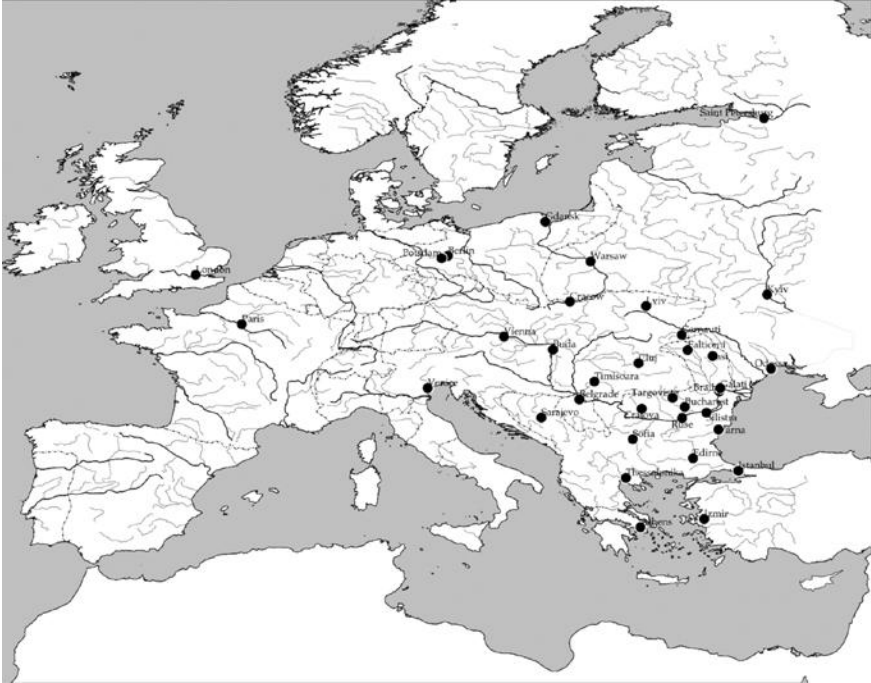


## Women and Their Role in a Network: A Wife and Her Husband's Career: The Hartulari Family



Map 4 Map of Eastern Europe cc. 1850. Made by Michał Wasiucionek.

Feeling the approach of old age, hounded by her own children in interminable court cases, weary after a difficult marriage to an unfaithful husband, Elena Hartulari (née Plitos) made up her mind to write her memoirs, setting down on paper the unhappy course of her life. By the testament of her husband, Iorgu Hartulari, who died in 1849, Elena was his executor and inherited his entire estate. Their three children were displeased at their father's decision, and joined together to contest, by various methods, including in court, their mother's right to administer the family inheritance. After numerous conflicts, Elena gave up the patrimony to her children and withdrew to live alone on one of the family's estates, with only a few servants to care for her in her old age. It was here that she began to write her memoirs, addressing them expressly to her children, who were to learn and understand the role that she, Elena Hartulari,

had played in the amassing of a huge fortune and the building of a social status. Her memoirs were not addressed to a wider public, but were to be read only by her children, so that they might realize how mistaken they had been in judging their mother. Written on lined paper and bound in a pink folder, Elena's memoirs were published in the early twentieth century as a sort of feuilleton novel by their discoverer, the historian Gheorghe Ghibănescu, under the title *Istoria vieții mele de la anul 1801* (The story of my life from the year 1801 [sic]).<sup>1</sup> Scattered through various issues of the journal, Elena Hartulari's memoirs failed to attract much interest either from literary scholars or from historians.<sup>2</sup> The pages published by Gheorghe Ghibănescu made no claim to be a critical edition, and they contain numerous errors of transcription.

### Elena Hartulari: Education

Elena Hartulari was born in Iași in 1810 into the Plitos (Pletosu) family of petty boyars. Her father, Grigore Plitos, owned estates close to Iași and was in the service of the Sturza boyar family.<sup>3</sup> His career and his wealth were closely connected to the Sturzas, whose client and protégé he remained all his life. Born and raised in the house of the boyar Grigore Sturza, Grigore Plitos became an indispensable administrator of his patron's house and property. For his services, in addition to a salary, Grigore received boyar titles, help whenever he needed it, and various other benefits.<sup>4</sup> This type of patron–client relation is a classic one, and was the basis on which many fortunes and careers were built in early modern Moldavia.

At the age of fifteen, Elena married Iorgu Hartulari, a poor young Greek and a second cousin of hers. His father, Manolache Hartulari, had arrived in

1 Elena Hartulari, "Istoria vieții mele de la anul 1801", ed. by Gheorghe Ghibănescu, *Convorbiri Literare* 5–8 (1926), 729–745; 9–10 (1926), 841–855; 11–12 (1926), 915–926; 9–11 (1927): 291–312; 3–4 (1928): 69–78; 5–8 (1928), 301–308.

2 See Angela Jianu, 'Elena Hartulari's Story: The Presentation of the Emotional Self', in Faruk Bilici, Ionel Candea, and Anca Popescu (eds), *Enjeux économiques, politiques et militaires en Mer Noire, XIV<sup>e</sup>–XXI<sup>e</sup> siècles—Etudes à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu* (Brăila: 2007), 429–449.

3 Constantin Sion says that he was a peasant from the vicinity of Iași, who on entering the boyar class Hellenized his name from Pletosu (the name means 'long haired') to Plitos. (Sion, *Arhondologia Moldovei*, 220). The practice was a current one throughout the Balkans, as Christine Philliou shows, the most conclusive example being the one that she analyses, namely Stephanos Vogorides. See Philliou, *Biography of an Empire*.

4 Gheorghe Platon, Alexandru-Florin Platon, *Boierimea din Moldova în secolul al XIX-lea. Context european, evoluția socială și politică (Date statistice și observații istorice)* (Bucharest: 1995).

Moldavia at the beginning of the nineteenth century and settled in Târgul Ocna, where he knew the Greek hegumen of the monastery. He later summoned his wife and children and other family members to join him and tried to become 'naturalized' through the purchase of estates and noble titles.<sup>5</sup>

The story of Elena Hartulari is the mirror of a Moldavian society caught in the grip of changes that it was barely able to assimilate and work with. Her education reflects this period of transition, and her writing is sprinkled with Moldavianisms, Hellenisms, and Gallicisms. What sort of education, then, did Elena Plitos receive before she became Hartulari? In her memoirs, Elena writes that from the age of seven she was busy with 'the study of Greek and Moldavian.'<sup>6</sup> In 1817, Greek was still the language of the elite, the language spoken in boyar salons, the language of correspondence, the language of cultural experiences. She completed her education at home with the help of some of those private tutors who were an important presence in the Moldavian world of the early nineteenth century. Elena's parents took care to pay a number of private teachers who could offer her an elementary knowledge of reading and writing, rather than insisting on the sort of 'feminine' education followed in other parts of Europe. Indeed, feminine education was not yet among the concerns of Moldavian society. It was only in the 1830s that Moldavia and Wallachia became very attractive to a series of foreign entrepreneurs who opened private schools for girls. Such *pensionnats* were expensive and elitist, however, and in any case, they came rather late for Elena Hartulari.<sup>7</sup> Even if she was not *pensionnat*-educated herself, Elena Hartulari cared about the education of her children, and took steps to send them to private schools in Iași, Czernowitz in Habsburg Bukovina, and later Paris. In so doing, she came in contact with the owners of these schools: some she visited, and with others she became friends. This was the case of Charles Tissot, who had come to Moldavia to open a private school for boys. His *pensionnat* began its activity in Iași in September 1834. Later he taught French grammar at the Academia Mihăileană, the most prestigious higher education institution in Moldavia.<sup>8</sup> He also served as secretary to Elena's protector, Prince Mihail Sturdza,<sup>9</sup> and it was through this connection that he found his way into the Hartulari family's social circle. He

5 Sion, *Arhondologia Moldovei*, 302.

6 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 1r.

7 Dan Dumitru Iacob, 'Copii de boieri la pension. Educația în familia postelnicului Iancu Costache-Negel (1838–1861)', in Cătălina Mihalache, Leonidas Rados (eds), *Educația publică și condiționările sale (secolele XIX–XX)* (Iași: 2015), 145–196.

8 See Vasile A. Urechia, *Istoria școalelor de la 1800 la 1864* (Bucharest: 1901), vol. 4, 388, 417.

9 See Simion-Alexandru Gavriș, *Viața și opiniile prințului Grigore Mihail Sturdza, 1821–1901* (Iași: 2015), 34.

and his wife became close friends of Elena's, and were constant guests at her residence in Fălticeni. With their help, she improved her knowledge of French.

Apart from the sufferings that she mentions on every page, Elena Hartulari had an active social life as daughter, mother, wife, lady of the house, friend, neighbour, and petitioner. Her activities place her in the ranks of the feminine 'bourgeois' elite of the nineteenth century. Her memoirs help us to reconstruct the relations between the status of women and their social identity through the intermediary of consumption and sociability. In this chapter, I shall try to analyse Elena Hartulari's memoirs with regard to four aspects: the linguistic experience of love; women and social networks; sociability and consumption; consumption and knowledge.

### The Linguistic Experience of Love

From the beginning of her narration, Elena Hartulari commits herself to what Philippe Lejeune terms an 'autobiographical pact', promising to recount her life in 'the spirit of truth.'<sup>10</sup> In telling the story of her life, Elena Hartulari represents herself, placing herself in the centre of her narration, trying to gain the pity, admiration, and goodwill of her children. Thus her memoirs are constructed in such a way as to accentuate the sufferings, hardships, and unhappiness she has experienced in the course of a life entirely dedicated to her husband and children.

In 1824, Elena was fourteen and living with her parents in Iași. She had her own room and maidservant. Her father had succeeded in rebuilding his fortune after the revolutionary upheaval of 1821 and was able to provide his daughter with a life relatively free from cares. Grigore Plitos dreamed of a good marriage for Elena within the local Moldavian elite, a marriage that would bring her material stability and a good position in the social hierarchy and would provide the family with another connection in the social network of Iași. Iorgu Hartulari was an outsider—his origins were in the region of Epirus. He was poor, and on top of that he was an inveterate card player. No father would have wished for a son-in-law like Iorgu, with no past or present, followed by a numerous family—parents, brothers, and sisters, all poor, arriving on Moldavian soil to seek their fortune.

Iorgu Hartulari played the card of the perseverant lover with an excellent command of words, gestures, and the art of *galanterie*.<sup>11</sup> A young man of twenty,

<sup>10</sup> Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (Paris: 1975), 14.

<sup>11</sup> Erving Goffman, *L'arrangement des sexes* (Paris: 2002).

he staged all the art of seduction, declaiming poems, promising eternal love, swearing oaths, entering by the window when he was put out by the door.<sup>12</sup> After seven months of more or less pretend resistance, Elena gave in: 'He went down at my feet, telling me to do what I wanted with him, for he was my lover, he was going to be my husband, with whom I was to live happily.'<sup>13</sup> There followed a prolonged period of hidden courtship because of the somewhat fierce opposition of the girl's parents, given the youth's utter poverty and above all his passion for games of chance. However, parental opposition did nothing to dampen the erotic passion expressed in visits organized with her sister's complicity, fiery declarations, hand-holding, and voluptuous embraces.

Over the course of a year and two months there followed a daily correspondence between us; every day two notes, one [to each] from the other, with the purest words of love, and sometime every week we would meet at my sister's and in our own home,<sup>14</sup>

notes Elena in her memoirs. When the young man threatens to shoot himself if they do not run away together, Elena writes to him:

It is I who have declared to you my love and my faith till my end; do you now want me to leave my poor parents in tears and suffering for your love?! Know now that you are all my future happiness; repay me with unfeigned love and with pity; I am yours till the grave.<sup>15</sup>

And he replies:

I come, please, my dear, at the hour you have decided for me and be sure that I will be the most faithful and the most suffering for you, innocent being and so strong in your words, which will remain in my memory until my end, witnessing to [good] behaviour and innocence, which with great nobility you wear upon yourself. I am yours and you mine and no one is capable of preventing us. Your slave until the grave.<sup>16</sup>

The amorous correspondence and the adventures that follow, the flight of the two lovers, their capture by a posse of guards, the young man's imprisonment,

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12 Arlette Farge shows that the art of seduction takes on different forms 'according to the social level at which partners are found'. Arlette Farge, 'Jeu des esprits et des corps au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in Cecile Dauphin, Arlette Farge (eds.) *Séduction et société. Approches historiques* (Paris: 2001), 72.

13 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 2r.

14 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 2v.

15 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 3r.

16 Ibid., f. 5r.

his letters from prison, *billets-doux*, often signed with blood ‘from his finger’, seem inspired by a popular literature in circulation at the time.<sup>17</sup> Elena, for her part, had a whole arsenal of protector saints, miracle-working icons and prayers to guide her, protect her, and help her at every step. Let me take one episode as an example:

... an idea came to my parents that my mother and my sister and I should go to the Metropolitan Church [in Iași], where there was a miracle-working icon of the Mother of the Lord, to say prayers for my peace. When we entered the church, the first person to be seen before the icon [was] the young man saying prayers, and the priest mentioning the name of my parents, that their hearts might turn towards him; where my mother also heard these words. And when he had read the prayer he turned to go. Then he caught sight of my family, which startled him, confused as to what apparition this might be, or the miracle of the Mother of the Lord; and he sat down on a pew till we too finished our prayers.<sup>18</sup>

After this episode, thought/seen/felt to be a miracle by all involved, the couple received the blessing of Elena’s parents. Of course, the ‘miracle’ had been preceded by the young man’s (and his family’s) appeal to Metropolitan Veniamin Costachi, to Grigore Plitos’s confessor, and to Grigore Sturza and other leading boyars of the day, which hastened the enactment of the divine will.<sup>19</sup>

From the scenes above let us try to understand the connection between book consumption and learning. Elena and Iorgu were consumers of a Greek literature, both being good speakers of the language.<sup>20</sup> Phanariot literature had turned some into poets, others merely into imitators and inveterate dreamers.<sup>21</sup> In the Moldavia of the early nineteenth century, Iași was home to quite an effervescent literary scene, developed around Greek lyric. Costache Conachi, Costache Negri, Alecu Beldiman, and Gheorghe Asachi composed

17 Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture*, 114–124.

18 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 4r–4v.

19 Elena and Iorgu were second cousins. Metropolitan Veniamin gave them his blessing, considering that this degree of kinship was not an impediment to their marriage. SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 2r.

20 Andrei Pippidi, ‘Lecturile unui boier muntean acum un veac: Ioan Manu’, *Revista de Istorie și Teorie Literară*, XX, 1 (1971), 105–119.

21 For a pertinent and interesting analysis of this Phanariot literature, see Peter Mackridge, ‘Some Greek Literary Representations of Greek Life and Language in the Late Eighteenth Century’, in *Revista de Istorie și Teorie Literară*, X, 1–4 (2016), 171–195; Peter Mackridge, *Enlightenment or Entertainment? The Intolerable Lightness of Phanariot Literature, 1750–1800*, consulted at [https://www.academia.edu/41212631/Enlightenment\\_or\\_entertainment\\_The\\_intolerable\\_lightness\\_of\\_Phanariot\\_literature\\_1750-1800](https://www.academia.edu/41212631/Enlightenment_or_entertainment_The_intolerable_lightness_of_Phanariot_literature_1750-1800) [1 February 2020]; Yannis Xourias, ‘L’européanisation fictive des Phanariotes’, *Cahiers balkaniques* [Online], Special issue, 2015, published online 27 January 2016, [accessed 9 March 2020].

verses full of erotic feeling, which then circulated through the intermediary of itinerant bands. Gheorghe Asachi, for example, also translated and wrote plays. Plays staged by troupes of amateur actors may have been another source of inspiration for the two lovers. The Greek theatre, promoted especially by the elite, found propitious ground on which to develop in the Wallachian and Moldavian capitals in the early nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> By 1827, the theatre had already advanced beyond the stage of amateur performances in boyar salons, and troupes of professional actors were performing in Italian, French, and German.<sup>23</sup>

Elena's contemporary, Dimitrie Foti Merișescu, expresses, right from the start of his own memoirs, his admiration for the novels *Erotocritos* and *Oreste*. It was reading these, in Romanian translation, that gave him the urge to start writing himself.<sup>24</sup> Elena Hartulari, on the other hand, has left no indications as to what she read. The vocabulary she uses, however, leads me to believe that her daily reading consisted of 'light' French novels. Many of the French words were adapted and introduced into everyday speech: *emabl* (*aimable*), *rezonarisit* (*raisonné*), *dezida* (a word used frequently: *decider*), *demuazela* (*demoiselle*), *rezon* (*raison*), *fraparisi* (*frapper*), *suvenir* (*souvenir*), *noblesă* (*noblesse*), *furioază* (*furieuse*), *estaziată* (*extasiée*), *galantă* (*galante*), *riscarisi* (*risquer*). They were already part of an everyday vocabulary filling in gaps in the Moldavian language, especially when it came to the expression of feelings. As such, the influence of the sentimental literature typical of the period can be clearly seen both in the epistolary style of the two lovers and in the vocabulary they use. It may be mentioned that Elena Hartulari's memoirs capture very well the changes that the Moldavian language was undergoing as it 'modernized' together with the birth of the young modern state. Greek vocabulary is not yet completely abandoned, however, but is sprinkled through the memoirs wherever events, situations, or even sentiments may be better expressed in Greek.

The day after their marriage, the 'ecstasy of love' came up against everyday routine: 'I told my husband to send [someone] to buy us two loaves. He answered that he had no money. We took coffee still with that pleasure.'<sup>25</sup>

22 Chrysothemis Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou, 'Greek Theater in Southeastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean from 1810 to 1961', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 25 (2007), 267–284.

23 For the repertoire and translation of various plays, see Paul Cornea, *Originile romanțismului românesc* (Bucharest: 2008).

24 See Part III, Chapter 6 of this book.

25 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 6v.

Elena consoles herself. Two months later, they were assailed by his numerous creditors:

After two months my husband's creditors started to come, to whom he owed 3,000 lei, and after a week they imposed administration on him for him to pay, and he had nothing from which to pay. I asked my father and he told me he had nothing, that as I had liked it ... to bear it! I asked my sister to lend to us, and she said she had nothing, knowing that if they gave to me I had nothing from which to pay them back.<sup>26</sup>

How Iorgu Hartulari was to emerge from poverty and debt, alongside an 'ugly' wife, we shall now examine.

### Women and Social Networks

Fălticeni, in northern Moldavia, was the market town in which the Hartulari couple decided to build their residence. The Hartulari house grew as Iorgu worked his way into a network that ensured access to jobs, contacts, and influence. His marriage to Elena Plitos was his first step in penetrating a powerful network that he was to succeed in making his own. Constantin Sion, a contemporary boyar, would later write in his *Arhondologia Moldovei* (Book of the nobility of Moldavia) that this was the aim of the marriage, Elena being ugly (*slută*) but very well positioned socially.<sup>27</sup> Elena talked about this aspect, trying to make sure that her future husband would not later hold her physical appearance against her:

Consider well that this is to be a bond for our lives, firstly that I have no wealth, secondly that I have no beauty or learning other than my language as a Romanian and the Greek language. For these [reasons], consider well, lest there come a time that you hold them against me or are unfaithful to me, which would break me down utterly.<sup>28</sup>

No likeness of Elena Hartulari survives, although she lived till 1860, well into the age of portrait painting and photography. However Iorgu Hartulari's behaviour tends to support the hypothesis formulated by Constantin Sion. Poor and a foreigner, but 'handsome and witty', on his arrival in the town of Iași, Iorgu clung to Elena like a lifebelt, offering her, as I have shown in the first part, a

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., f. 7v.

<sup>27</sup> Sion, *Arhondologia Moldovei*, 302.

<sup>28</sup> SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 6r.



restless and unsettling love. He would later cheat on her at every opportunity, however, either with passing dalliances or with long-term relationships. But that is not our concern here.

What sort of connections? What sort of patronage? Through his marriage, Iorgu Hartulari acquired the social connections of his wife and father-in-law. Career advancement was facilitated in the first place by spiritual affinity: Mihail Sturdza, who had been Elena's godfather at her baptism, was now sponsor at their wedding: 'at the right time, behold, a surprise from our protector [Grigore Sturza], urging his son Mihail Sturdza, by whom I was baptized, to come and marry us: where indeed he came with his son Dimitrie, the year 1827 June 10.'

By this gesture, the Hartulari couple were brought under the patronage of the Sturdzas, further strengthening existing connections. Grigore Plitos was already the right-hand man of Grigore Sturza, Mihail Sturdza's father. Iorgu Hartulari was now officially introduced into the powerful network of the Sturdza kindred. Indeed, a contemporary witness records how 'Iorgu, a fine cunning robber ... through the influence of his father-in-law (Grigore Plitos)' was appointed customs officer in the frontier town of Suceava and later, enjoying the protection of his godfather (Mihail Sturdza), who in the meantime had become prince of Moldavia, began to become wealthy by leasing the lands of monasteries.<sup>29</sup> With Mihail Sturdza's ascent to the throne in 1834, Grigore Plitos was appointed princely adjutant, charged with administering the princely palace in Iași.<sup>30</sup> The preservation of an impressive number of documents about the activity of Iorgu Hartulari helps us to understand how a 'new man' (a foreigner) could work his way into the fabric of his country of adoption and succeed in amassing impressive wealth and an enviable social position.

Iorgu Hartulari set out with three pieces of silver to his name, and advanced by making intelligent use of his wife's connections and dowry.<sup>31</sup> His various activities may be summed up as follows: he held offices in the state administrative apparatus, he attended to his estates, and he embarked on 'speculations'. The offices and the 'speculations' were closely linked. The higher he advanced in the administration, the more access he had to information, protection, and a reputation that could help him in his business ventures. Before dealing with the activities that Elena termed 'speculations' (*speculații*), I shall endeavour to sketch a portrait of Iorgu as he emerges from his wife's memoirs and from

29 Sion, *Arhondologia Moldovei*, 302.

30 SJAN, Iași, Fond Documente Moldovenesti, XIII/88. Grigore Plitos held this position for two years, till 10 August 1836, when at his own request he was replaced by Costache Tomazichi.

31 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 50v.

the surviving documents. Iorgu Hartulari brought flair, skill, and intelligence to the development of any business venture; he gave no thought to moral considerations, and he calculated the prospects well. His career developed in a period when there was an acute need for 'bureaucrats'.<sup>32</sup> Iorgu could write well in Moldavian and in Greek; moreover he had the ability to explain rules and regulations clearly. The Russian administration needed such men to put the Organic Regulation into application. Through his patron, Grigore Sturza, he came to be part of the administration in Moldavia, where he was used, first by General Pyotr Zheltukhin and later by General Pavel Kiselyov, in the implementation of the new rules and rewarded with ranks and promotions in the administrative hierarchy.<sup>33</sup>

Once accepted into the network, Iorgu was well able to feign subservience towards his patrons, Grigore Sturza and Mihail Sturdza. The acceptance of a 'minimum of voluntary compliance', as Max Weber remarks, involves an 'interest', whether that interest is material, affective, or 'ideal'.<sup>34</sup> And this docility may be based on 'purely opportunistic grounds, or [...] reasons of material self-interest'.<sup>35</sup> Iorgu asked his patrons' advice before embarking upon a business venture, talking to them about the opportunities offered by particular investments, with the result that his 'compliance' and competence made him someone to be trusted. In their turn, his patrons offered him their trust, involving him in the solution of various economic and personal problems or in the management of public business that could bring them personal gain. He speculated on any connection that could bring him an advantage, worked hard, and followed closely every negotiation or business deal. As Elena testifies, Iorgu was 'exact' in all his accounting and kept a careful record of the income and expenditure of his estates.<sup>36</sup> Already from the middle of the eighteenth century, Moldavian boyars had begun to keep ledgers of income and expenditure for their estates. Copying the model of the Russian nobility, they took an interest in calculating the wealth at their disposal and investing it in the best possible exploitation of their lands.<sup>37</sup> The ledgers were maintained by

32 Max Weber, *Bureaucracy*, in Malcom Watters (ed.), *Modernity: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, vol. III, *Modern Systems* (London, New York: 1999), 351–367.

33 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 9v–10r.

34 Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. (Berkeley: 1978), 212–213.

35 *Ibid.*, 214.

36 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 15r–16r.

37 Elena Korchmina, *The Practice of Personal Finance and the Problem of Debt among the Noble Elite in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, in Andreas Schönle, Andrei Zorin, and Alexei Evstratov (eds.), *The Europeanized Elite in Russia, 1762–1825. Public Role and Subjective Self* (Illinois: 2016), 116–135.

estate managers, who were then checked on by their masters.<sup>38</sup> At first, Iorgu was far too poor to be able to afford to employ an estate manager, so he kept the accounts himself.<sup>39</sup> Even when he became very rich, he trusted no one and still preferred to keep personal control of his business affairs.

Iorgu's rapid rise to wealth would have been impossible without advancement in the hierarchy of ranks, together with the effective holding of administrative offices. In 1835, he was raised to the rank of *căminar* (the official responsible for collecting the tax on alcoholic drinks and wax) and appointed a member (*cilen*) of the court of justice of Suceava county; before the year was out, he moved on to the civil position of *ispavnic* (prefect) of the same territory and the military rank of *serdar* (commander); he subsequently managed to attain membership of the *protipendadă* (the elite category of great boyars), receiving the rank of *agă* (chief of police), *spătar* and later, in 1847, that of *postelnic*.<sup>40</sup> Along with the posts and ranks he received came influence, privileges, and power. Iorgu was a good speaker of Greek, Hungarian, German, and Moldavian, and expanded his connections beyond the borders of the principality, succeeding in establishing good relations with the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem. Once he had begun to create his own network and to make his fortune, Iorgu Hartulari considered that the time had come to part with Elena. In 1835 he threw his wife out of the house and requested a separation. However, Iorgu had not grasped that the strength, and above all the solidarity of the network that had propelled his rise could equally well bring about his downfall. Grigore Plitos asked for the help of his patron, Prince Mihail Sturdza, who was to remind Iorgu who lay behind his social ascent: 'Let us separate her from such a tyrant, who after he has made his position, now comes with insolence, after all the torments he has caused her, to abandon her

38 For Moldavia, there are a considerable number of such ledgers. See, in this connection, Mihai Mîrza, 'Averea lui beizadea Ioniță Cantemir după un catastif din 1755', in *Analele Institutului de Istorie Xenopol*, t. XLIX (2012), 409–437; Mihai Mîrza, 'Cheltuielile casei marelui vistiernic Toader Palade, după o seamă din anul 1752', in *Analele Științifice ale Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Iași, Secția. Istorie*, LIX (2013), 333–408; SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente P. 1023/2: Sama lui Șerban logofăt pentru cheltuiala casii dumisale Ioan Canta biv vel vistier pe anul acesta, precum arată anume înăuntru, leat 1777 ghenuar 1, f. 52. For Wallachia, these registers come later. See Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, "Condica de toate pricinile și trebuințele casii mele" de pitarul Dumitrache Piersiceanu de la Fundata (1804–1839), in Dan Dumitru Iacob (ed.), *Avere, prestigiu și cultură materială în surse patrimoniale. Inventare de averi din secolele XVI–XIX* (Iași: 2015), 523–553.

39 While he administered the estate and outside business, Elena kept records of the houses and servants in a ledger. SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 20v.

40 Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, *Marea Arhondologie a boierilor Moldovei (1835–1856)* (Iași: 2014), 109; Gh. Platon, Al.-F. Platon, *Boierimea*, 117.

too! I will take his wealth and give it to her, for it is hers, and let him remain as he was [before], because it was for her sake that I gave him so much help and assistance with money.<sup>41</sup>

This threat from his prince and protector Sturdza forced Iorgu to think again about his decision and he resumed his duty as a husband. His extra-marital affairs continued under his wife's tolerant gaze, but the economic benefits of the social network (which he could easily have lost) and the solidarity built around Elena determined him to be cautious and gradually to return to the conjugal bed.

Iorgu Hartulari pursued his business interests in a small community held together by various bonds of family or friendship. Elena's memoirs reflect very well this community, whose members prospered together, developing economic activities and celebrating their victories with parties and balls. An examination of Iorgu's network allows us to observe that it was made up of family members (his brothers, brothers-in-law, and nephews), friends belonging to the second rank of the boyar class, clients, and business partners, with whom he associated only in his financial and property 'speculations' (the Jewish bankers and merchants in the community, Turkish merchants).

The 'speculations' to which Elena alludes involved leasing estates: Iorgu would offer the owner a fixed sum to be paid twice a year, while he took charge of the harvest and strove to obtain as great a profit as he could by exploiting the peasants' labour.<sup>42</sup> He embarked on such speculations particularly with the hegumens of monasteries, who granted him the use of their lands. The experience was useful and helped him to take a step forward. Iorgu's leasing of land dedicated to monasteries led to him becoming the right-hand man of the prince of Moldavia, Mihail Sturdza, which brought him renown and authority, but also a reputation as someone greedy for wealth and lacking any moral

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41 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 15r–16r.

42 He held a lease on the estate of Borca in Neamț county, for which he paid the Metropolitan Diocese a fixed sum on the days of Saint George and Saint Demetrius; any additional revenue belonged to him. See the record of 21 April 1841, when he paid the Saint George's day instalment of 15,000 lei (SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 428/206). The Metropolitan Diocese considered that the income from the estate was much greater, so on 26 April 1841, it signed a new contract with Iorgu Hartulari, leasing the estate of Borca to him for the sum of 48,005 lei (SJAN, Colecția Documente, 428/209). In addition to Borca, he also held a lease on the estate of Murgii, belonging to the Monastery of Neamț (SJAN, Colecția Documente, 427/250, 256). 427/250, 256), and other estates in Moldavia, as may be seen from his carefully preserved contracts and receipts. See SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 427/ 259, 29 April 1849; 427/ 288, 27 December 1847.

principles.<sup>43</sup> An incident reported by Elena Hartulari shows how her husband was perceived in the community: on their daughter Maria's wedding day, the city was full of 'satires' (broadside pamphlets) ironically lamenting the fate of the new son-in-law, Șerban Căănău, who had such a 'tyrannical' father-in-law. Written in a bitter tone and describing the abuses committed by Hartulari, the broadsides succeeded in scaring him, as he feared that Șerban would break off the agreement.<sup>44</sup> However, the immense dowry—'12,000 gold pieces in money and 3,000 gold pieces in silverware and jewellery and the best bed linen and clothes and two furnished rooms, plus a carriage worth 180 gold pieces'—was more important to him than his father-in-law's reputation.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to leasing estates, Iorgu was also involved in the timber trade. In this, he worked in association with Ottoman merchants, Jewish and Greek merchants who were active in the same line of business.<sup>46</sup> He also produced and sold spirits, which brought a substantial and steady income.<sup>47</sup> The money he made, he then invested in buying estates and other financial speculations. Moreover, he knew how to get a good price for his protection and for the influence that he managed to have in the community. This is abundantly clear from his dealings with the guild of Jewish merchants in Fălticeni, Austrian subjects, who on one occasion requested his help and protection.<sup>48</sup>

43 He took leases on estates belonging to monasteries dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. These were administered by the Board of Guardians of the Wealth of the Holy Sepulchre (*Epitropia Averilor Sfântului Mormânt*). In the age of print, the Board had standard contracts and issued printed receipts on which only the sum had to be entered by hand. See the contract of 23 April 1845 (SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 433/272) and the receipt of 26 October 1846 (SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 426/211). Other receipts are preserved in SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente 426/226, 227; 427/ 259; 427/288, 27.

44 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 31v–32r.

45 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 32v.

46 Contracts are preserved from a number of years. To give only a few examples: Contract of 1 June 1836, SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 428/160. The contract signed on 1 June 1840, renewed on 9 November 1841, with the Turkish merchant Abdul Ramiz (?) for delivery of timber. On 28 July 1842, Abdul Ramiz still owed Iorgu Hartulari money. The contract is written in Cyrillic, but signed by Abdul in Ottoman Turkish. The document recording the payment of the debt is written in Ottoman Turkish and Cyrillic, and signed by Abdul in Ottoman Turkish. SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 427/ 252, 255, 261, 262.

47 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 427/ 253.

48 Iorgu Hartulari had a special relationship with Ștrul Foțăneanu, a leading figure among the Jews of Fălticeni, from whom he borrowed money to launch his business ventures (SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 31v–32r). When Iorgu rose to be a notable of the town, known for his influence with Prince Mihail Sturdza, the Jewish community appealed for his help to resolve conflicts with the local boyars. See Artur Gorovei, *Folticeni. Cercetări istorice asupra orașului* (Folticeni: 1938), 69–71, 73–74.

'Exact' in his business affairs during his lifetime, and keeping all his accounts with precision, Iorgu Hartulari made preparations for his posterity in good time. After the inconstancy of his youthful behaviour, he returned to his wife in the last years of his life, insisting at every opportunity on her role in building his immense fortune, and preparing her to take charge of his business affairs. In his testament, he named his wife as heir to his entire wealth, with the right to dispose of it as she wished, given that she had been its source.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, he took steps to ensure the transfer of authority, visiting estate after estate and summoning the peasants to get their goodwill by distributing gifts and invoking his decent treatment of them. They were advised to be obedient and to listen to the new mistress just as they had to him.<sup>50</sup> On his death, he left a considerable fortune, which he had succeeded in managing so that it brought in considerable income. However, it was not in the palpable form of money or goods, but was invested in his volatile 'speculations'. Elena may have been the source of this wealth, but she did not have the economic knowledge necessary to keep control of these financial speculations, which required practice and agency to make them work. The patrimony thus fell victim to the demands of creditors and the extravagance of the Hartulari children.

### Consumption and Sociability

The first half of the nineteenth century saw a remodelling of the role played by women both in the promotion of a type of consumption and in the construction of a form of sociability. Leora Auslander observes that: 'The focus for women's consumption was the making of the family and the class.'<sup>51</sup> The 'evolution of consumption', which began somewhere in eighteenth-century England, as Jan de Vries has shown,<sup>52</sup> manifested itself much later in southeastern Europe. The wars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, involving frequent military occupations, contributed to the promotion of a certain mode, a certain type of civility. Moldavia joined the European trend of consumption, through urbanization and the numeric growth of a population segment able to invest in consumption, and it underwent a series of institutional

49 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 45v.

50 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 42v–43v.

51 Leora Auslander, 'The Gendering of Consumer Practices in Nineteenth-Century France' in Victoria De Grazia, Ellen Furlough (eds.), *The Sex of the Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective* (California: 1996), 79.

52 Jan De Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Demand and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: 2008).

changes aimed at the construction of a modern state. Manolache Drăghici, writing the history of Moldavia in these years, attributed capital importance to the reforms introduced by the Organic Regulation and the Kiselyov administration in the transition to a new stage of society:

The administration of Count Kiselyov was blessed by all classes of the Romanian people, for as long as he governed and long after, as an age in which, with his wise measures, he made our lands cleanse themselves of all the barbarous rust and oppressive customs that had remained in them from the Turks and from the Tatars through the subjection of the locals and the adoption of many Asiatic ways.<sup>53</sup>

Together with the institutions of modernity, the principality saw an explosion of 'institutions and discourses', to use Leora Auslander's words, centred around consumption.<sup>54</sup> Merchants travelled up and down Moldavia with their goods, while shops, more and more specialized in character, were opened in Iași, Bârlad, Focșani, Galați, Fălticeni, and Tecuci.<sup>55</sup> Moldavian consumption had its particularities, however: many goods continued to be brought from the Ottoman Empire, via Istanbul, Bursa, Sibiu, and Iași; the 'French' model was adopted through the intermediary of the Russian army of occupation; the local market was connected to the Viennese and German market, via Leipzig; and the boyar household itself produced a considerable part of the foodstuffs and textiles necessary for everyday life.

How did the local elites become informed about new fashions and tastes? Magazines devoted to fashion, interior decoration, garden layout, pavilions, etc. began to arrive from Leipzig and Vienna. Starting in the 1830s, a domestic press developed, with whole pages dedicated to consumption: advertisements for clothes and shoes, alimentary delicacies, outfits for balls and soirées, porcelain and silverware, announcements regarding the employment of qualified staff (teachers, engineers, designers, valets, maids, cooks, painters, gardeners, doctors, tailors, etc.). May we, as Leora Auslander argues, speak of a directed consumption, with French society as its model?<sup>56</sup>

As her husband, Iorgu accumulated a sizeable capital, so little by little, Elena Hartulari entered into the logic of consumption. When their income

53 Postelnicul Manolachi Drăghici, *Istoria Moldovei pe timp de 500 de ani pînă în zilele noastre*, ed. Andrei Pippidi (Bucharest: 2017), 251.

54 Auslander, 'The Gendering of Consumer Practices', 81.

55 The presence of these travelling merchants, who wandered all over Moldavia, greatly frightened the authorities, who tried to limit their movement by means of various orders. See *Manualul Administrativ al Principatului Moldovei* (Iași: 1856), 404.

56 Auslander, 'The Gendering of Consumer Practices', 81.

rose and Iorgu attained important administrative positions, part of that capital was used to sustain their new social acquisitions. Elena invested in the fitting out of their residence in Fălticeni to match their new status, attending to furniture and interior decoration, clothes, and objects necessary for sociability.<sup>57</sup> The residence could accommodate the Hartulari couple with their children, numerous servants, guests, and sometimes occasional visitors.

Fălticeni was a small town on the road from Iași to Suceava. From a social point of view, the town was headed by a local second-rank boyar class, engaged in competition for offices in the local administration and holding properties in the surrounding villages.<sup>58</sup> The economic life of the town was maintained by a fairly large number of merchants, many of them Jews from neighbouring Bukovina and Galicia, who conducted trade with Vienna, Leipzig, and Istanbul.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, the town was known for the great fair organized on the day of the Holy Prophet Elijah (*Sfântul Ilie*), which brought together all Moldavia. Its fame had spread far and wide, and drew all sorts of people to the town every summer. Situated as it was near the border between Moldavia and Austrian Bukovina, Fălticeni was a place of migration both for Jewish merchants and for German craftsmen who had set up their workshops on the Moldavian side of the border. In accordance with the provisions of the Organic Regulation, a town council (*eforie*) was set up in 1832. It was charged with making the town more beautiful and salubrious. All the same, Fălticeni was 'modernized' with great difficulty, and only began to lose its rural appearance—with houses and shops crowded together and unsurfaced lanes, full of mud in the winter and dust in the summer—towards the end of the nineteenth century. As for health and hygiene, it was 1842 before the town had its first doctor, in the person of Ignatz Diaconovici. As we shall see from Elena Hartulari's memoirs, however, the medical profession was rapidly acquiring an important status in society, and he was soon joined by others. The following year, there were eleven doctors in Fălticeni, many of them Habsburg Jews and Germans.<sup>60</sup> The intellectual

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57 New studies regarding the relation between material culture and gender identities highlight the roles and influence of women in the construction of sociability and of social networks. See Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven, CT – London: 2009); Amanda Vickery, *The Gentlemen's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven, CT – London: 1998).

58 The *Catagrafia* of 1851 lists twenty-five boyars with property and sixty boyars without property in Suceava county, to which Fălticeni belonged (Gorovei, *Folticeni*, 125–126).

59 In 1851, there were 230 Jewish families living in the town (Gorovei, *Folticeni*, 125).

60 Gorovei, *Folticeni*, 171.



life of the town remained weak, however, and centred on the activities of the four private schools.<sup>61</sup>

In a small town of this sort, where everybody knew everybody else, there was fierce competition for social status. The model to follow was, of course, the Moldavian capital, Iași. Being stuck in the past and failing to adapt to the latest currents in fashion earned censure on the part of the community, in the form of the social exclusion of members who were considered behind the times and too set in their ways. And members of the elite needed one another, especially in a community where there were offspring to be married.

Provincial society was relatively slow to change. In the first half of the nineteenth century it took significant steps in the direction of adopting a 'European model'. However, the process was prolonged and foreign observers detected a mixture of old and new, European manners and oriental furnishings, adoption of the French language combined with ignorance of individual freedom and the continued owning of Gypsy slaves.<sup>62</sup> Gustav Adolf Ramsay, an officer in the Russian army, visited Iași in 1829 and expressed surprise at the 'mosaic' of costumes and languages: 'One hears the French language and sees French clothes, but equally [...] one sees Orientals smoking tobacco reclining on sofas, and ragged Gypsies busy about the house.'<sup>63</sup> And if this is how things looked in the capital of Moldavia, they were even 'worse' in provincial towns, where a few families of local boyars controlled the whole political game, holding positions in the administrative apparatus and using their influence to modify any measure coming from the central authorities

The consumption that developed around sociability helps us to understand the relations that individuals developed with goods and the space in which they were to be found, and to observe practices and behaviours adopted in order to highlight membership of a social group, to mark a social identity. Elena Hartulari's home must have been similar to other provincial boyar residences.<sup>64</sup> For the purposes of this paper, let us consider only the spaces dedicated to sociability: the salon, dining room, and cabinet. The salon was the principal room in a boyar residence, and had multiple functions, connected especially with sociability. The word *salon* itself entered the language

61 In 1839, 54 pupils attended these four schools (Gorovei, *Folticeni*, 218).

62 Bogdan Mateescu, *Familia în timpul robiei. O perspectivă demografică. Studii și liste de populație din arhive* (Iași: 2015); Bogdan Mateescu, *Căsătoria robilor între alegerea cuplului și voiața stăpânului. Studiu și documente din arhivă despre căsătoria robilor în Țara românească după 1830* (Brașov: 2014).

63 *Călători străini*, II, 389.

64 In this connection, see Dan Dumitru Iacob, *Elitele din Principatele Române în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea. Sociabilitate și divertisment* (Iași: 2015), 41–104.

as architecture adapted to the new forms of sociability: hitherto it had simply been called the 'big room' (*odaia mare*).<sup>65</sup> This big room could at any time be adapted, re-arranged to meet the requirements of a social event. It was in the salon that friends, acquaintances, and neighbours met to savour coffee and fruit preserves, to draw on pipes or narghiles, and to play cards or other society games. Social events were organized all through the year: visits and receiving hours, celebrations of religious festivals with family and friends, or events to mark special occasions. Among these were balls and consecration ceremonies of newly founded churches. The furniture of the salon would have been a mix between the new 'European' tendencies and oriental fashion. Richard Kunisch found the use of the word *salon* pretentious, and described the room dedicated to sociability by the boyars he visited in 1857 as follows:

This expression is somewhat pretentious for a room whose flooring was of bricks and whose walls, like the shapeless stove, were whitewashed. An icon representing the Mother of God or Saint Nicholas constituted the only ornament in the homes of the richest and most noble persons. Around the walls, benches without upholstery were fixed, covered with coarse fabric. A large sofa, referred to as a bed, so high that to sit on it you had to climb two steps, occupied half of the room. A table in the corner, covered like the benches with coarse fabric, completed the furniture.<sup>66</sup>

If at first the salon was lined with sofas covered with coloured rugs, woven in the house or brought from Edirne or Constantinople, later we may presume that Elena progressed to the new trend and brought 'European' furniture from Iași or Czernowitz, consisting of armchairs, stools, and special tables for card games, while the walls were hung with tapestries and decorated with mirrors.<sup>67</sup>

Indeed, the shift from oriental to 'French' costume necessitated some adaptation of interior arrangements. Commenting ironically on this unsynchronized transition, Costache Negruzzi writes the following in a satirical piece in the newspaper *Albina Românească* (The Romanian bee):

You have beds and straw mattresses in your salon and you consider that you will entice me to come and see you? But how shall I sit down on them without tearing all the laces and buttons that fasten me? Without the under-straps of my

65 The term used by Alecu Russo, *Scrieri alese* (Bucharest: 1970), 60. See also Iacob, *Elitele*, 62.

66 Richard Kunisch, *București și Stambul. Schițe din Ungaria, România și Turcia* (Bucharest: 2014), 108.

67 This was the furniture in the *agă* Scarlat Donici's salon on his estate in Vaslui county. See Corina Cimpoeșu, *Artă, modă, cultură europeană în Moldova, între 1830 și 1860. Elemente ale procesului de modernizare culturală* (Iași: 2013), 170–171.

trousers bursting? How can I put my noble *bonjour* jacket, so masterfully tailored by Orgie, with your bed made by an Armenian mattress-maker?<sup>68</sup>

Elena Hartulari's salon would have been fitted out with pieces of furniture necessary for sociability: coffee table, chaises longues, couch (indispensable for social chat), and reading table. It was here that she spent many moments in the company of her friends, her confessor—Archimandrite Neonic of Neamț Monastery—, her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, drinking coffee, playing cards, and talking about this and that. It was here too that Iorgu Hartulari organized numerous card-playing sessions, bringing together his friends, neighbours, and other acquaintances.

This is perhaps the place to introduce the term 'semi-luxury' (*demi-luxe*) proposed by Jean-Claude Daumas to mark the transition from aristocratic luxury to the luxury of comfort. Semi-luxury products began to appear and to impose their presence in the 1840s, with the development of 'artistic industries incorporating bronzes, goldwork, clockmaking, and furniture.'<sup>69</sup> Due to ever rising demands and the growth of a middle class interested in comfort, a market in semi-luxury goods developed as a separate field, actively promoting itself by means of a press specially conceived to sustain and educate tastes in the interests of consumption.<sup>70</sup>

The Hartulari residence must have been furnished with semi-luxury items: pieces of furniture that could easily be moved aside when big events such as balls were organized. The Hartulari family ranked among the wealthy boyar families who organized social events that brought the community together, because their social definition depended on the recognition of others. As Oliver Schmitt has noted, social rituals have a huge potential in marking the belonging of a member to a given community.<sup>71</sup> As I have already shown, Iorgu Hartulari had become an important member of the Fălticeni community, where he exercised his authority, displayed his wealth, and maintained his reputation. Social practices bind a community together and offer its members the necessary instruments with which to affirm their social identity. The first grand social event recorded by Elena Hartulari was the consecration of a

68 Carlu Nervil [Costache Negruzzi], 'Magaziile Iașilor. Veacul merge sporind', *Albina Românească*, n. 10, 3 February 1846, 39.

69 Jean-Claude Daumas, *La révolution matérielle. Une histoire de la consommation, France XIX<sup>e</sup>-XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 2018), 27.

70 Daumas, *La révolution matérielle*, 32.

71 Oliver Schmitt, 'Addressing Community in Late Medieval Dalmatia', in Eirik Hovden, Christina Lutter, Walter Pohl (eds.), *Meanings of Community across Medieval Eurasia. Comparative Approaches* (Leiden: 2016), 126.

church. On their estate at Huși, the Hartulari family had erected from its foundations a church that was to become a sort of funerary chapel for the family. The good work of founding places of worship was a very common one among Moldavian and Wallachian boyars. It enhanced their social prestige in the eyes of the community, and at the same time formed part of an unwritten pact with the Divinity in preparation for the Last Judgement. The festivities dedicated to the event lasted three days and brought together 'all the foreigners and boyars of Fălticeni,'<sup>72</sup> Archimandrite Neonic, three priests, and two deacons. The presence of a large number of guests implies a very large consumption of both material and human resources. In the first place, Elena Hartulari had to prepare the house for some thirty guests. Some of them came accompanied by servants, arriving in carriages or droshkies, with coachmen in the driving seat. Food for people and animals was procured, to a large extent, from the Hartulari family estates. Elena describes herself as being talented at making fruit conserves, pickles, smoked meats, vodkas, sherbets, and rose water—in short, 'how to keep and to manage the house.'<sup>73</sup> Servants were brought in from the other Hartulari estates and the Gypsy slaves were dressed in livery in order to help out.

As hostess, Elena attended to the guests, but her authority was much diminished. Her husband participated in this event of great importance, both from a social and a religious point of view, which he himself had initiated, accompanied by his mistress: 'My husband and his mistress (*metresă*) took charge of everything, coming only occasionally to me to order whatever was required, restricting me to merely staying with the guests.' Elena Hartulari expresses with pain the offence, and above all the dishonour of such a situation: 'How improperly he treated me with his mistress in front of all those gathered, who all stayed for three days.' The word that best sums up the social status claimed by Elena Hartulari is *respectability*. She presents herself to others as a respectable, worthy woman, who deserves the pity of others without diminishing in any way the dignity and respect she demands. She attends to the guests, converses with them and maintains sociability; she takes care that there is food, coffee, and drink for everyone; she expresses piety, in view of the religious event that is being celebrated.

Things were very different when Iorgu Hartulari, having reached the apogee of his career, decided to organize a ball, bringing together local boyars, business associates, relatives, and friends. The fashion for such *loisirs* came with the Russian army and took hold rapidly, so that in almost every small market

72 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 18v–19v.

73 Jon Stobart, Mark Rothery (eds.), *Consumption and the Country House* (Oxford: 2016).

town dance parties were organized periodically for the local elite and foreigners (teachers, doctors, officers, prosperous merchants, etc.).

For this ball, Elena Hartulari was preoccupied with toilette (*toaletă*) and socialization through dance. 'I make myself a toilette more splendid than ever, appearing before everyone happy and contented,' she writes in her journal.<sup>74</sup> Elegant and expensive dresses, precious and pretentious jewellery, strong and fine *bottines* could be bought from shops in the city, and by 1840 the newspapers of the day were already advertising them. For example, Madame Neli Lenfant, probably a Frenchwoman, advertised the goods in her shop by means of the paper *Vestitorul Românesc* (The Romanian Herald). In 1845, her shop on Podul Calîtei in Bucharest offered ballgowns, cloaks, scarves, fancy shawls, fine linen and handkerchiefs, lace and feathers; all 'beautiful' and capable of satisfying the taste of the most demanding ladies. And should any of her clients not be satisfied with what they found in the shop, Madame Neli 'undertakes that in within twenty-four hours she can have ready a suit of clothes of the most elegant.'<sup>75</sup>

Men too could buy suitable clothes after reading advertisements in the gazettes. Monsieur K.M. Frank, Tailor of Vienna, for example, with a shop in Curtea Veche, Bucharest, promised 'the most elegant and inexpensive novelties in matters of men's clothing, brought from Paris itself: jackets, tailed coats, Codrington coats, trousers and waistcoats of various materials.' Should one be attending a fancy-dress ball, Mr Varembergh's shop on Podul Mogoşoaiei, Bucharest, stocked special items for such an occasion: 'silk domino cloaks in all colours, national costumes, characteristic and fancy', together with a variety of masks; in addition he offered in twelve hours to make any costume at a 'decent' price.<sup>76</sup>

The great attraction of such balls was the dances. Moldavia kept up-to-date with balls in Europe, not only learning the dance steps, but adopting the specified music for them. About this particular ball, Elena Hartulari writes: 'The polonaise began with me according to custom. Then the quadrille began, again with me; third I began to waltz with a couple of cavaliers.'<sup>77</sup> The exhibition of the richly adorned body, the exhibition of one's qualities as a dancer, the display of the most expensive ballroom decorations, the preparation of the tastiest dishes—these constituted the core of such a dancing event. Full attention

74 SJAN, Iaşi, Colecţia Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 26r.

75 *Vestitorul Românesc*, Tuesday, January 9, no. 3, 1845.

76 *Vestitorul Românesc*, Saturday, April 28, no. 33, 1845.

77 SJAN, Iaşi, Colecţia Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 25v–26r.

had to be given to the slightest detail, lest the next day the community sanction with gossip any deviation from what a 'successful' ball should be.

Social events were used by Elena to draw attention to the disagreeable situation in which she found herself: respectability was the order of the day for the urban elite. Family and honour were closely bound together, and unwritten social norms weighed heavily in the acceptance and validation of one's belonging to the community. Immediately after the events, friends and relations sanctioned Iorgu's behaviour and explicitly demanded that he control his conduct in public.<sup>78</sup>

### Consumption and Knowledge

Maxine Berg has argued that 'new wealth had to be educated, and the choice, display, and use of the variety of goods had to be cultivated.'<sup>79</sup> This hypothesis is borne out by the experiences of the Hartulari family, who educated their tastes to the extent that their wealth permitted the accumulation of various goods, objects, and services. A luxury item bought or received as a present is not just a mere product; it generates emotion, stimulates thought, and offers pleasure.<sup>80</sup> For example, Elena Hartulari receives from her husband a 'brooch with brilliants' after his successful conclusion of a timber deal in Constantinople in 1836. Twenty-three years later, the brooch with brilliants prompts the widow Hartulari to recall with affection her late husband's journey. Through Elena's eyes, we discover her fascination with the Orient in general and Istanbul in particular. As she writes her memoirs in 1856, she still has a vivid memory of Iorgu Hartulari's reception by Mehmet Pasha, the head of the Ottoman naval department, known as 'pasha of the Tersane [arsenal]'. Shortly before his interview, Iorgu sent 'two large mirrors to put on the wall and a large clock with music to put on the table' as gifts to the pasha. There followed the usual reception ritual that was accorded to any princely envoy,<sup>81</sup> but which took on great significance in the imagination of Elena, eager to set down on paper the

78 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 2vr. See also Anne Martin-Fugier, *La Bourgeoise* (Paris: 1983); Adeline Daumard, *Les bourgeois et la bourgeoisie en France depuis 1815* (Paris: 1991).

79 Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: 2007), 41.

80 Maxine Berg, 'In pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 182 (2004), 96.

81 Iorgu Hartulari had letters of recommendation from prince Mihail Sturdza to the bey of Samos, Stephanos Vogorides, who was Sturdza's father-in-law, and to the patriarch of Constantinople.

triumphs of her 'braggard' husband. 'Braggard' (*fanfaron*) is her characterization of Iorgu, who, once he had grown rich, was eager to boast of his wealth, making a show of his money and influence—but to return to our story:

After my husband went in to the pasha, he made an obeisance, went into the middle of the room, made another obeisance, the pasha being on the bed, sitting Greek-style, holding a jasmine chibouk a fathom long, with a mouthpiece on the chibouk of the best amber and full of brilliants and a bowl the size of a *filcan*, which cost some 70 gold pieces. The pasha got up on his knees, my husband making an obeisance down to the ground, and he said to him: '*oturu boiar*', that is, 'sit down.' He sat down on a very luxurious armchair, beside the pasha. Immediately two dark-skinned Turks came up, one with a chibouk more expensive than the pasha's and the other with a *filcan* of coffee, but without the pasha speaking to him until the coffee was finished. My husband when he gave back the *filcan* put five *icosars* down on the silver tray. In came another chibouk, five *icosars* to him too. The Turks, both of them, made obeisances to him, thanking him for the tips he had given. After this ceremony the pasha began to speak in the Greek language, asking him first about the ruler of Moldavia, if he was healthy, and about the land, in what condition it was. They continued this conversation about half an hour, and then entered into the question of trade.<sup>82</sup>

Iorgu Hartulari ended his visit with the gesture of a parvenu grown rich overnight. Happy that he had sealed the timber deal, when he left the pasha's presence he threw *icosars*<sup>83</sup> to left and to right, thus offering a tip to the sentinels who guarded the palace.<sup>84</sup> The Turks encountered by Iorgu Hartulari in Istanbul were very different from the Turks of Elena's childhood, when they had invaded Iași and burned and looted the houses of the Christians: these Turks were friendly and impressed by the actions of the 'Moldavian merchant'.<sup>85</sup> Elena's thoughts follow his footsteps though 'the most important places' in Istanbul, through the markets where he bought many and varied things, presents for Prince Mihail Sturdza, for relatives, friends, and acquaintances. She writes that Iorgu made these visits 'for his memory'.<sup>86</sup> Through her husband's tales, Elena Hartulari sees the miraculous Orient, enjoys Hagia Sophia, Galata, and Pera, travels on the steamer, where she tastes champagne for the first time, throws *icosars* to left and to right, shares out presents, is thrilled by the bitter-sweet taste of oranges, feels the sea breeze as she walks proudly on the deck

82 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 12r–14v.

83 Turkish coins.

84 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 12r–14v.

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

of the returning ship.<sup>87</sup> A brooch with brilliants stimulates the imagination, awakening emotion, generating knowledge.

Elena Hartulari often went to Czernowitz, where she sent her daughter Maria to boarding school. Capital of the Habsburg province of Bukovina, Czernowitz was a reference point for the local Moldavian elite.<sup>88</sup> It was there that the local boyars and the urban elite sent their children to complete their education, and there that they went to shop, or for cures and medical treatment. If Elena had been raised to be a 'good housewife' and a 'faithful wife', the same cannot be said about her daughter. Maria Hartulari was sent to *pensionnats* from the age of ten. She spent the first two years in Iași, first at a private school run by 'Madame Colen', and then at another run by 'Madame Gore' (probably Gareth<sup>89</sup>). When she took ill, Elena brought her home for a while, and then moved her to Czernowitz, where she was enrolled in the *pensionnat* run by 'Madame Domenzil' (probably Dumézil).<sup>90</sup> Czernowitz was not a random choice: in addition to being an important educational centre, it was also a medical one. Maria learned French, German, and piano, and her health could be closely supervised by a doctor.<sup>91</sup> The German town offered Elena another sort of knowledge, more connected to the practicalities of life.<sup>92</sup> At Madame Dumézil's urging, Elena agreed to be consulted and tested by Doctor Zalheri (in fact her daughter's regular doctor), by three other doctors, and by a midwife. First the doctors prescribed her a diet:

I was consulted three days in a row and the result was for me to have baths in whey for three summers, and medicines in the winter, and a very great diet. First to be barred from sorrows, which could not be, second, not to eat bitter or salted food, wine, or oranges for these three years, which I followed. No coffee with

87 On the steamship journey, see Constantin Ardeleanu, 'From Vienna to Constantinopol on Board the Vessels of the Austrian Danube Steam-Navigation Company (1834–1842)', in *Historical Yearbook*, VI, 2009, 187–202.

88 On Czernowitz under Habsburg rule, see Kurt Scharr, 'Czernowitz-Cernăuți-Çernovcÿ (Tscherniwzi). Genese einer städtischen Kulturlandschaft in einem wechselnden politischen Ambiente', in Sergej W. Piwowarow (ed.), *Die Bukowina. Historische und ethnokulturelle Studien* (Tscherniwzi: 2007), 16–45.

89 At the time, the *pensionnat* founded and run by François and Isabelle Gareth in Iași was one of the best in Moldavia. See Iacob, 'Copii de boieri', 151.

90 I have not yet managed to identify any 'Madame Domenzil' or similar running a *pensionnat* in Czernowitz in the 1830s and 1840s.

91 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 33r.

92 On the relation between women, consumption, and travel, see Evguenia Davidova, 'Women Travellers as Consumers: Adoption of Modern Ideas and Practices in 19th-Century Southeast Europe', in Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu (ed.), *Women, Consumption and the Circulation of Ideas in South-Eastern Europe, 17th–19th Century* (Leiden: 2018), 200–227.



milk either, or black coffee, where I had a weakness for black coffee, every hour I would drink a cup, having a weakness for coffee, it came to me from sorrow.<sup>93</sup>

Then the doctors compiled a full-scale ‘medical report’, which they sent—via Elena—to her regular doctor in Fălticeni. At the time, to have a regular doctor was the habit of a very restricted elite. Doctors began to acquire importance only with the construction of the modern Romanian state. A large proportion of the doctors in Moldavia were foreign, and worked at the princely court or in the houses of great boyars and in the main cities. Doctors had to face not only the distrust of the population, however, but also the poor esteem in which their profession was held by the elite. Elena Hartulari’s journal transmits important information about medical practice: the cures, diets, and spa visits that were already fashionable in Europe and were now taking shape in Moldavia too. Experiences of this sort were then reported to friends and relations, encouraging them to join this medical consumption, to the detriment of traditional empirical practices.

With Maria, Elena launched her struggle for the education of her children. Her two sons, Nicolae and Matei, were also enrolled in private schools. Nicolae was sent to Lemberg (L’viv) and Matei to Potsdam.<sup>94</sup> Their German education should be seen in relation to the education that the family’s protector, Mihail Sturdza, offered his sons, whom he sent first of all to Luneville and Paris, and then to Berlin. When her patron sent his sons to Paris, Elena was quick to do the same. Through her French acquaintance Charles Malgouverné, who taught French at the Academy in Iași, she was able to send the two boys to study in Paris.<sup>95</sup> As Maria’s marriage broke down after two years, and to give some direction to the young woman’s unruly energies, her parents hastened to send her to Paris too, under the supervision of the same Charles Malgouverné and his wife.<sup>96</sup> This time, Maria went on a sort of educational trip, for the purpose of ‘making noble acquaintances’ and ‘travelling’. Her companion was ‘Madame Luba’, who had been the governess of Mihail Sturdza’s wife.<sup>97</sup>

It is very interesting to observe how the Hartulari family took the princely family as its model and tried to imitate it in everything. The interactions

93 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 33r.

94 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 33r. See also Andrei Pippidi, *Părinți și copii în Geneva lui Töpffer* in Nicoleta Roman (ed.), *Copilăria românească între familie și societate (secolele XVII–XX)* (Bucharest: 2015), 343–360.

95 Urechia, *Istoria românilor*, vol. 4, 417.

96 For the divorce of Maria Hartulari and Șerban Cănanău, see SJAN, Iași, Colecția Documente, 428/197.

97 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 33v.

between the two families were numerous, but never went beyond the relation between patron and client, master and servant. As a faithful and submissive client, Iorgu Hartulari took advantage of his master's trust in him to amass a considerable fortune. As for Elena, she was affectively bound to her spiritual patron, and ran to him every time she felt threatened or needed assistance. In a way, Iorgu Hartulari was a little 'master', dominating the local community and copying the behaviour of his patron. Of course Mihail Sturdza was clearly his superior when it came to education, but Iorgu strove to make up for this by investing in the education of his children. This is probably why he did not mix with the local boyar class where education was concerned. Elena writes that her husband had become very rich in a very short time.<sup>98</sup> With wealth came pride, boastfulness, and the desire to be recognized and appreciated as one of the foremost boyars of Moldavia. '[My sense of] honour is great' (*Filotimia îi mare*) was Iorgu's excuse when he refused a very good offer for the sale of an estate.<sup>99</sup> In other words, his honour and his ambition to be considered the foremost among the leading boyars in the community had to be reflected in any action. The same can be seen in the education of his children, in his display of luxury, in his behaviour. Of course this regard for honour was not his invention. The Hartulari family was imitating a model to which every thousand gold pieces it amassed brought it closer, a model that was present in society and that inspired many other families.

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Elena Hartulari's interactions with various objects, goods, and places determined her to imitate and to adapt ideas, manners, tastes, and behaviours that would contribute to the promotion of a new lifestyle, a new way of seeing traditional society. The widow Elena Hartulari is the quintessence of these accumulations of knowledge. After Iorgu's death in 1850, and the fall of her patron Mihail Sturdza in 1849, Elena found herself faced with fierce family conflicts. Her two sons, her daughter, and her son-in-law joined together in the attempt to break away as much as possible of the wealth and power delegated to their mother / mother-in-law by her late husband. Now, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the world had changed and the networks of power had taken new paths, which determined Elena to go to war against everyone: her children, the prince, the metropolitan. Writing petitions and demanding audiences with the new prince, Grigore Alexandru Ghica (1849–1853, 1853–1856) and the new

98 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 12r.

99 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 36r.

metropolitan, Sofronie Miclescu (1851–1856), she fought to keep her position as mistress of the patrimony.<sup>100</sup> However her struggle brought to the foreground adversaries that were unfamiliar to her: the new institutions of the modern state with their bureaucracies, new networks with their various interests, new people in important positions of power. Her revolt became open when the new circles of power ignored her petitions and complaints. For example, in 1851, when her son Nicolae wanted to get married without her agreement, Elena sought the help of the metropolitan, just as she had always done before, convinced that she still held sufficient power to be listened to and could stop the marriage being celebrated by the Church. But the metropolitan gave Nicolae his agreement, to the distress of Elena, who burst into the Metropolitan Palace and shouted out her discontent:

I go and enter at the metropolitan's [office], where there were also three archpriests, and I present myself that I am the *postelnic's* wife Elena Hartulari! I have come to thank you for the help you have given me for my orphan Nicu, that you have taken all rights to yourself and you have married him without my consent! Cursing him to his face, that for any wrongdoing of his he will have to give account to the all-powerful Judge!<sup>101</sup>

Elena Hartulari's journal offers a remarkable insight into the changes taking place in Moldavian society in the first half of the nineteenth century, giving a detailed analysis of everything from language to gender relations, from institutions to bureaucracy, from consumption to social status, from the perspective of a woman caught between tradition and modernity.

Reading Elena's memoirs, and then the numerous Hartulari family documents that have been preserved, covering a long period of time (1810–1880), the researcher is struck by the discrepancy between the calculated and avaricious Iorgu Hartulari and his sons, spendthrift and incapable of administering an estate. Unfortunately, we do not know what they studied in Paris, or whether they attended specific schools or simply polished their education with the help of private teachers and through participation in routine socializing. What is certain is that when their father died in 1850, Nicolae and Matei Hartulari did not have the necessary abilities to take over the immense property of the family. Matei remained in Paris for a time, in 1851–1852, but when he fell in love and threatened that he was going to marry a lady (*damă*) without fortune or position, Elena stopped his allowance and forced him to return home.<sup>102</sup> Caught

100 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 52v.

101 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 54v.

102 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 54v.

between the two worlds, the young Hartularis did not know how to put their French education to good use, but nor did they have the necessary levers for integration in Moldavian power networks. Although they married 'for love', following their mother's example, their marriages proved failures, both from the sentimental and the financial point of view.<sup>103</sup>

The discrepancies are also evident between Elena and her daughter Maria. Elena had been raised to be 'a good housewife and a faithful wife'. Her mother had repeated this obligation at every opportunity, and Elena would fulfil it conscientiously and down to the smallest detail. She had served her apprenticeship beside her mother, learning how to keep the house clean, how to prepare the larder for winter, how to impose her authority over the servants. In other words, Elena had followed a model that was current in the period. She had wanted something more for her daughter: French, German, piano, salon conversation. However it was a superficial education, and did not help Maria to spot the dangers of a society in which not only aristocrats but also various charlatans were trying their luck. Away from home from the age of ten and spending more time in the company of others than with her family, Maria quickly came to believe that she deserved more than a banal provincial life. Arriving in Paris aged eighteen, free and given to fanciful aspirations picked up from Romantic literature and instilled in her by her French governess,<sup>104</sup> she fell in love in 1849 with a Spanish Count Alba, who turned out to be nothing but an impostor. Maria Hartulari's youth was a continuous vaudeville, as she compromised her honour and squandered her dowry.<sup>105</sup> The model of the 'respectable bourgeoisie' that was in fashion in the 1850s did not inspire her.<sup>106</sup> Her second marriage, made in haste and against the wishes of her parents in 1850, brought a dowry-hunter into the family, the lawyer Dimitrie Cracti.<sup>107</sup> Sought as a husband and sensing the weaknesses of the Hartulari family, Cracti took full advantage of the disagreements between mother and children, and managed step by step to transfer the profits of the estates and of the dowry to himself. When he had taken over all that he could from his mother-in-law, his wife, and brothers-in law, he played the divorce card very successfully. In the

103 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 54r–57r.

104 Maria continued her education at home, assisted, for a time, by a governess of French origin. SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 30v. For female education and governesses, see Nicoleta Roman, 'Foreign Governesses in Wallachia in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Aspasia*, 14 (2020), 37–56.

105 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 34r–v, 38v–40v.

106 Ionela Băluță, *La Bourgeoise respectable. Réflexion sur la construction d'une nouvelle identité féminine dans la seconde moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle roumain* (Bruxelles: 2010).

107 SJAN, Iași, Colecția Gh. Ghibănescu, MS 164, f. 41v.

1860s, we find Maria Hartulari writing petitions and letters in French seeking help against Dimitrie Cracti.<sup>108</sup>

The spectacular rise and resounding fall of the Hartulari family are part of Moldavian society's age of transition. 'Greek crossed with Moldavian,' as Constantin Sion described him, Dimitrie Cracti was the prototype of the new man who adapted quickly to the demands of the modern state.<sup>109</sup> He put little weight on obtaining titles, but carved out his path by making use of his knowledge, serving the modern state and serving himself.<sup>110</sup> A bureaucratic functionary, Cracti stepped easily into the new modern state, in which Moldavia and Wallachia were now joined as the United Principalities. He was the embodiment of the 'middle class,' ready to carve out a place for himself and to make his way on the political stage.

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108 SJAN, Iași, *Colecția Documente*, 434/254.

109 Sion, *Arhondologia Moldovei*, 160.

110 In 1853, Dimitrie was accorded the rank of 'spătar' as payment 'for services'. Vezi Ungureanu, *Marea Arhondologie*, 67.