring with a large diamond.” These jewels were worth three times more than the money spent on “clothing and bedding.” Priced in guilders the new, massive jewellery accessories were much appreciated by Southeast Europeans. In Bucharest, on Lipscani Street, three shops joined forces to mark Europeanization and the association between the new fashion and jewellery: Jewellery of the Elite, Gallery of Silks, and Pompadour Dresses.

### *Clasps, clasps, and more clasps*

NICOLETA ROMAN

**M**ade mainly in Greek and Turkish workshops, belt clasps (Romanian *paftale*, singular: *pafta*) were part of the women’s outfit associated with the Phanariot era. The catalogues made by various museums in the Balkans indicate a certain specificity of the models and materials used in the decoration of objects most often associated with folk costumes. Thus, Turkish clasps were usually lacy, often gilded, with many stones (especially pearls), and expressive of opulence. Bulgarian and Aromanian belt clasps were simpler, with a certain design and a specific symbolism. The Greek ones were mainly made of silver, with delicate patterns, to which coral and coins were added.

The enamel found in some areas had a subtle colour, and its presence was reminiscent of Byzantine mosaics. Such jewellery was sometimes to be found in Russia, but the colours of the enamel there had much stronger shades than in the Greek examples. Greeks and Aromanians were often considered skilled craftsmen of these works of art. Depending on local particularities, fastenings of this type took on a variety of forms. Such clasps could also be worn as pendants around the neck, as can be seen among the Transylvanian Saxons.

In this respect, the difference between the countries of Western and Central Europe and the Ottoman Empire consisted in the Ottomans’



*Pafta, Turkish workshop, eighteenth century (Craiova Art Museum, inv. no. MT11).*

ability to combine materials and precious stones. Another feature was their preference for floral motifs rather than animals and birds. Populations under Ottoman rule assimilated influences and integrated them into their own culture. Moreover, belt clasps were also worn by Orthodox prelates, though less so by boyars and princes. By the 1840s, they had become obsolete, remnants of an older style, still be seen in votive portraits in churches, though sometimes only worn by ladies. They were still mentioned in wills, as party of the patrimony to be inherited, but to a lesser extent. Belt clasps were no longer up to date: women who wanted to keep up with the latest fashion put them away in the family jewellery box.

*Pafta, with filigree and floral decorations, eighteenth century, Macedonia (Benaki Museum, Athens, no. inv. EA 106, © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).*





Top: Pafta (heftel), Transylvanian workshop, first half of the seventeenth century (National History Museum of Romania).



Left: Pafta (heftel), Franciscus Kirtscher's workshop, Sibiu, seventeenth century (National Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca).

Bottom: Pafta, workshop in Saframopolis, city with mixed population (Greek and Turkish), 1837 (Benaki Museum, Athens).



While belt clasps were losing their value in the eyes of the elite, the lower classes still appreciated them. For instance, dowry lists from the middle of the nineteenth reveal another use for them, in addition to being just clothing accessories: their weight in gold or silver was written down, so that if need be, they could be melted down and reused, including as payment for various services. Indeed, they were still valuable, but not necessarily for their initial purpose. For example, Costache the barber and his wife Bălașa passed on to their daughter Stanca, along with a set of silver jewellery and a shop: “1 pair of silver belt clasps, after the death of my wife Bălașa, Stanca to have them and to pay for a *sărindar* [daily prayers for her in church]; the clasps come to 58 drams.” The metal could be reused and thus the material became important, not the object itself. Another example concerns Ghiță Protopopescu and his daughters Joița and Ioana, who received as part of their dowries’ French gold earrings, with or without topazes, and gold rings, together with belt clasps with an ornamented belt. Compared to the Western jewellery in the same document, the price of these last items was low, but their material could be easily repurposed according to the daughters’ desires. Another type of reuse, if less prevalent, was to utilise one side of the clasp as the frame for a hand-held mirror.

However, jewellery was also part of another process, which involved the incorporation of national and identity symbols; these pieces of material culture were thus recovered. The phenomenon was connected to the presence of heraldic symbols on the precious objects of the Romanian boyars, and of the European aristocracy. Signet rings and blazons became common in Southeastern Europe, and at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century belt buckles started to display identity symbols too. This phenomenon was part of the national emancipation movement, in which identity had been built around unity of language and religion. The elites themselves become part of this movement and left their mark on objects by inscribing on them their own heraldic signs. These symbols were displayed on many of the belt clasps used by elites in the second half of the nineteenth century as part of national costume.





## *Weapons, suits of armour, and prestige*

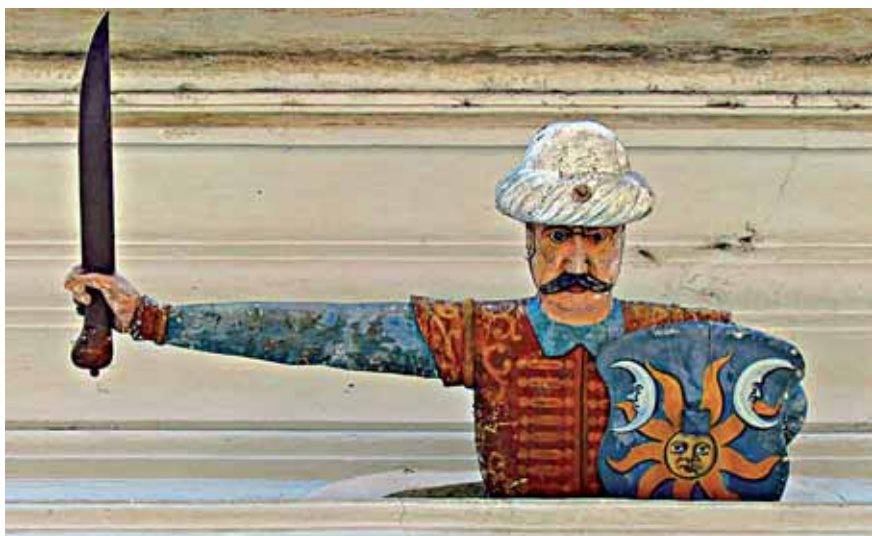
NICOLETA ROMAN

There are a considerable number of museums in European capitals that house suits of armour and collections of firearms and hunting weapons. In Russia, Austria and Turkey, they are linked to the former armouries. The *Landeszeughaus* of Styria in Graz, Austria, is the largest historic armoury in the world, with a collection of around 32,000 artefacts, the oldest dating from the fifteenth century. Such a place memorialises conflicts between empires and the pieces within are generally spoils of war and relics of a reputation built in battle. In his analysis of Islamic weapons and armours, researcher David G. Alexander has pointed out that the existence of chronological, geographical, and dynastic limitations makes it difficult to analyse the complete history of these objects. Our intention here is not to write a history of weapons, be they Ottoman or European, but to discuss them as markers of prestige and status. The details of their making and the historical role they played send a certain message. Weapons are part of heraldic insignia and are visibly displayed in some homes as if to reconfirm social status and bring attention to the past of the family that owns them.

In addition to the coats of arms of the Counts of Saurau and their spouses, the Saurau Palace in Graz also has a distinctive element: the bust of a Turkish soldier looking down on the passers-by, as if ready to fight. According to recent research, this is a figure related to the tournaments organised in the pre-modern period but it is also related to the history of the Saurau family. The Turkish soldier was added as an element of decoration after the construction of the palace, when it came into the possession of Count Karl von Saurau (1587–1648), governor of Styria (1635–1648), marshal and commander involved in the Austro-Turkish wars.

Weapons also became a symbol of power for the military leaders of the border areas of the Ottoman Empire, namely for Serbs, Albanians, Carol Popp de Szathmári, [Princess Marițica Bibescu], 1845. *The wife of prince Gheorghe Bibescu (1843–1848) wears a folk costume, a pafta (belt clasp), a salba (necklace of gold coins), a small string of pearls, and a crown of gold coins (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*





*Bust of an Ottoman soldier under the cornice of the Saurau Palace in Graz (Photo: Nicoleta Roman).*

and Greeks, as evidenced by the precious metals from which they were made, the elaborate ornaments, and the inscriptions of names and dates of battles. These commanders of the Ottoman provinces formed a so-called “aristocracy of arms”; they collect weapons and were interested in technological innovations in the military field. Moreover, their weapons legitimised their leadership position in front of their subjects and foreign diplomats. For this reason, their weapons often feature in their portraits and were displayed in their reception halls.

In the nineteenth century, and especially in its second half, when the number of art collectors increased, the panoply of arms became more visible as a decorative element. However, the panoply is not an invention of the nineteenth century, a century of the assertion of nation-states and romanticism; on the contrary, panoplies were to be seen in previous centuries, always associated with the aristocracy. When the bourgeois of the nineteenth century developed a taste for such decorative features, they were emulating the elite.



*The ceremonial sword of Count Karl von Saurau, Marshal of the Austrian Army (Universalmuseum Joanneum, Museum für Geschichte, Graz, inv. no. 822).*

*Flintlock pistol, early nineteenth century (National Museum of Bukovina, Suceava, inv. no. 92.894).*







*Ali Pasha of Ioannina (1740–1822)* Perhaps no other leader in Southeastern Europe has fuelled the imagination of Westerners as much as Ali, the pasha of Ioannina. Originally from Albania, from a family of warriors, he obtained local power through determination and violence after the death of his father, from whom, according to legend, he inherited a musket. He was part of the Ottoman administrative system and faced the Souliotes in the context of the Russo-Austro–Turkish War of 1787–1792, during which time he gained control of the city of Ioannina. Ali turned Ioannina into a centre of power, extending his influence over several territories in Greece, Albania, and the Peloponnese. From 1789 to 1822, when he was killed on the orders of Sultan Mahmud II, he maintained diplomatic relations with European powers and local leaders and was recognised for his semi-independent position with regard to the Porte.

In 1839, when pastor S. Wilson published an account of his sixteen-year mission to Malta and Greece, he wrote that: “Albania forcibly fixes the attention of an inquisitive traveller. It is the land of romance; it is the asylum of freedom; it is the Caledonia of Greece; it is the plaything – or once was – of the notorious Ali Pasha of Yoannina.”

At the time, Ali Pasha had already become a legend, due in part to his remarkable life, but also to Lord Byron’s poem *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812–1818) and to Alexandre Dumas’s *Ali Pasha* (1840). The meeting between Byron and the warrior from Tepeleni, who had become the leader of an opulent court with increased autonomy from the Porte, was amply described in the poet’s letter to his mother of 2 November 1809. Byron was cordially received in a room paved with marble and with a fountain in the centre. Ali Pasha, who had previously made inquiries about his guest, saw him as “a man of birth,” because he had “small ears, curling hair, and little white hands.” Byron’s attention was drawn to the fact that Ali Pasha considered his ancestry more important than his title and rank. His physical description of the leader of Ioannina anticipates the portraits that would circulate throughout the nineteenth century, emphasising his

*Uroš Knežević, Duke Stefan Knićanin, 1849. The portrait depicts the Serbian commander and revolutionary Stefan Knićanin in an oriental costume, wearing weapons and decorations specific to this space (Matica Srpska Gallery, Novi Sad, Serbia).*





Maria F. Passano, Pasha, 1824 (Benaki Museum, Athens, inv. no. GE 8389. © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).

Next page: "Ali Pasha hunting on Lake Butrint, March 1819" (detail), in Louis Dupré, *Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople*, Paris, 1825 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

small and overweight stature, as well as his blue eyes and white beard, in harmony with his affable and dignified demeanour. In Ali pasha, Byron saw a complex and contradictory character, in whom diplomacy and violence coexisted, and compared him to Napoleon Bonaparte. On his return to England, Lord Byron published *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, his autobiographical poem in which Ali Pasha's court was set in an enchanting







place and the ruler was described as brave and powerful. Here is what Byron writes in Canto II, Stanza LXII:

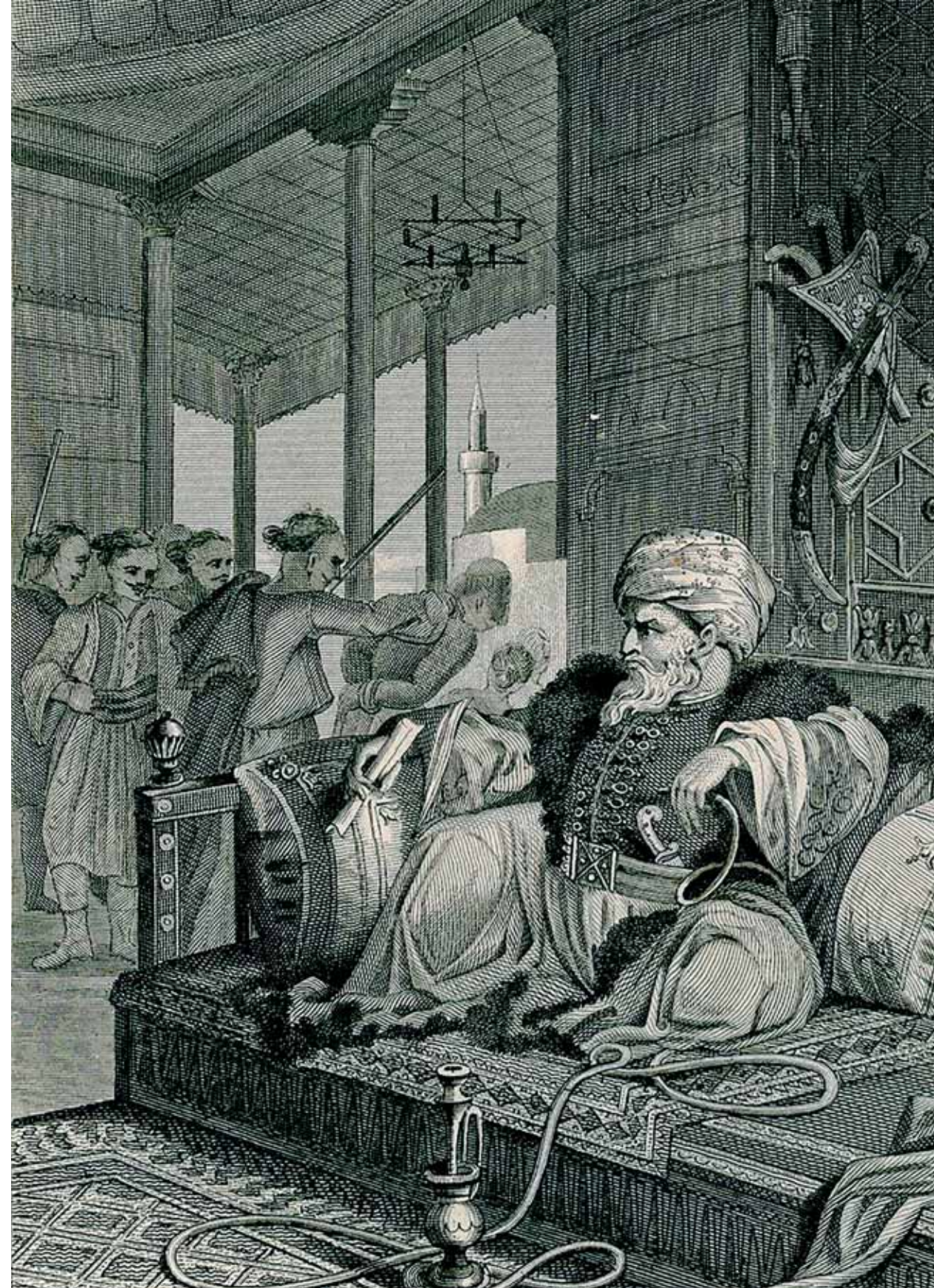
In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring  
Of living water from the centre rose,  
Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,  
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,  
Ali reclined, a man of war and woes:  
Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace,  
While Gentleness her milder radiance throws  
Along that aged venerable face,  
The deeds that lurk beneath and stain him with disgrace.

The French painter Louis Dupré, who came to know him towards the end of his life, during an 1819 trip, left us another testimony regarding to the pasha. The artist was greeted by the leader of Ioannina at the end of a meeting with the British general Thomas Maitland, governor of Malta (1813-1824). The setting was oriental: seated on divans and surrounded by pipe smoke, those present were served coffee in porcelain cups brought on silver cup holders. Dupré was impressed not by the pasha's costume, but by his weapons, "carefully polished, [...] placed close and within his reach; they included a rifle, a long dagger, and two pistols adorned with precious stones."

Ali Pasha had been reserved about Dupré's desire to portray him, but he invited the artist and General Maitland to hunt on Lake Butrint. Thus, the painter got to know Ali's son, Veli Pasha, and his grandchildren, Ismail and Mehmed, who served as his guides. The hunting party of 14 March 1819 provided Dupré's opportunity to paint the pasha of Ioannina, together

*Rifle decorated with gold and silver, dated 1821, which belonged to the pasha of Ioannina and was made by the English gunsmith Joseph Manton (Benaki Museum, Athens, inv. no. TE 5679. © 2020, Benaki Museum, Athens).*

*Next page: Portrait of Ali Pasha, in Thomas Smart Hughes, Travels in Sicily, Greece and Albania, vol. I, London, 1820 (Google Books).*







with his pipe and weapon, a portrait that remains a point of reference even today. The depiction offers a neutral image of the warrior at an advanced age, but still influential in the diplomatic field. Louis Dupré's portrait would circulate intensely before being published in the album illustrating his journey in 1825 and would be reprinted with minor modifications by the brothers Eugenio and Raffaele Fulgenzi, the authors of a costume album published in Smyrna in 1836–1838.

Other portraits, such as those made for the works of the Englishmen Thomas Smart Hughes and Joseph Cartwright, highlight the pasha's countenance as a dreaded ruler, in line with Byron's depiction. Hughes arrived in Ioannina in 1814 and was greeted by the pasha, who was wearing a dagger decorated with diamonds and sitting on a divan covered with a lion pelt rug. Having informed himself regarding Ali's past, Hughes was aware of his attempts to retrieve the sword of his grandfather, who had died during the siege of Corfu. Although present in the background, the panoply is a common element of the representations offered to the public by Hughes and Cartwright. Thanks to this quasi-Western element, Ali Pasha could be integrated into that "aristocracy of arms" that was taking shape at a European level.

Western decorations, oriental weapons, and traditional costume all played an important role in the visual representations of military leaders in the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, they prove the double commitment of these rulers: to their space of origin, which emphasised the source of their power, and to the space of European diplomacy, with which they were in dialogue.

Ali Pasha of Jannina, in *Joseph Cartwright*, [Eleven Coloured Costume Plates of Northwestern Greece], London, 1822 (Gennadius Library – the American School of Classical Studies at Athens).



## Decorations

NICOLETA ROMAN

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Frédéric and Christine Reinhard travelled to the Romanian principalities, following the appointment of Frédéric Reinhard as Commissioner General of France for Trade Relations. Their journey was full of adventures, the couple being even taken prisoners by the Russians. The Ottomans saw their presence as a sign of concern over the course of international relations and Reinhard was accepted by the Porte only with the status of Consul General for both principalities. To ensure the goodwill of a Western diplomat in troubled times, at the end of his mission, the Wallachian prince solemnly offered gifts to the Reinhardts: a tobacco case adorned with diamonds for the diplomat and two cashmere shawls for his wife. The value of the objects was considerable; when Reinhard, unaccustomed to such gifts, objected, the ruler explained that “the case was given as a decoration.” These objects were precious not only because of their value, but also as markers of the prestige attributed to their owner. Westerners were familiar with the importance of decorations, but not with the Ottoman custom of receiving precious gifts. Frédéric Reinhard needed to be educated in this respect. In 1817, Lieutenant-Colonel John Johnson, on his journey from India to England, passed through Russia. There he met an anglophile count, who invited him to see a specially arranged room containing portraits of the king and queen of Prussia and of the Russian tsarina, together with various gifts he had received: a feather made of diamonds and rubies, a gold snuffbox with the portrait of the tsar, another one with the portrait of the Prussian king, a sword adorned with precious stones, and a medalion, the last two given to him by the City of London and the Prince Regent respectively. All these objects were kept together, regardless of origin, and the feather-shaped jewel was worn by the count on special occasions.

In Southeastern Europe and in the Romanian lands, in particular, decorations as representations of material culture with a political and diplomatic dimension began to appear only in the 1830s. After the Treaty

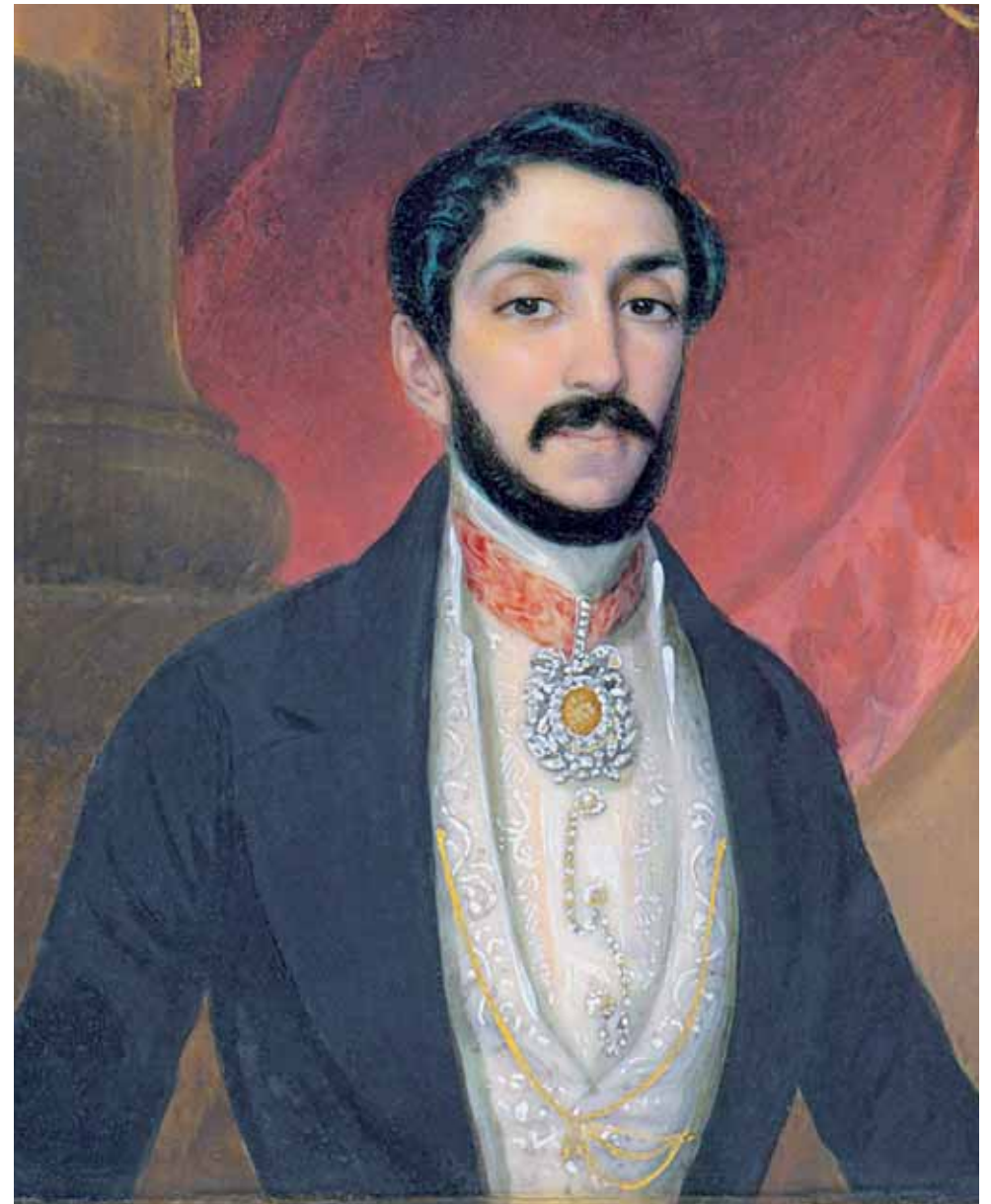
of Adrianople (1829), political control over the region remained as important as ever. The Ottoman Empire, Russia, and Austria were looking for local loyal partners, including among the younger generations, and decorations played a significant diplomatic role. Diplomatic service, courage on the battlefield, and meritorious achievements in the world culture and the arts were to be rewarded with orders and medals. A decoration offered by the leader of an empire meant prestige and a (re)affirmation of social status. After gaining independence, Greece established the Order of the Saviour (1829). The Ottoman Empire was not to be outdone, so Sultan Mahmud II (1808–1839) created a very valuable order named Nişan-i İftihar or the Order of Glory. His successor, Abdul-Medjid (1839–1861), created an order named after him (Medjidie) in 1852.

Even before the establishment of the Nişan-i İftihar order, the Romanian lands were familiar with the significance and conditions of granting orders and decorations in Europe. Thus, in the newspaper *Albina Românească* in 1829, a preamble to the presentation of the orders and decorations of Russia reminded readers that: “The orders of knights are those societies established by princes, the receiving of which, known through signs of decoration (or external ornament), is granted only to those persons who have won special merits towards the ruler and the country, or to whom, by the power of nobility, is given the highest offices of the state, without having achieved any previous merit. Their purpose is to encourage [...] and at the same time to thank. The orders of knights were at first brotherhoods of worthy men, who, charged with certain duties, uniting under the law of honour, entered into causes patriotic and useful for all Christendom. Over the centuries, changing according to circumstances, they became established as we find them today in all the states of Europe.”

*Princely decorations* Nişan-i İftihar was, as historian Edhem Eldem shows, an order more of merit than of glory, and came with a diploma and a regulation. It was granted on the recommendation of a superior or an acquaintance. An example is the commander of Vidin, Hussein Pasha, who recommended Serbian prince Miloš Obrenović, who in turn recommended other Serbian princes. A decoration in the form of an object, therefore,



*Adalbert Suchy, [Portrait of a diplomat], drawing, 1829 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*



*Carol Popp de Szathmári, [Barbu Știrbei], undated drawing (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).*





created an entire network of loyalties to the suzerain power. Unlike Western orders, the decoration resembled a piece of jewellery, often attached to a ribbon around the neck or worn as a brooch. In 1838, Prince Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica recommended Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei to Sultan Mahmud II to receive the order Nişan-ı İftihâr. In a portrait painted in his youth by Carol Popp de Szathmári, we see him wearing it over the collar of a shirt matched with a white waistcoat with silver embroidery, over which the supporting cord can be seen. This diamond string hides the buttons of the shirt. The order conveys the idea of opulence and becomes a focal point of the painting. The viewer's attention is captured by this decoration, highlighted by the frame and the colour of the composition.

However, Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei was also awarded Russian orders such as those of Saint Anne or Saint Stanislas for the “continued efforts” and “principles of honour” according to which he guided his activity as secretary of the government and main collaborator of Pavel Kiseleff, the Russian general and governor of the principalities. The *Obşteasca Adunare Extraordinară de Revizie* (Public Assembly) issued in 1831 a diploma for his “hard work and faith worthy of the highest praise [...] and patriotic zeal he has shown.” The Nişan-ı İftihâr order came somewhat late but contributed to his appointment as prince. It is a little-known fact that when he visited Athens in 1844, he was decorated by the king of Greece with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Saviour in the rank of Commander. In official portraits during his reign, he is represented wearing only part of the decorations. The most visible are always the Ottoman ones, but these distinctions indicate his place on the political scene: a Romanian prince subject to the Porte and under the protection of Russia.

*A baron, a decoration, and a diploma: Dimitrie Bellio* Decorations were not only awarded to princes, consuls, or other diplomats. They were also bestowed upon the aristocracy and, gradually reached the emerging bourgeoisie. In addition to the Ottoman Empire and Russia, Austria, Prussia, and, later, France had their own orders and decorations. One of the cases

*Mișu Popp, Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei, oil on canvas, signed on the pocket flap: M. Popp, undated (Braşov Art Museum, inv. no. 70).*





Carol Popp de Szathmári, [Portrait of baron Dimitrie Bellio], drawing, 1846 (Library of the Romanian Academy, Print Cabinet).

Next page: Diploma by which Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria conferred the title of baron to the Wallachian boyar Dimitrie Bellio (Bellu), with the blazon of a baron of the empire, rewarding him like his adoptive father, "the banker Constantin von Bellio, Austrian baron since 1817, by the goodwill of the Imperial House" (November 15, 1856, Library of the Romanian Academy, Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection).





known at the time is that of the Bellu or Bellio family. Constantin Bellio, an Aromanian banker who had made his fortune alongside Hagi Moscu, moved to Vienna, where he became a baron, in 1817. His brother Ștefan remained in Wallachia and held important positions in the state apparatus and in the judiciary. As the rich banker had no children of his own, he adopted Ștefan's children, and in 1838, before his death, he left them an impressive inheritance. From a family of merchants and bankers, the young Bellios would become nobles of the Austrian Empire, to which they would do a number of services. At the same time, Constantin, Dimitrie, and Alexandru built splendid careers and entered matrimonial alliances with old families, such as the Mavrocordats and the Văcărescus, thus consolidating their status. Some exotic details are also linked to their name: for example, Alexandru Bellio was one of the boyars who cultivated citrus fruits in his greenhouses, real delights for a refined meal. Dimitrie Bellio was ennobled in 1856 for his services to Austria: Austrian soldiers had been billeted in his houses in Bucharest during the Crimean War, and he had also made important donations to the Austrian troops in the Banat and to the recently founded Prussian pensionnat in Bucharest. Along with his baron's diploma, sent by the Imperial House of Austria, he also received a decoration, the order of the Red Eagle, third class. This order, together with the Nișan-ı İftihar, which he already held, appeared in his portrait by the painter of the Wallachian court, Carol Popp de Sza-thmári.

The news of his ennoblement, double in fact, also appeared in the daily newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung d'Augsbourg*, in a list of all those who held Austrian nobiliary titles. A commentary in the journal *L'Étoile du Danube* in 1857 stated that generally "neither the nobles [i.e. boyars], nor even the Romanian bourgeoisie paid much attention" to such honours.

#### *Decorations for the emerging bourgeoisie: doctors, public servants, and artists*

At first, orders and decorations were given especially to princes and boyars, but starting with the middle of the nineteenth century, the range of recipients expanded. The decorations retained their political significance but were awarded for merit in the most varied activities: health, administration, and even art, at the recommendation of the prince or of the re-

ipient's superior. In 1854, during the Crimean War, the governors of Vlașca, Mehedinți, and Teleorman received Russian decorations, together with other officials, including postmasters. All of them had a significant role in the way the conflict unfolded in the Romanian space. At the end of the war, I.N. Mayer, a former inspector general of civilian and military hospitals in Wallachia, received the Grand Cross of the Franz Joseph order for "services performed by searching for sick and wounded soldiers, who were brought to Bucharest during the war." Painter Theodor Aman, who had been present on the battlefield, offered Sultan Abdul-Medjid in Constantinople the canvas *The Battle of Oltenița*, for which he later received the Ottoman order Medjidie, sent via General Magheru. Another important development in the second part of the nineteenth century, after the Crimean War, was the granting of Austrian, German, and French orders and decorations. George Știrbei was the first Romanian to receive the French Legion of Honour in 1856, followed by the physician of French origin Carol Davila. Officials and professionals were thus appreciated for their merits and their contribution was no longer known exclusively in Romania. Theodor Aman made other canvases dedicated to the war, depicting the battles fought at Sevastopol and the Alma, and then presented his works at the universal exhibitions organised in Paris (1855, 1857). Dr. Carol Davila, a constant collaborator of the administration, would substantially contribute to the organization of the health services in the principalities, becoming an undisputed authority.

## Recommended reading

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