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THE FOREIGN SUBJECTS FROM THE ROMANIAN EXTRACARPATHEAN PROVINCES IN THE 19TH CENTURY-WITH A SPECIAL REGARD ON MOLDAVIA

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Abstract: The 18th and 19th centuries represented a period of important changes for Moldavia, changes that occurred at the level of the ethnical structure of the population of this province, first of all because more persons from different ethnical groups established in this area.

A part of this people often chose to become citizens of other states, generally of European ones, based on many reasons, the phenomenon amplifying during the 19th century. The presence of these foreign subjects on the territory of Moldavia, but also on the territory of other Romanian provinces outside the Carpathians Mountains had some specific features and played an important role in the economic, social and cultural life of these provinces.

Key words: foreign subjects, Moldavia, Romanian Kingdom, territorial spreading, specific features

1. Introduction

The problem of the foreign subjects (or “sudiți” as they are known), in Moldavia and ,also, in Walachia appeared as a consequence of the peace treaty of Kucük Kainargi (1774) by which the Czarist Empire had obtained the right to establish consular officers in capitals of both Romanian principalities.

This problem derived from the existence of these treaties known as “capitulații” (from ital.capitulazione-agreement, convention) by which the foreign inhabitants in the Ottoman Empire had diverse rights: economical, legal and social etc. they remained subjected only to the laws in their country of origin, stipulations of these treaties being extended though to the level of the Romanian principalities, although they were not part of the mentioned empire.

Besides this, in enough cases, there is not necessarily a similarity between protection assumed by a foreign person or a group of people and their ethnic identity, situations existed when among then Austrian or Austro-Hungarian subjects there were numerous Jews or Romanians (especially from Transylvania), the British- Greeks, the Russians-Bulgarians or Serbs.

All these situations impede finding out-for all foreign subjects who have been for more than a century on the territory of the Romanian principalities, the ethnic identity, the area of origin of “sudiți” etc. except when, for some period of time, there are some sources that provide more accurate information about these people who had opted for the citizenship offered by another state.

2.The foreign subjects of Moldavia

Thus, in Moldavia, the first recording which contains most important data about foreign subjects is *Condica Liuzilor* in 1803 where, although the data are incomplete, Iasi had 532 heads of family (of which 289 were Russians and 243 Austrians), but, of these 198 were Jews- most of them opted for Austrian citizenship, while in Suceava district there were registered 8 foreigner subjects family heads. The census (*catagrafia*) of 1820, combined with an extract from 1821, shows the existence of 1935 foreigner subjects family heads in Moldavia, of which 484 heads of family were Jews (25%), most of these “sudiți”-1145 (59%), being established in the capital- Iași, then was holding Covurlui district-169 family heads, Roman district -107, Botoșani -82 etc.

In terms of protection, clearly dominated heads Austrian family-931, followed by the Russians-610, and at a large distance came the Prussian -51, French -19 etc. for the Russians there is indicated their ethnic origin: 131 Russian heads of family, 30 Greek heads of family, 25- Moldavian etc.

The most important information is offered by special census (*catagrafia*) of foreign subjects from 1824-1825, which recorded 2282 family heads. Of the 2282 registered family heads, most were settled in Iași- 1004 (44%), then Botoșani district-303 heads of family (13%), Neamț, Roman, etc. This special census offers accurate data about the ethnic identity of those who adopted citizenship (protection) of another state, which gives them a greater importance in the existing sources of documentation for that period.

Thus, of the 511 Austrian heads of family in Iași city, almost half were Jews -251(49%), after which the Romanians were -72 heads of family (they were from Bukovina and Transylvania), Armenians -36 heads of family (they were from Bukovina), Poles etc. and 349 Russian heads of family existing in the same city, 142 were Jews (41%), after which the Russians were -110 heads of family, Moldavians, Serbs and so forth.

Two decades later, the 1845 census of Moldavia showed 4624; foreign heads of family (of which 1437-31% were Jews), comparatively to 1824-1825, when the number of the “sudiți” heads of the family was 2282. There is an appreciable increase of them, among of the cities remarked in the first part of the 19th century outside the capital Iași, being Galați city, where in 13 years (1832-

1845) the number of foreign subjects increased from 559 to 1430, primarily due to the declared regime of *portu franco*, which has attracted many foreigners with commercial interests, which were added the immigration of large number of Serbs and Bulgarians from the south of Danube, the passage of certain autochthonous into foreign protection etc.

In the 1859 census, the number of foreign subjects from Moldavia was 20,451, the largest proportion of these being in the cities and boroughs (especially in the capitals of the districts- in these cities living 80.6% of the total of the foreign subjects).

It was obvious that Moldavians foreign subjects were present primarily in areas where cities were more dynamic and economically diverse, more open outwards, with many groups of people from nearby regions (Jews, for example), appropriate conditions to Galați city and the two major cities in the north-the capital city of Iași and the Botoșani city.

In contrast, where there is a degree of low urbanization, economic activity less developed and diversified, geographical isolation, the foreign subjects were less numerous, this being the case of some districts from the south: Vaslui-368 “sudiți” and Fălciu-471 “sudiți”, these districts having the lowest number throughout Moldavia.

3.The foreign subjects of Romanian Kingdom

At the end of nineteenth century (1899), in the Romanian Kingdom there were 188,834 foreign subjects- 3.1% of the whole population of the country, most of them registered in Muntenia - 68.4%, followed by the foreign subjects from Moldavia-21.8% and, at greater distance, came Dobruđja which had 9.7% of all foreign subjects existing in the kingdom (Fig 1).

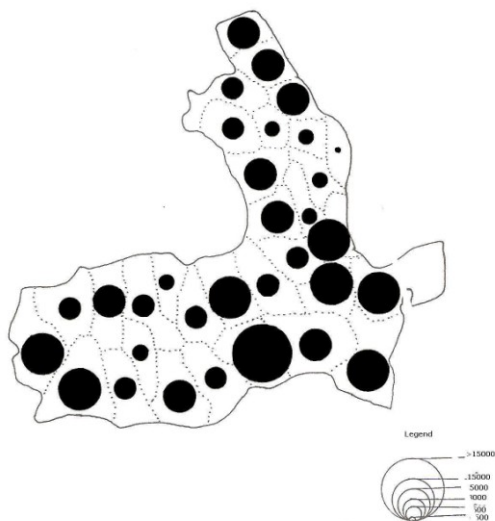
Overall, there were three major areas with the most number of foreign subjects: one, in the south-east, with four districts: Brăila, Covurlui, Constanța and Tulcea, one in central Muntenia comprises the districts of Ilfov and Prahova and one western with Dolj and Mehedinți districts, where most of them were established in the major cities of Craiova and Turnu Severin.

Meanwhile, the lowest number of “sudiți” was characteristic in several districts of Moldavia, more isolated and less economically developed, less urbanized, where their number did not exceed 1500: Fălciu, Tecuci, Tutova, Vaslui, minimal value being met at Fălciu-450 persons, and in several districts of Muntenia- Olt and Muscel, for example.

At the urban level (Fig 3), there was distinguishable existence of foreign subjects on the territory of the districts which were the largest cities – Ilfov (București), Brăila (Brăila), Covurlui (Galați), and Dolj (Craiova) etc. but there were also

important exceptions (districts with a large number of “sudiți” but with cities less populated than previous): Mehedinți district- Turnu Severin city, with a population lower than the cities mentioned, but with an advantageous geographical position- on the Danube and at the border with Austro-Hungarian Empire, Constanța district with a less number of inhabitant in these periods, but with the most important Romanian port to the Black Sea etc.

The repartition of the foreign subjects in Romanian kingdom at the end of the 19th century(1899)



min.value-Fălcu-450
max.value-Ifov-57.398

Fig.1

SOURCE-POPULATION CENSUS-1899

Throughout the kingdom there were large regional differences in terms of geographical distribution, where districts attained the largest number of “sudiți” being those who had a dynamic city port, more prosperous

economically: Brăila -14,714 persons, Covurlui -11,748 persons and Constanța - 10,708 persons, maximum value is reached in Ilfov district -57,398 persons, due to the capital Bucharest.

The repartition of the foreign subjects in the Romanian kingdom(1899)-rural area

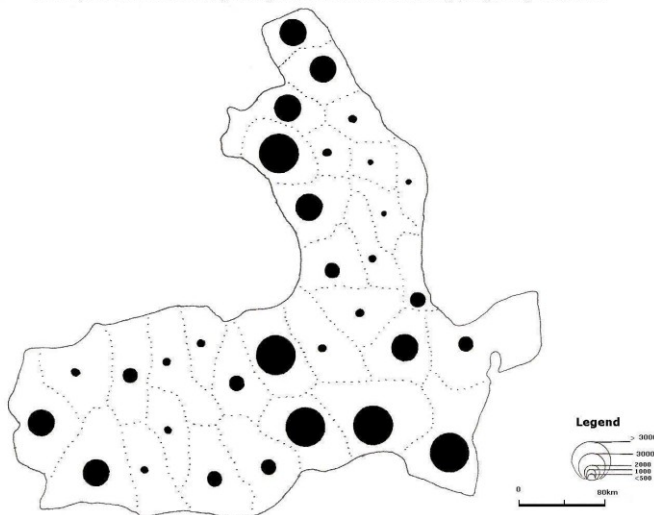


Fig. 2

The repartition of the foreign subjects in the Romanian Kingdom(1899)-urban area

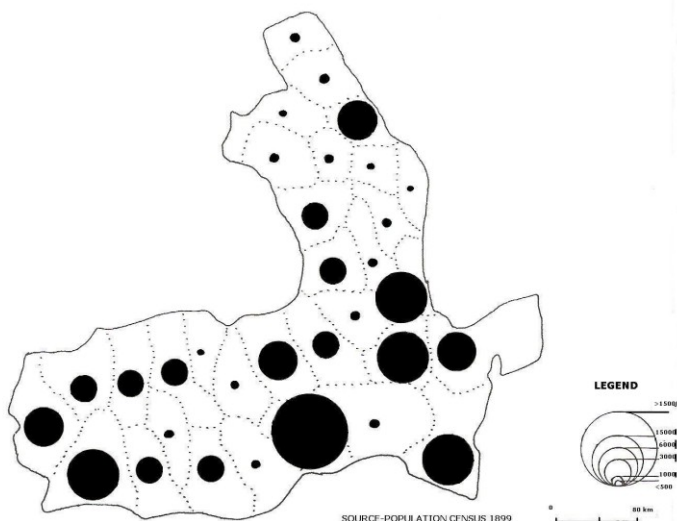


Fig.3

SOURCE-POPULATION CENSUS 1899

Another important thing to be mentioned is that Iași district still had a relatively important number of foreign subjects in Moldavia set mostly in the city of Iași, but compared to the number of foreign subjects recorded in other large cities of the kingdom, it was lower after 1859, attesting that, especially after 1859, other areas had become more dynamic and more attractive from the point of view of some economical opportunities.

In rural areas (Fig 2), at the end of nineteenth century, the foreign subjects were grouped into three areas, placed at a large distance away from one another- a northern area: the northern and western Moldavia (Dorohoi, Neamț, Bacău districts), due to the Jewish population more numerous here as well as to the presence of foreigners, involved in mining or timber station in Carpathian and Subcarpathian zones, followed by a south-eastern area, which began in Prahova and extended to Constanța-due to the many groups of foreign people involved in the activities in the oil areas of Prahova, agricultural activities in Ilfov and Ialomița or various commercial and handicraft activities in Constanța and a south-western area, corresponding Dolj and Mehedinți, border districts, which were established more immigrants “sudiți”, which came especially from Serbia.

As the urban level and a rural one, the lowest number of foreign subjects was always met in some areas more isolated, less exposed to the external trade, with cities having less numerical and economic importance, they are less attractive to foreigners (in addition Romanians from Ardeal, Moldavians and Walachians from these areas rarely went under foreign protection); this case was with central-eastern Moldavia- Vaslui, Tutova, Fălcu districts, last was recorded with the lowest number of “sudiți” in the kingdom-294 persons, central-western Muntenia: Muscel, Olt districts etc.

Regarding the composition of foreign subjects existing in 1899 within the kingdom, most of them were Austro- Hungarian subjects: 108,285 people (57.3%), this being followed at a large distance by Turks: 12.5% of total foreign subjects, Greeks-10.6%, Italians, Bulgarians and Germans- all with percents between 4-4.5%, Russians – 2.4%, Serbs – 2.1% etc.

At Moldavia level, from the 41,180 foreign subjects registered in 1899, most were Austro-Hungarian subjects – 64.7% (26,645 people), they are concentrated mainly in the north- Botoșani, Iași and Dorohoi districts (due to many Jews arrived from Galiția or Bukovina with Austro-Hungarian protection or passed under this protection after the establishment of the territory of Moldavia) and in the south – Covurlui district (maximum value 4285 persons, because of many foreigners with this protection established in Galați city), of these two areas added a western border-Suceava, Neamț, Bacău and Putna

districts, the higher number of Austro-Hungarian subjects from here dueing to neighboring Transylvania and Bukovina, from where proceeded the vast majority among them being various foreigners but also Transylvania Romanians or Bukovinian Romanians.

On the other provinces, a large number of Austro-Hungarian “sudiți” was met in Brăila district- most established in the port of Brăila, in the central part of Walachia, especially on Ilfov and Prahova districts- Ilfov district had the maximum value – 39,869 people (mostly in București), and in the west of Oltenia –Dolj and Mehedinți districts, most established in the cities of Craiova and Turnu Severin.

The German “sudiți” were in a smaller number in Moldavia-1384 persons, mostly in cities (70%), being concentrated especially in south, Covurlui and Putna districts, to them added in the north Iași district but with lower values.

The Greek and Turks foreign subjects had spread especially in south because they frequently came from areas situated in the south of the Danube, in both cases leading Covurlui district, in which was the majority of Greeks and Turks from Moldavia -78% and 38.5%, they were involved in various economic activities in the port of Galați.

In Muntenia, Turk subjects had the largest percent (47% of the Turk subjects in the Kingdom), being present in Ilfov- the largest number was in București and in Dolj and Mehedinți districts, among them being also other ethnic groups-sephard Jews etc. to Walachia adding also Dobrudja, in Constanța district to reach the biggest number.

The Greek subjects in the kingdom had a prevalent eastern distribution, remarking here the districts with important port cities: Constanța, Brăila and Galați, where they were frequently making important business, as well as Ilfov district-mostly in București and Ialomița district, here most are established in rural areas, where they were involved in various agricultural activities, trade with cereals, tenant farmers etc.

As far as it concerns the Slav foreign subjects from Moldavia, many belonged to the Bulgarian and Russian subjects in the case of Russian, among which frequently were Romanian from Bassarabia, Lipovans etc. They were grouped in the north and north-east especially in Iași district (majority in Iași city) and in the south-Covurlui district where almost half were in the city of Galați.

Bulgarian subjects-the majority being probably of Bulgarian origin, were established in the southern part of Moldavia, the area closest to the places from where they became and more favorable to the agriculture practiced by them, along with Covurlui district- where most were found, they being present in the districts of Putna, Tecuci, Tutova and Bacău.

Excepting Moldavia, in all the other provinces, Russian subjects were present mainly in Dobrudja-Constanța and Tulcea districts, where there were many Russian Lipovans communities (most were in rural areas) and in București, while in western part of Muntenia their number was very low, in many districts: Muscel, Gorj, Olt were missing.

In Walachia and Dobrudja, Bulgarian subjects were mostly in the southern areas, closer to the Danube and Bulgaria- Ilfov district being first here, but also in Brăila district (Brăila-Galați area being one with many Bulgarians), in the entire kingdom the Bulgarian subjects having a significant presence in rural areas (43.7% of the whole), one of their basic occupations being the vegetable growing.

They are joined by the Serbs subjects, who in Moldavia were in small numbers (more in Tecuci and Tutova districts), most meeting in the south-western Walachia-Mehedinti and Dolj districts, where Serbian population were more numerous and in Ilfov districts, being predominantly established in București.

We must mention that the foreign subjects of Moldavia (and from Walachia) had more privileges, mostly economics and fiscals- the most important being personal tax relief, juridical- they had estate properties, plus the fact that they had customs facilities, they had religious freedom of expression, some fees which they had to pay were smaller according to the indigenou.

Most of these privileges had lasted for a long time until 1863, when, under the reign of Al. I. Cuza, the patent law was given for trade and handicraft, that disbanded tax privileges, the foreign subjects became equal from the fiscal point of view with indigenou, after which the customs facilities were cancelled, remaining only the personal tax exemption.

Among foreign subjects one special category was individualized, the “protégé” who came from among Moldavians or other Greeks, Jews, Armenians which had been established for a long time in Moldavia or were born here, who fraudulently received the citizenship of another state to obtain, frequently, privileges and to escape the abuse of officials, they were known as the “atârnați” (subjected to foreign protection) or “târtani” in popular language from German *Untertan*.

However, it must be mentioned, meanwhile, the fact that the foreign subjects- the “sudiți”, especially the most “authentic ones” coming from across borders, had also an important role in the economic, the social and cultural life of Moldavia, they contributing to the introduction and the developing of certain economical activities, growing the external exchanges, and also to a certain cultural artistic development of the Romanian social environment, to several town-architectural achievements etc.

Thus, in 1825 it is showed that these foreign subjects practiced 60 types of commercial activities and 75 different types of handicrafts, after 1829

beginning with the disappearance of the Ottoman monopoly, the number of these subjects arrived from different parts of Europe to live in Moldavia grew, this having a certain positive impact on the economic development of the principat.

These foreign subjects were responsible, to a large extent, with the introduction of new branches of economic activities, many of them being locksmiths, watchmakers, jewellers, chemists, booksellers etc. by bringing the articles of luxury for the Moldavian elite-luxury furniture, perfumes, jewelry, spreading of a new fashion that accentuated the decline of oriental clothes etc.

Also, among the foreign subjects sometimes were people with high intellectual training: teachers, doctors, architects, lawyers etc. persons who contributed to the development of Romanian education- both the general and the specialized-medical education, juridical and technical education, they have impelled the use of foreign languages, influenced the development of juridical, medical, architectural knowledge etc.

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