

## MILESTONES OF THE ROMANIAN ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE FEUDAL ERA

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### **Abstract:**

*The end of slavery in the ninth and tenth centuries in France, England, Italy, and Germany contributed to the emergence and the crystallization of a new historical epoch - feudalism. On the territory of our country, as well as in other Eastern European states, feudalism emerged much later, only between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, with the disintegration of village communities. From this is when the economic gap between Western Europe and Eastern Europe begins. Among the economic factors and policies that triggered the economic gap between Western and Eastern Europe we recall: geographical discoveries (century XIV - XVI) due to which the western European states will know an economic development that two or three centuries may they will later contribute to the emergence of the industrial revolution; the domination of the Ottoman Empire over the Eastern European states on for almost five centuries it has affected their historical course and economic life. From the above it turns out that the germs of capitalism have been present in Western Europe since the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, while in Eastern Europe's capitalist relations appear only in the twentieth century. XVIII when the decline of the Ottoman Empire takes place.*

**Key words:** history, Romanian economic life, Ottoman Empire, slavery, feudalism, capitalism.

**Jel classification:** A10, G22, N9

In Romania, the process of formation and development of feudalism took place closely related to the process of developing feudalism in other European countries, but at the same time it was especially by the way of formation, by the forms of manifestation, the duration and the intensity of some specific manifestations (Ștefan Pascu: 1966, p.116). On the territory of our country preum and in other states Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, feudalism later took shape, over a very long period of time, having its origin in the process of disintegration of the village communities in the X-XIV centuries. The break-up of slavery and the emergence of feudal relations in states such as England, France, Italy, Spain took place in the 9th - 10th centuries. Eastern and partly central Europe under the influence of the Byzantine Empire experienced the feudalism developed towards the end of the century. XIV when they were a number of state formations were formed: the Kingdom of Hungary, the Kingdom of Poland, Kievan Rus',

Serbia, Bulgaria, the Romanian Lands, etc. (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p. 70)

The end of the century XVIIth and beginning of the century the 18th century represents the beginning of the decline to the Ottoman Empire, which, for the Romanian

Lands, also meant the non-observance by the Gate Ottoman of the obligations he assumed, previously through documents called Capitulations Ottoman. Due to the non-observance of these obligations, the autonomy of the Romanian Lands was impaired, they have were appointed foreign rulers, the Ottoman monopoly on their foreign trade was accentuated, and the invasion of foreign merchants and Greek clerics created competition for merchants Romanians. Moreover, without the consent of the Romanian authorities, the Ottoman Empire ceded its territory to the rival powers: Bucovina ceded in 1771 to Austria and Bessarabia ceded in 1821 Russia, and Transylvania and Banat ceded to Austria in 1711. The Phanariot rulers limited it political autonomy of the Romanian Lands because the rulers were appointed by the Gate, from 1711 in Moldova and since 1716 in Wallachia. There has been a stagnation of economic life that has accentuated the gap between Wallachia and Moldova, on the one hand, and Transylvania and Banat on the other on the other hand (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p. 71)

From an economic point of view, the period of early feudalism (10th - 14th centuries) did not it has undergone substantial changes, in the sense that the natural economy that includes culture predominates plants, animal husbandry, and craft occupations carried out by members of traditional families outside the agricultural season and who had to provide for them living. Over time, the separation of agricultural trades, as well as the intensification of the activity of exchange of goods has contributed to the emergence of urban centers that come from old and new cities, from large villages at the crossroads of trade routes: Baia, Siret, Cîmpulung Muscel, Curtea de Argeș, Sibiu, Alba Iulia, Oradea, Brașov, Bistrița etc. (Ștefan Pascu: 1966, p.116-148; Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p. 71)

Regarding social relations, the existence of some is mentioned in the documents of the time certain social stratifications as it appears from the following documents: Diploma of the Johns of the year 1247 refers to majores terrae (landowners) and rustics (dependent peasants), and in Golden Bull given by Hungarian King Andrew II, in 1222 details are made regarding privileges feudal.

The constitution in the middle of the century. XIV of the Romanian independent feudal states – Country Romanian in 1330 and Moldova in 1359, as well as the voivodeship of Transylvania in the year 1176 within the Hungarian feudal state marked the beginning of a new stage in the organization administrative, financial, military, cultural, religious and political of the Romanian countries, as well as to the transition to developed feudalism (Ștefan Pascu: 1966, p.80-88)

From the century In the 16th century, the village community began to decline as tax worsening, and whole villages, unable to pay their debts, were sold to boyars or monasteries. The feudal domain was divided into three parts: the royal domain, the boyar domain and the domain monastic. The main income of the feudal domain came from: tithes collected from the inhabitants of enslaved villages which consist of different products (grain, sheep, pigs, wine, etc.) and which they accounted for one-tenth of the production, then the ninth; the robot that consisted of working towards rule and state and the office which was a rent in money and represented the tax to the state. Feature dominance of the domain economy consists in its natural character, the respective domain being able to provided everything he needed for his existence, without exchanging products (Stefan Easter: 1966, pp.59-62)

In any feudal society the land was the main wealth, and that is why according to ownership of the land structured the entire composition of society. That's why in the economy of the Romanian Lands was occupied by the cultivation of cereals, animal husbandry and shepherd.

Agriculture is the main economic activity throughout the feudal era in the Romanian countries, during the period of developed feudalism. Plant culture is dominated by that of cereals, respectively millet, oats, and from the century 16th century of wheat and corn from end of century 17th century and the beginning of the 20th century in the 18th century. (Nicolae N. Constantinescu: 1997, p.96-130). Because it was easy to cultivate and not included in the royalties demanded by the Ottoman Empire, corn became the main food of the Romanian peasant and an important animal feed (In addition to cereal cultivation, viticulture, fruit growing, gardening, beekeeping and fishing complemented the activities related to agriculture and, through the products obtained provided traditional food for the Romanian peasant (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p.72-73)

Regarding the agricultural tools, starting from the century XIV century, in Transylvania appear iron coulter for plows, and later, from the 16th - 17th centuries, there are plows that have other iron components. In Carișana and Banat, from the century 17th century are even commonly used and iron plows with reversible coulter, which positively influences the cereal production obtained per unit cultivated area. In Moldova and Wallachia, the wooden plow represented, unfortunately, throughout the feudal era, the main tool of agriculture. The traction was that animal, predominantly bovine in Moldova and Wallachia, and in Transylvania, starting with century 17th century, the horse one.

Agricultural production did not increase substantially in the feudal era, especially after the establishment of the Ottoman monopoly on the foreign trade of Moldova and Wallachia (a second half century XVI), when the interest of the boyars decreases - large landowners for increasing the cultivated areas or the yield of the cultivated crops. In their memoirs, foreign travelers, who in the XIV - XVIII centuries crossed the Romanian Lands noticed the fertility of their soil, but also its insufficient development.

Cattle breeding in the Romanian Lands is an occupation in the 16th - 17th centuries and a considerable source of income (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p. 72-73. 73-74). The documents of the time mention the existence of large herds of animals, cattle also constituting currency in carrying out commercial transactions. Raising cattle, horses, sheep, buffaloes and pigs contributed to a significant income by selling meat and the products withheld from them. Wallachia and Moldova were crossed annually by the flocks of Transylvanian shepherds who came down to the Danube in September for the winter. This phenomenon of Transhumance is not only a source of income for the treasuries of Moldova and the country Romanians, but also a preservation of the connections between the Romanians on the slopes of the Carpathians.

Crafts represent the field of activity that differentiates the Romanian Countries, and which can be divided into three categories: village crafts, field crafts and crafts. (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, pp. 75-76).

The village crafts are a permanence of the peasant household, a natural household based on self-consumption. Practiced since ancient times by family members, in the period of off - season, these trades were aimed at meeting the needs of the clothing, footwear, repair of small agricultural inventory. Also in this category of crafts include wood and iron processing, practiced by skilled craftsmen, blacksmiths, horseshoes, shingles makers, etc.

Domestic crafts, those from the great boyar and noble domains, respectively, were usually practiced by Gypsies or Tartar slaves in Wallachia and Moldova, and by to serfs in Transylvania, who made agricultural tools and worked metals. Also at the level Crafts related to the processing of agricultural products and crafts have also been developed in the field attested by the existence of mills, oil presses, weavers and postmen, recorded in the documents weather.

The urban crafts were marked by the urbanization process. In Moldova and in Țara Românească they are significant starting with century in the 16th century. In cities, craftsmen and the merchants were engaged in both urban and agricultural occupations, the latter the city never disintegrated throughout the Middle Ages. This has impressed the countries Romanian has a semi-rural character, a phenomenon noticed and related by foreign travelers of that time. Into the during this period the first associations appeared, the brothers of the craftsmen - such as the association religious and self-help from Suceava from 1540. In century 17th century fraternities (associations) were transformed into guilds, the first guild dating from 1641.

In Transylvania, the development process of urban crafts has been more developed due to the Saxon population, and the first guilds date from the century in the 14th century. From the century in the 16th century cities such as Brasov, Cluj, Sibiu, Oradea have become important craft centers. To Cluj there were, during this period, 30 guilds and 60 craft specialties. (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p.76)

In the feudal era, especially in the period between the 16th and 18th centuries, they were brought in the Romanian Lands of Transylvania, craftsmen at the royal or boyar courts. We can see a flourishing of crafts related to art, painting, wood and stone sculpture, gold and silver, the construction of churches and monasteries.

Manufactures appeared only in the middle of the century. 18th century, the most eloquent example being the one from Resita founded in 1769, where tools, cauldrons, stoves, shells and cannons. The manufacturing stage of the production does not reach a full development in the Romanian space due to the following factors: insufficient capital required, opposition from the guilds, delay agrarian reforms.

Trade - an important area of economic life during feudalism developed in three directions: internal trade, foreign trade and trade transit. (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p.76-80; Nicolae Șută, Sultana Șută-Selejan: 1997, pp. 50-78; )

Domestic trade reached modest heights by the middle of the century. 16th century due the relatively closed nature of the peasant household. However there were some forms of regular events - fairs, fairs, fairs that took place during the holidays religious. On this occasion, agricultural products, animals, honey, salt, wine, skins were sold of animals, agricultural tools, ceramics, as well as imported spices, fabrics and oils. Offer of products were due to the boyar and monastic fields, craftsmen, merchants and in a small measure to the peasants.

In Transylvania, in addition to the activity of Saxon merchants, since the twentieth century. in the 16th century also noted the activity of Romanian, Greek, Armenian merchants, established in commercial companies, known as Greek companies in the cities: Cluj, Sibiu, Brasov, Fagaras, Orastie, Hunedoara.

The foreign trade of the Romanian Lands in the feudal era was, first of all, a trade between the Romanian Lands, influenced by the community of origin, language and customs of the Romanians, the complementarity of economic activities. (Nicolae Șută: 1996, pp. 90-120) In the middle of the century. The 15th century, when the development of handicraft production in Transylvania and of agricultural production took off in Wallachia, the exchanges of goods between the Romanian Lands intensify. Proof of the common interest to amplify the economic relations between the Romanian Lands is also repeated confirmation by the lords of Moldova and Wallachia of the privileges granted

Transylvanian merchants, as well as the freedoms secured in Transylvania for merchants from the other side of the Carpathians. Thus, only the merchants from Brasov received from the lords of the country Romanians, between 1368 and 1444, eight trade

privileges, and from the lords of Moldavia, from the beginning of the century XV to 1458, nine privileges, to which are added many other derogations and regulations.

In addition to the trade links mentioned, Wallachia and Moldova maintained trade with Poland, Russia, Germany, Venice, etc., where they exported cattle, wine, wax, honey and from where they imported iron tools, fabrics, silks, jewelry, spices, etc. Transylvania it had trade relations with Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic and Poland.

From the second half of the century. XVI, the foreign trade of Wallachia and of Moldova is heavily influenced by the effective establishment of the Ottoman monopoly. That therefore, for a long time, until 1829, its main direction will be to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman monopoly is manifested by the right of preemption over Romanian products, and the prices were not negotiated, but were imposed by the Ottoman Gate. The Romanian products who represented interest in the Ottoman Empire were: wheat, oats, cattle, sheep, salt, timber etc. The Romanian countries have maintained trade relations with Poland, the Italian cities, The Habsburg Empire, Russia, Prussia, England.

After 1774, by the Treaty of Kuciuk-Kainargi, the Ottoman monopoly over the foreign trade of the Romanian Lands was limited and consulates were established: in 1782 Russian consulate; in 1783 the Austrian consulate; in 1785 the Prussian consulate; in 1793 French consulate; in 1803 the English consulate. The establishment of consulates is a testimony eloquent on the not only political but also economic interests of these countries in this part of Europe.

Transit trade, favored by the geographical position of the Romanian Lands, is also developing it brings significant revenue to the royal treasuries. In this sense, two routes were highlighted: in the direction South - North, also called the Moldovan road, on which goods brought by caravans from Asia and crossed the Black Sea to Poland and Germany, respectively on the east-west direction which crosses Wallachia and ensures the connection, through the Balkan Peninsula, between the port of Brăila and cities on the shores of the Adriatic Sea. The second route also had a fork, through the Bran pass crossed Transylvania, to the countries of Central and Western Europe.

The period between the middle of the century. The 18th century and the revolutionary year 1821 represent the end of the feudal era. Basically, only the agrarian reforms carried out in the middle of the century. The nineteenth will paves the way for a market economy, although even after this date there are still elements of feudal period.

In the eighteenth century and in the first decades of the century. 19th century, economic life - the social situation of the Romanians was particularly turbulent. Wallachia and Moldova formed field of seven Turkish-Russian-Austrian wars, those of 1711, 1716 - 1718, 1736 - 1739, 1768 - 1774, 1787 - 1792, 1806 - 1812, 1828 - 1829. Each of these have caused human losses and material destruction, military occupations, high consumption of products, by cereals and fodder to the stationary or belligerent armies, etc. The Phanari regime imposed by the Empire Ottoman in Wallachia and Moldova also contributed to the stagnation of the economy Romanian. Political instability, both in the context of the economic zone and at the national level, has created a great insecurity of life and hindered the economic initiative of the Romanian Lands.

Agriculture and cattle raising continued to be the main activity economic development in the Romanian Lands. The growth of agricultural production was stimulated by a number of factors: increasing the number of people in villages, towns and mining centers; the presence of numerous armies on the territory of the Romanian Lands (Turks, Russians, Habsburgs) consuming agricultural products; increasing the need for money of the feudal lords accustomed to the new and expensive Western way of life; introduction of a new agrotechnical method - triennial crop rotation; the establishment of a Agriculture in

Transylvania (in 1769) by the Saxons, Hungarians and Romanians; introduction and generalization of new crops such as: corn (at the beginning of the 17th century in Transylvania, at mid century XVII in Moldova and Wallachia) with a productivity of 17-20 times larger than millet; tobacco, flax, hemp, rapeseed and rice on Crown fields; the potato at end of century in the 18th century.

In the two Romanian Lands, the land is, in unequal proportions, in the property boyars - large landowners and peasants - small landowners. Large land ownership is secular and church. Secular land ownership is limited, and the boyar is required by law and custom to cede to the inhabitants of the villages, from its domain the right of use for a part of the land, in the exchange of their fulfillment of obligations in products and work. Thus, 2/3 of the surface the total area was used for the fields, and 1/3 of the so - called reserve was cultivated by boyars also with their help. This report is also enshrined in the Regulations Organic.

The 18th century was also dominated by the growing trend of the sea boyar landed property, made by sale - purchase, donations, marriages or even violence. At the same time, the lease is growing. The lease did not encourage investment, investments for the improvement of the production process in agriculture, but it was of the feudal type, in the sense that the lessee leased the feudal privileges from which he obtained his income and the rent paid the owner.

In addition to agriculture, animal husbandry, an occupation, had an important place facilitated by vast pastures and meadows, but also by export possibilities. Conformable documents of the time in Moldavia in 1785 there were about 3 million sheep, 800,000 cattle and 170,000 horses, and in Wallachia, at the beginning of the century. In the 19th century there were about 4 millions of sheep.

Viticulture was intensely practiced, as well as fruit and vegetable growing, and from the XVIII century - the technique of seedlings and water wheel irrigation was generalized, and fishing was done in the ponds that existed within each boyar household.

Crafts were practiced in villages and towns in the forms known in the previous period, with the specification that in the period to which we refer the guilds reach the maximum point of development and growing up. They grouped the tradesmen of the same branch or related branches, being constituted in order to defend the economic, religious, political and military interests of the members. In plan economically they aimed at: joint procurement of raw materials at the most convenient prices; fixation product prices; the division of the market between the members in order to eliminate it competition; defending the interests of the members before the secular and ecclesiastical nobles, the voivode; product quality assurance. Their internal organization was relatively simple. They were led by a the leaders of the guild, followed by the masters, the journeymen, and the disciples.

Manufactures appear in the first half of the century. XVIII in all Romanian Countries, being from the beginning an intermediate link between the trade and the small production of goods. Manufacture announces the emergence of capitalist relations of production, amid the disintegration of the feudal ones. From this moment to the work of serfs is added the free labor of salaried workers, domestic and foreign brought in as specialists. They had a tendency to increase in numbers. These two categories of workers they formed the basis of the formation of the incipient proletariat in the Romanian economy. Feudal manufactures were founded by nobles, boyars or monasteries, right at the beginning of the century. XVIII in view processing of the products of the field and their capitalization at a high price.

At the same time, there are larger enterprises, such as feudal manufacturing, established by boyars or merchants on the basis of royal authorizations, which confer a

monopoly on manufacturing and other privileges, including the right to open production in its own shops in cities, a priority purchase of raw materials, the right to use as laborers with the exemption of labor and even the possibility of bringing in foreign workers, relief from customs duties on imports of raw materials and equipment, etc.

In Wallachia and Moldova, manufactures appeared that produced cloth – at Bucharest (1796 - 1803; 1819), Ruginoasa (1805); glass in Târgoviște (1783; 1791 - 1793), Deleni (1786); paper in Cătichea (1793 - 1799), as well as others in which fabrics were produced, candles, pasta, etc. In Transylvania, the manufactures know a greater development and with difference in the field of metal processing. Modern manufactures also appear and develop here, established with capital, generally Austrian, and which employed the employed labor force. (Maria Mureșan, Dumitru Mureșan: 1998, p.84)

In Transylvania, the manufactures know a greater development and especially in the field metalworking. Here also appear and develop modern manufactures, established with capital, in Austrian general, and who used salaried labor.

In conclusion, in the Romanian Lands and Transylvania we can speak of an economic progress - in the second half of the eighteenth century and in the first decades of the nineteenth century, progress in agriculture, internal and external trade, expansion and diversification the production of handicrafts and the timid appearance of manufacturing, in the circulation of money and capital accumulation etc. All this has prepared the conditions for the transition to the economy modern Romanian.

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