

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE CITY OF TÂRGOVIȘTE (1878-1914)

*Marius VINTILĂ**

Abstract: The period 1878-1914 represented a new stage in the economic life of the city of Târgoviște. The industry in its various forms of manifestation, commerce and other economic activities flourished and grew significantly in comparison with the previous period (1831-1878), the signs of modernisation being visible in all the aspects regarding the development of the city.

Keywords: economic life, industry, commerce, Târgoviște, 1878-1914.

The removal of the Ottoman monopoly over the Romanian Principalities following the Adrianople treaty of September 2/14, 1829, gave a new course to the economic evolution in Wallachia and Moldova in general and a new commercial momentum in particular, thus creating the premises for economic development.¹

In Dâmbovița County, as in other counties of Wallachia, this new course of economic life would be registered, especially after 1831.²

On September 2nd 1832 general Pavel Kisseleff addressed a *Proclamation* to the inhabitants of the city of Târgoviște, a proclamation through which he pointed out that the cities administered their own interests through those elected in the City Councils whose basic duty "was to protect the commerce inside every town"³

Once a flourishing medieval town, Târgoviște had reached at the beginning of the XIXth century, due to the difficulties of time, a town with a few thousand inhabitants. The city was a place intended for trade, and to the political and commercial role fulfilled in the past "were added, with an important weight, craftsmanship and occupations related to agriculture".⁴ Thus, in Târgoviște, after 1831, there was a mutual interweaving and complementing of craftsmanship with commercial activities, reflected by the fact that craftsmen sold their products. The same was the case with agricultural producers, who sold their products directly on

* PhD Candidate, Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Craiova, Email: marius.uliesti@yahoo.com

¹ Iulian Oncescu, Ioan Stanciu, *Introduction in the modern history of the Romanians (1821-1918)*, Cetatea de Scaun Publishing house, Târgoviște, 2009, p. 33; Mihai Oproiu, Dobrin Pârvan, *Târgoviște. The city and its surroundings between 1821-1918*, vol. II, Bibliotheca Publishing house, Târgoviște, 2000, p. 18.

² See Cleopatra Ionescu, *Data regarding the economy of Dâmbovița County in the first half of the XIXth century* in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, 1971, pp. 257-264.

³ The County Department for the National Archives of Romania (named hereafter C.D.N.A.), *Dâmbovița County Prefecture*, file 122/1832, f. 117-120.

⁴ Mihai Oproiu, Dobrin Pârvan, *op. cit.*, p.18.

the city market or indirectly through intermediaries (called *hagglers*) who bought the peasants products and resold them in different fairs.⁵

I. INDUSTRY

I.1. Craftmanship, craftsmen and artisans

The introduction of the unique tax system in 1831, which abolished taxes and duties of all kinds, led to a process that established the exact number of tradesmen and merchants (usually mentioned in patent categories), journeymen and ploughmen in Târgoviște. Among them, according to a statistic, in the city at the end of 1831 there were two second class patentees, 106 third class patentees and 103 fourth class, practically a total of 210 patentees, to which 37 of their journeymen were added.⁶

The handcrafted products were diversified and generally covered the supply needs of Târgoviște, but also those of Dâmbovița County, thus being mentioned in 1832, among the Târgoviște craftsmen, lacemakers, tailors, bakers, cobblers, masons, shoemakers, barbers, painters, silversmiths, tanneries.⁷

In 1851, in Târgoviște there were 297 fifth class tradesmen registered,⁸ their number growing steadily until the end of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century.⁹ The increase in the number of craftsmen and the diversification of crafts led to the formation of a first professional organization. In this sense, on March 5, 1852, a *Dominion of guilds* came into existence, which grouped builders in different categories: carpenters, cabinetmakers and masons. The organization was led by a starosta who had his own budget and set the price of the execution of the buildings. The set up of this dominion led to protests of other craftsmen, having as result the amendment of the status and the reduction of the sums of money received by the starosta upon completion of the works.¹⁰ A few years later, in 1854, in Târgoviște, 24 cabinetmakers, 10 carpenters, 10 masons, 26 blacksmiths were registered and they were led by starosta Ilie Hagi Gligore.¹¹

After 1832, small workshops and factories developed in the city. In that year, 13 mills were reported in Târgoviște near the Mill Pond. Thus, milling will occupy an important place among craft occupations. Over time, the mills changed owners quite often. In 1862, the existence of 15 mills was mentioned, some of which worked occasionally, and others had no activity.¹²

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ C.D.N.A., *Dâmbovița County Prefecture*, file 56/1832, f. 109-117.

⁷ *Ibidem*, dosar 40/1832 f. 110-112.

⁸ Idem, fond *The City hall of Târgoviște*, file 40/1851, f. 10.

⁹ At the end of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century, new craftsmen such as upholsterers, wood carvers, cart builders, tinsmiths, watchmakers, etc. were attested. They were accurately noted in the local records, which fluctuated annually. Thus, in 1908 there were 541 merchants and tradesmen registered in the records of the Bureau of Weights and Measures - *Ibidem*, file 13/1908, f. 4-18; Also see Mihai Oproiu, Dobrin Pârvan, *op. cit.*, p.19.

¹⁰ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 32/1852, f. 6-9.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, file 72/1854, f. 1-4.

¹² *Ibidem*, file 22/1863 f. 8-9.

Towards the end of the XIXth century, the first systematic mills and flour mills were reported. In these circumstances, in 1886, when the city plan was drawn up by the schoolmaster Dimitrie P. Condurăţeanu, the mills were mentioned within the radius of the city of Târgovişte, along the Mill Pond from upstream to downstream, the mills Mihai Neamţu, Kulle, Gorgota, Hiotu, Kercea, Răducanu, Hagi Ducea, Samuel Iosif, Ierescu, Gavrilesco.¹³ We mention here that these mills often changed owners. Thus, in 1889 I.Kulle leased his mills to Puga Predinger, mills that the owner equipped with modern machinery, producing quality semolina and flour that competed with imported products.¹⁴

A statistic from 1890 stated that another mill in Târgovişte, with steam, that of Ioan Nicolaide, had been operating since 1881, and in the Serbian slum there was a modern mill in operation that belonged to Samuel Iosif.¹⁵

The latter's flour mill was operating in Târgovişte since 1880 and had 14 employees and 19 pieces of machinery and that of Puga Predinger (probably one of the mills leased or bought from I. Kulle after 1889) operated with 8 workers and 22 pieces of machinery. These two large Târgoviste mills appear in the archive documents until 1916, when it seems that only Samuel Iosif's mill still existed in the city.¹⁶

The flour produced by these mills was used to make bread, pretzels, and other bakery products. Of course, bread, in addition to meat, and other products were considered indispensable for the supply of the city's inhabitants, being reported, in Târgovişte, since the first half of the XIXth century (1847) a guild of bakers, and a guild of butchers. Obviously, bread was produced by bakers in large ovens, but for butchers there were, between 1831-1878, places to slaughter animals and cut meat called *zalhanale*, which after 1831 were moved outside the city, along Morii Pond, being considered harmful to the health of the inhabitants. Some of the owners of these *zalhanale*, up until 1878, were Tolea Hagi Ioan (1831) and Grigore Popescu (1850-1851).¹⁷

In these circumstances, in the modernization process of the city of Târgovişte was also included the problem of building a slaughterhouse and the removal of totally unhygienic shacks. Thus, in 1879, the steps to achieve this goal began. In these circumstances, in the meeting of April 14, 1880, within the Municipal Council, the land where the city's slaughterhouse would be located was delimited. In 1893, the construction was completed, the execution time being quite long, because large funds were needed for its realization. The city's slaughterhouse and its facilities have undergone improvements over time to meet hygiene standards for operation. Much

¹³ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 20; Gica Pehoiu, Mihai Oproiu, *The Almanac of Dâmboviţa (1912)*, Transversal Publishing house, Târgovişte, 2008. p. 176.

¹⁴ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgovişte*, file 2/1889, f. 28.

¹⁵ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 20; C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgovişte*, file 13/1881, f. 115.

¹⁶ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgovişte*, file 7/1916, f. 8-10.

¹⁷ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, pp. 20-21; Cleopatra Ionescu, Mihai Oproiu, *Târgovişte in the regulatory period*, in „Scripta Valahica”, tom IV, Târgovişte, 1973, pp.232-233

later, in 1905, construction of a slaughterhouse for small animals began, and in 1912 the construction of a pig slaughterhouse was discussed in the Board of Trade.¹⁸

The production of wine and brandy also had a significant role in the economy of Târgoviște. Of course, these products were manufactured in the period 1831-1878 in warehouses that were located outside the city, on the Ialomița river, warehouses that stretched to the vicinity of Mills Pond. After 1878, important steps were taken in this area of production of alcoholic beverages, this time in modern factories and not in simple warehouses. The first reported spirits factory after 1878 belonged to Ghiță Gavrilescu. A few years later, in 1885, Cernat Vlădescu's distillery and spirit factory are mentioned.¹⁹

Two other factories are mentioned in the same year (1885), that of Dima Ștefănescu who had 25 employees and that of Samuel Iosif who had 35 employees, this being one of the most prominent industrialists in Târgoviște. In the year 1910 he intended to establish a factory of liquors and fine drinks.²⁰ Near the end of the XIXth century, in 1896, the distillery and sparkling water factory of Nicolae Lăzărescu was also mentioned in the city documents.²¹

In the period 1878-1914, the gas water factories had several industrial establishments. Among these factories, we mention here those that belonged to Carol Groeff, Scarlat Mihăescu, Gogu Ionescu, the Georgescu brothers. In 1906, pharmacist Liviu Dogaru requested approval for the establishment of such a factory near the *Speranța* pharmacy, and another named *Sanitas* was established in Târgoviște by Andrei Nemeșiu in 1913.²²

Breweries or beer bottling factories also existed in Târgoviște. Thus, in 1898, Anton de Ana requested the City Council to establish such a factory.²³ The brewery belonging to Emanuel Wesley operated for a good period of time, being closed in 1907 due to the unsanitary conditions for the production of this drink.²⁴

In Târgoviște, in the period 1878-1914, small soft drink factories operated, as well as confectioneries and candy factories. In 1890, the existence of five confectioneries and four candy factories was recorded in the city, their number tripled until around the time of the First World War.²⁵

The city authorities paid special attention to the manufacture of candles, as they were the main source of lighting for the citizens. The supply of candles is ensured through contracts with suppliers to prevent price increases. In 1890, tallow candle factories are documented, some also manufacturing candles and soap, like

¹⁸ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 21; C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 15/1889.

¹⁹ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 8/1885; file 37/1890.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, file 13/1890, f. 4-14; file 8/1891, f. 11-12; file 3/1910 f. 30; Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

²¹ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 22/1896, f. 1-6.

²² *Ibidem*, file 20/1906, f. 2-6

²³ *Ibidem*, file 13/1898.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, file 13/1908, f. 1-3.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, file 13/1890, f. 4-14.

Niță Petrescu's. Thus, in 1895, five wax candle factories were operating in Târgoviște, and Nicolae Luculescu had requested approval to open a soap factory.²⁶

Tannery was an important occupation for some residents. The tanneries were real sources of infection for public health, which is why they were located on the outskirts of the city near the Ialomița river. In 1890, the existence of five tanneries is attested, the most famous being that of Nae Zamfirescu, a tannery mentioned in the documentary and later, in 1915. The tannery activity generated other activities like furriers workshops, saddleries, shoemaking, upholstery, the more numerous being the furriers. A statistic from the year 1890 indicates the existence in Târgoviște of 18 tanneries, 13 shoemakers and 3 shoe repairs, the newest workshop, in this sense, being that of Dumitru Angelescu, who operated with seven workers and three apprentices. The shoe workshops increased their number determining their organization in a self-employed society called "*Society of shoemakers from Târgoviște*", a society that was founded on May 29, 1889. In the field of the textile industry, documents also mentioned the existence of tailors and quiltmakers in the city. Thus, Dumitru Angelescu's workshop was the largest in Târgoviște, being equipped with Singer sewing machines, the workshop having 42 workers (foremen, journeymen and apprentices). In addition to these workshops, the furniture and carriage upholstery workshops also functioned, and from 1908 fashion workshops also appeared, being signalled in the city as workshops for women's clothing.²⁷

Another valued and indispensable craft in the economy of Târgoviște was woodworking (cabinetmaking, carpentry, turnery), but also the interweaving of related trades. At the end of the XIXth century, four woodworking workshops, five turning workshops, seven carpentry workshops are mentioned, and in the meantime mixed blacksmith-carpentry workshops appeared.²⁸

In 1908, the documents also record the existence of a wagon building workshop, but also a wood carving workshop.²⁹

A special category was occupied by construction craftsmen who organized, in 1883, in a professional association called "*Union of construction workers from Târgoviște*".³⁰ The program of the association established on September 15, 1883 regulated a number of aspects arising from this profession, including the setting of prices, as well as the training of builders in special schools in the country and abroad.³¹ At the same time, the help offered by this employer's company in case of work accidents (disability) of construction workers was regulated.³² Among the founding members of the association we mention Gheorghe Stănescu, Nae Ducea, Nicolae Ion, Jorj Herman, its president being the architect Nicolae Bruneanu. The

²⁶ *Ibidem*, file 9/1895; Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, pp. 22-23.

²⁷ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 13/1890, f. 4-11; 27-31, file 13/1908, f. 4-18; Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, pp. 22-23.

²⁸ Constantin Manolescu, *The Union of construction workers in Târgoviște (1883)*, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1971, p. 295.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 296.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 296-297. Also see C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 42/1883.

³¹ C.D.N.A., *Prefecture of Dâmbovița county*, file 56/1883, f. 108-112.

³² *Ibidem*.

company was involved in the construction of some buildings in the city, such as School no. 2 from Târgoviște, offering lower execution prices than some of the contractors in the city.³³

Metalworking was another occupation for some of the city's residents. Blacksmiths were also appreciated due to their diversity, combining blacksmithing with woodworking. At the end of the XIXth century, the presence of three blacksmith workshops, one blacksmith-dye shop, two turning and blacksmith shops and 11 tinsmiths was reported in Târgoviște.³⁴

Workshops specialized in various operations are also recorded in the same period, with locksmiths, watchmakers being mentioned, foundry and mechanical parts workshops that belonged to Pascu Recu, but also blacksmiths owned by B. Kiss.³⁵

I.2. Foundry

The choice of Târgoviște during the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866), as a place to establish a foundry boosted economic life and changed the face of the city. The Council of Ministers decided on July 21, 1864 to establish the cannon foundry in Târgoviște on the site of the princely ruins, and on August 4, 1864 Al. I. Cuza approved this decision. On August 8, 1864, the Minister of War approved the preparation of the plans and the estimate of the works, at the same time opening a credit of 300,000 lei from the state budget for the achievement of this objective. However, the foundry was not built as proposed on the ruins of the princely palace and a second option was chosen, because the space was insufficient, and Lamy's proposal regarding the garden and the Metropolitan Cemetery ceded by it, was a realistic one. But even the new location of the foundry turned out to be insufficient, requiring 30 more places for some owners.³⁶ They were to be expropriated with compensation as required by the Ministry of War. In order to pay for the lands and their expenses, the Town Council undertook, on January 18, 1865, to collect 2000 coins. With the help of the citizens of Târgoviște, 43,535 lei were collected, and up to the amount of 60,000 lei was supplemented from the city's treasury (the 2000 coins).³⁷

The amount of money obtained in this way was taken to Bucharest by the mayor G. Ludescu and a delegation made up of councillors and prominent citizens of the city. Appreciating the gesture as one of devotion for the country, ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza sent, on May 29, 1865, a thank you letter addressed to the

³³ Idem, *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 13/1890, f. 4-14.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, file 11/1915, f. 34; file 7/1916, f. 8-10.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, file 29/1878, f. 84-85; file 13/1890, f. 130.

³⁶ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op. cit.*, p. 25 (At the proposal of General Ioan Emanoil Florescu and Major Eugene Lamy, head of the French military mission in Romania, Târgoviște was chosen as the location for the establishment of a cannon foundry. Initially, the chosen place had been on the ruins of the former royal palace, but due to the lack of space, this place was abandoned and it was proposed to place it on the site of the Metropolitan garden).

³⁷ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, pp. 24-25; C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 11/1865, f. 118.

inhabitants of the city of Târgoviște. On August 2, 1865, in the presence of the prefect of Dâmbovița County and other officials of the city, the foundation stone of the foundry was laid in Târgoviște, in the established place, in a lavish ceremony. In September of the same year, the sum of 438,000 lei was approved for the building of the Cannon Foundry, the installation of a carpentry workshop, warehouses and buildings for the guard corps. From the beginning, the works were supervised by the engineer Berthon, and Godillot was chosen as the contractor. The carpentry workshop was built for which Colos machines had been ordered in France. Primers were left at the ends of the constructions for the continuation of the works. After the removal of Alexandru Ioan Cuza at the beginning of 1866, the Târgoviște Foundry fell into the background, the works almost stopped and only the presence of the city guards indicates a weak activity. Even the law of 1867 did not mention anything about the Târgoviște Foundry. The works were accelerated after 1870 with the defeat of France following the war with Prussia. In 1872 Ioan Emilian Florescu, in his capacity as Minister of War, requested funds to continue the work in Târgoviște.³⁸ The amount of 129.000 lei was approved and Major Cristodorescu Scarlat was named as the director of the Foundry. At the same time, urgent measures were taken to expropriate the 27 lands adjacent to the foundry. Even the Minister of War is involved in this action, who on the occasion of his visit to Târgoviște, in May 1872, asked the mayor Nicolae Chirculescu to declare the land that was to be expropriated as local public utility. The city council unanimously voted for the public utility of the lands neighbouring the foundry with the mention that the city would not be obliged to pay compensation to those expropriated. After the uncertain moments of 1872, the Târgoviște Foundry was remembered as functioning, being equipped with machines for the manufacture of cannon and cannon parts. The foundry was inaugurated in 1872 after the autumn manoeuvres of the army, it being visited by the General Staff. On this occasion, about 500 officers attended a tea, and at the end there was a demonstration with fireworks. In December 1876, the Târgoviște Foundry was transformed into a storage arsenal, with armoury workshops, to function as a branch of the Central Arsenal from Bucharest, the armoury machinery and tools being left to Târgoviște, and the construction machines were taken to Bucharest.³⁹

From now on, the Foundry in Târgoviște receives the name of *Arsenal*.

During the Romanian War of Independence (1877-1878) a military hospital functioned in part of the Arsenal buildings, where Turkish prisoners from the Dealu Monastery camp were also treated.⁴⁰

In the spring of 1883, the Vth Artillery Regiment was assigned to Târgoviște, which received the buildings from the front of the Arsenal towards Independence Street as a place of armament. Also in that period, the construction of a new premises

³⁸ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 26.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 27.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 28; *Collection of documents regarding the contribution of the popular masses from Dâmbovița county to the struggle for the national independence of the homeland*, Târgoviște, 1977, pp. 11-12.

for the command of the 4th Infantry Division (newly established division) located in the edge area of the Foundry began, and later the building became a recruiting circle. Other expropriations of private properties followed, the grounds of the Foundry extended to the area called "Șanțul Cetății" (The Moat of the Fortress). Nothing was built on this land, being used as a military training ground. Starting from 1887, warehouses and sheds were built, becoming the Artillery Storage Arsenal. After the Vth Artillery Regiment was transferred to another locality, in 1892 the Special Cavalry School from Bucharest was installed in its place. In 1902, the buildings of the Arsenal, the Divisional Command and the Cavalry School were occupied by the General Headquarters of the manoeuvres of the second corps of the Army, which on the occasion of the manoeuvres was quartered in Târgoviște.⁴¹

For a better functioning, the Arsenal was connected to the Târgoviște Railway Network station by a direct railway line that reached the middle of the premises, the City Council ceding the land necessary for this achievement in 1904. Six years later, in 1910, the Cavalry School was moved to the newly built building near the station, its place being taken in the vacated Arsenal buildings by the Xth Red Regiment.⁴²

Because they did not have enough space, the Municipal Council gave another 50 m of land in the market area. The Arsenal established its own fire service and the City Hall abolished its department with the consent of the Ministry of the Interior and obtained in 1914, the agreement that the Arsenal firefighters would also serve the city of Târgoviște in exchange for an annual sum of money. In the same year, a shed was built in the Arsenal premises for the materials of the fire service.⁴³

I.3. Mining of coal and oil

The city of Târgoviște, due to its geographical location, is in the vicinity of rich coal and oil deposits. In the Șotânga area, near the city, a rudimentary coal mine was operating since 1859, which was used as fuel.⁴⁴

Through the development of railway transport, it indirectly contributed to the development of coal extraction at the end of the 19th century, two mining operations in Șotânga being attested, one belonging to the state, the other to Dimitrie Dobrogeanu. Another coal mining began in 1909 in the village of Golescu on the Neu valley.⁴⁵

The mines Mărginescu and Făgețe belonged to A. Filiti which in 1904 also established a lighters factory.⁴⁶ Oil resources and their exploitation strongly influenced the economic development of the city of Târgoviște through the

⁴¹ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 15/1883; file 24/1887; Idem, *Prefecture of Dâmbovița County*, file 7/1905. Also see Mihai Oproiu, Corina Andrei, *Târgoviște. The administrative evolution of the municipality between the XVth century and 1947 (prefects, presidents, mayors)*, Zven Publishing house, Târgoviște, 2019, pp. 167-168.

⁴² Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 29; Mihai Oproiu, Corina Andrei, *op.cit.*, p. 239.

⁴³ C.D.N.A., *The Prefecture of Târgoviște*, file 331/1914, f. 4-6; Mihai Oproiu, Corina Andrei, *op.cit.*, pp. 238-239.

⁴⁴ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ C.D.N.A., f *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 8/1904, f. 6-7.

appearance of the oil exploitation and processing industry in Dâmbovița county, exploited first in Colibași, Resca and Glodeni, and then in the Ocnîța-Răzvad area.⁴⁷ Regarding oil extraction, Dâmbovița county has always occupied a leading place, in 1860 715 tons of crude oil were extracted, and in 1890 production reached 25,000 tons of crude oil.⁴⁸

At the end of the 19th century, numerous oil factories appeared located in Târgoviște or in its immediate vicinity, producing gas lamps and other oil derivatives. To prevent incidents, it was decided to move warehouses and gas plants from the city. The development of a Regulation by the Municipal Council of the city in 1889 regarding oil derivatives put order in this field, some factories and industrial establishments being closed.⁴⁹

After 1880 some oil processing plants began to take the name of refineries, many of them being nothing more than small distilleries. Ghită Gavrilescu established a refinery in 1882 with a processing capacity of 400 tons of crude oil per hour, and in 1884 the distilleries of Nae Luculescu, I. Ionescu, Iancu Tomescu and V. Dumitrescu are mentioned.⁵⁰

Following the requests made by some industrialists who demanded the installation of underground metal pipelines for the transport of oil, land was concessioned in the area of the Târgoviște station and thus large oil warehouses were built.⁵¹

In 1881, the refining and distilling company of Ion Grigorescu in the Mahala neighbourhood began its activity. On the site of this gas factory, in 1889, Grigorescu built a modern refinery, whose products were awarded a bronze medal at the anniversary exhibition in Paris.⁵²

The modernization of the refinery was done with machinery brought from Germany, and in addition to the refinery, Grigorescu's company owned several oil fields in the towns of Glodeni, Resca and Colibași in Dâmbovița County, Telega and Bușteni in Prahova County. His refinery initially had 25 workers, and later the number exceeded 100 employees.⁵³

⁴⁷ Mircea Alexandrescu, *Some new data regarding the export of oil from Dâmbovița County between 1881-1900*, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1971, pp. 286-287.

⁴⁸ C.D.N.A., *The Prefecture of Târgoviște*, file 31/1890; Mihai Oproiu, Dobrin Pârvan, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁴⁹ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 1/1883, f. 1-7; file 4/1889, f. 45-46, file 33/1897, f.1-11. Also see the plan drafted for Târgoviște by Constantin Alessandrescu, in 1886, plan on which the city's gas plants were located, Constantin Alessandrescu, *The Geography of Dâmbovița county*, second edition, editor Vasile Mihăilescu, librarian, Târgoviște, Tipo-Litografia Ștefan Mihalescu, București, 1886, pp. 29-30.

⁵⁰ C.D.N.A., *The Prefecture of Târgoviște*, file 3/1900 f. 38; Florica Dumitrică, *New data on the development of the oil industry at the end of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century in Dâmbovița County*, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1969, pp. 107-109.

⁵¹ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 12/1891; file 41/1892; file 10/1912.

⁵² Idem, *Ioan Grigorescu Enterprises*, file 1/1888, f. 1-50.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, file 41/1892, f. 1-33; Florica Dumitrică, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

Ioan Grigorescu's company has established itself both on the domestic and foreign markets, standing out in foreign trade with Romanian petroleum products. With large, modern machinery and an important production, Grigorescu's refinery distinguished itself on the market as an important producer, exporting petroleum products, in the period 1887-1892, to countries in Central and Western Europe, but also to Bulgaria, Serbia, Turkey and even in Egypt.⁵⁴

In 1892, due to the large volume of crude oil processed, a metal pipeline was installed to connect Grigorescu's refinery with the railway station of the city of Târgoviște and to install a loading ramp.⁵⁵

In addition to this refinery of Ioan Grigorescu, in 1884 another company "Câmpeanu & Comp" was established in the city, which processed the oil taken from Schelele Glodeni, Câmpina and Buștenari. This refinery processed 11,000 tons of crude oil annually producing gasoline, lamp oils, and some of its products were exported to France or Germany.⁵⁶

II. Commerce

The city of Târgoviște is located in an area where the plain meets the hills. During the period of the regular reigns (1834-1848) there were two commercial nodes or fairs here: *The Indoor Fair*, located around the church of the market in the centre of the city, *The Outdoor Fair* located on the road to Câmpulung near the medieval moat that surrounded the city.⁵⁷

The number of merchants was variable from year to year, because a small part of the merchants succeeded in business and ended up occupying important positions in the economic and financial life of the city, but also in the political, social and cultural life. Including the boyars, they developed commercial activities owning commercial establishments, but Stelea, Dealu, Gorgota, and Viforâta monasteries also had such establishments.⁵⁸

A special category of merchants was the pre-purchasers, who bought peasant products and resold them at higher prices. This activity concerned the city authorities, because it caused certain shortages in the supply of the population with strictly necessary foodstuffs.⁵⁹

From the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, merchants of colonials, gas, jewellery and fashionable clothes appear. In 1885, there were 13 patent merchants of the 1st class, who were large merchants who monopolized the trade. Thus, Nae Boteanu owned a luxury store and one of carpentry and carpentry products, Lazăr Kochberg owned a large tavern and a decolonial store,

⁵⁴ C.D.N.A., *Ioan Grigorescu Enterprises*, file 1/1901, f. 1-19.

⁵⁵ Also see details in Mircea Alexandrescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-294.

⁵⁶ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op.cit.*, p. 31; Florica Dumitrică, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁵⁷ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 9/1837, f. 247; Mihai Oproiu, Corina Andrei, *op.cit.*, pp. 114-116.

⁵⁸ Idem, *Prefecture of Dâmbovița County*, file 198/1833, f. 82; Idem, *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 40/1851, f.4.

⁵⁹ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

Toma Protopopescu owned product stores, the Stematiu brothers, Ghiță Constantinescu, Samuel Iosif with a flour warehouse and Vanghele Augustini with timber storage.⁶⁰

Various products were used in The Outdoor Fair: carts with firewood, timber, sugar, vegetables, butchery products, drinks and other necessary products.⁶¹ At the same time, trade was declining in *The Indoor Fair*, which displeased the merchants who had their shops here, requesting that the fair be moved inside the city.⁶² In the meantime, *The Outdoor Fair* was moved inside the city where it was set up as a special place for the sale of various products between the garden of the Metropolis and the Foundry, called *The New Market*.⁶³

In 1879, a new pavement was made in the New Square and 20 wooden shacks already rented were added, but the merchants expressed their dissatisfaction through a petition regarding the practice of trade in the weekly market square.⁶⁴

Major improvements to the place took place in 1897, when under the supervision of Baltazar Vignosa Giovani, 30 day shops managed by the City Hall were built.⁶⁵ Strict compliance with hygiene rules will be regulated by a new regulation on the operation of public markets from 1898, aiming at the verification of measures and weights, as well as the civilized conduct of trade.⁶⁶ In the regulation of 1898, the operating hours of the markets, butchers and bakeries were also established, being even obliged to sell their goods on a daily basis. There were forbidden were "*quarrels, indecent words, shouting and immoral searches*".⁶⁷

Setting up a new cattle yard was under the attention of the authorities since 1885, and its presence inside the city affected the urban appearance, public hygiene and cleanliness of the city.⁶⁸

In 1914, the town hall owned 31 shops, 18 wooden sheds and three former butchers. The city was freely supplied with bread, meat and other goods.⁶⁹

In addition to the weekly fairs, there were also periodic fairs called annual fairs held on March 25 and September 14 or 15 near the Serbian Cemetery.⁷⁰

The document attests to the existence in the city, in addition to shops, bars, pubs, confectioneries, cafes, pubs and some hotels. They appear later in the urban landscape and were real landmarks, in 1879 the hotels „Moldavia”, „Victoria”, „Mariucă”, „Diaconescu” were mentioned.⁷¹

⁶⁰ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 8/1885, f. 23-38; Also see Mihai Oproiu, Corina Andrei, *op.cit.*, pp. 172-177.

⁶¹ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 21/1840, f. 103.

⁶² *Ibidem*, dosar 21/1840, f. 104; Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op. cit.*, p 35.

⁶³ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 47/1882, f. 20-32.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, file7/1879, f.1-13; file 20/1879.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, file 8/1897, f.15.

⁶⁶ Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁶⁷ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 8/1898, f.3.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, file 7/1885, f. 20-21.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, file 18/1914, f. 21.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, file14/ 1906, f 1-10.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, file 8/1897, f. 2-15.

A distinct note was given in Târgoviște by the pharmacies of Carol Sroeff and Nagy Alexandru as well as the bookstore of Vasile Michailescu.⁷²

This period 1878-1914 was also marked by the organization of contests, exhibitions and other events to encourage trade. Thus, in 1881, an agricultural committee of Dâmbovița County was established with the aim of organizing plough competitions and exhibitions of agricultural, industrial and animal products.⁷³ In 1904, documents mention the exhibition organized by this agricultural committee.⁷⁴ In Târgoviște, the Commercial and Industrial Circle was built in 1910, under the motto "all for one and one for all", which wanted to strengthen the ties between merchants and industrialists, the freedom of trade and the elimination of itinerant trade and the abolition of monopolies. Prominent members of the Circle included the city's merchants and vase manufacturers: Ioan Grigorescu, M. Câmpeanu, Iorgu Lăzărescu, Scarlat Mihăescu and Scarlat Iordonide. The president of the circle was the industrialist and politician Ioan Grigorescu.⁷⁵

In the banking field, the first Târgoviste bank was the Commercial and Industrial Bank, founded in 1911 by a group of industrialists and traders. The first director of the bank was Ioan Grigorescu.⁷⁶ A special role in the system of credit institutions is occupied by the popular banks that came into existence following the law of March 29, 1903, and in addition to the popular banks, credit cooperatives appeared following the law of December 20, 1909. The first popular bank established in Târgoviște, in the year 1906 was the initiative "Garden" belonging to the priest Nicolae Grigorescu Aramă.⁷⁷

Bibliography

Primary sources

The Dâmbovița County Department for the National Archives of Romania:

The City Hall of Târgoviște, file 9/1837, file 21/1840, file 40/1851, file 68/1851, file 32/1852, file 72/1854, file 22/1863, file 11/1865, file 29/1878, file 7/1879, file 20/1879, file 3/1881, file 13/1881, file 47/1882, file 1/1883, file 15/1883, file 42/1883, file 56/1883, file 7/1885, file 8/1885, file 24/1887, file 2/1889, file 4/1889, file 15/1889, file 13/1890, file 37/1890, file 8/1891, file 12/1891, file 41/1892, file 9/1895, file 22/1896, file 8/1897, file 33/1897, file 8/1898, file 13/1898, file 8/1904, file 16/1904, file 14/1906, file 20/1906, file 13/1908, file 3/1910, file 10/1912, file 18/1914, file 11/1915, file 7/1916.

⁷² *Ibidem*, file 13/1890, f. 3-4; Mihai Oproiu, Pârvan Dobrin, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁷³ C.D.N.A., *The City Hall of Târgoviște*, file 3/1881, f. 5-9.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, file 16/1904, f.22.

⁷⁵ *The Statutes of the Commercial and Industrial Circle from Târgoviște*, „Viitorul” Printing House, E. Angelescu, Târgoviște, 1910.

⁷⁶ *The Commercial and Industrial Bank of Târgoviște. Report of the Board of Directors and report of the Censors of March 25, 1915*, Târgoviște, 1915.

⁷⁷ Gica Pehoiu, Mihai Oproiu, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Prefecture of Dâmbovița County, file 40/1832, file 56/1832, file 122/1832, file 198/1833, file 56/1883, file 31/1890, file 3/1900, file 7/1905, file 331/1914.

Ioan Grigorescu enterprises, file 1/1888, file 41/1892, file 1/1901.

Secondary sources

***, *Collection of documents regarding the contribution of the popular masses from Dâmbovița county to the struggle for national independence of the homeland*, Târgoviște, 1977.

***, *The Statutes of the Commercial and Industrial Circle from Târgoviște*, „Viitorul” Printing House, E. Angelescu, Târgoviște, 1910.

***, *The Commercial and Industrial Bank of Târgoviște. Report of the Board of Directors and report of the Censors of March 25, 1915*, Târgoviște, 1915.

General Works

Alessandrescu Constantin, *The Geography of Dâmbovița County*, second edition, editor Vasile Mihăilescu, librarian, Târgoviște, Tipo-Litografia Ștefan Mihalescu, Bucharest, 1886.

Oncescu Iulian, Stanciu Ion, *Introduction in the modern history of the Romanians (1821-1918)*, Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House, Târgoviște, 2009.

Special Works:

Alexandrescu Mircea, *Some new data regarding the export of oil from Dâmbovița County between 1881-1900*, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1971.

XIXth century and the beginning of the 20th century in Dâmbovița County, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1969.

Ionescu Cleopatra, *Data regarding the economy of Dâmbovița County in the first half of the century al XIX-lea*, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1971.

Ionescu Cleopatra, Mihai Oproiu, *Târgoviște in the regulatory period*, in „Scripta Valahica”, tom IV, Târgoviște, 1973.

Manolescu Constantin, *The union of construction workers in Târgoviște (1883)*, in „Acta Valachia”. Historical studies and materials and the history of culture, Târgoviște, 1971.

Oproiu Mihai, Pârvan Dobrin, *Târgoviște. The city and its surroundings between 1821-1918*, vol. II., Biblioteca Publishing House Târgoviște, 2001.

Oproiu Mihai, Andrei Corina, *The administrative evolution of the municipality between the XVth century and 1947 (prefects, presidents, mayors)*, Zven Publishing house, Târgoviște, 2019.

Pehoiu Gica, Oproiu Mihai, *The Almanac of Dâmbovița County (1912)*, Transversal Publishing House, Târgoviște, 2008.

