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THE “MUNTENiME MAHALLE”
FROM IASI AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY.
NEW INFORMATION REGARDING THE DYNAMICS
OF THE SOCIAL LIFE
(Summary)

Keywords: “mahalle”, social life, dynamism, boyars, ethnic groups, social aggregation.

This study aims to offer a framework and to bring light on the dynamics of social life in the „Muntenime mahalle” at the beginning of the 19th century. The “mahalle”, a framework for spatial organization and urban structure borrowed from the Ottoman space, answered to a genuine need for organization and physical coagulation of the Romanian medieval city. The division of urban development in structures like “mahalle” has favored the emergence of a social aggregation phenomena of urban community and the formation of various communities, ethnic or religious. This reality supported the emergence of solidarities based on geographical aspects of the slum, or the formation of townspeople’s associations aiming to fulfill tasks of public utility and also to ensure social security through collective responsibility for individual misbehaviors.

Beyond these processes and phenomena of social insertion and cohabitation of the people who inhabited the limited space of the “mahalle” and their analysis, we can justly question ourselves who were the inhabitants of the “Muntenime mahalle”, what were their occupations, their ethnicity or their confession, who was in the urban hierarchy or what were the ways of social insertion of the population who settled in the Muntenime, in that period. We chose to focus on the social component of the “Muntenime mahalle” from Iași, in the first decades of the 19th century, because they represent a period of transition as from the point of view of the concept of “mahalle”, as spatial organization, as well as form perspective of the urban community, in general. For the “mahalle”, the period analyzed, meant an “openness” towards new groups of population, settled in the northern part of Iași, a gradual loss of the selective character and of the legal and social role of its inhabitants, at the same time with the measures of legal and economical modernization. In the case of the urban community, the period of demographic growth, specific to the entire European space, at the beginning of the 19th century, developed on the basis of political stability and of economic growth, led to the beginning of a new stage in the evolution of the European cities.

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