

# An Alien Practice “Town Architects” in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Romania

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19<sup>th</sup> century architecture in the Romanian Principalities is a subject insufficiently known; information, ideas and analyses have been often focused on narrow topics and have not been assembled yet in general syntheses which would shed light upon the period between the end of the Phanariot rule (1821) and the reign of Charles I.<sup>1</sup> This period is associated with the transition from an extended Middle Ages to a wavering modernity built on the hasty shift of fashions and desires, echoing in the areas of politics, society, culture and behaviours, against a backdrop of a contrasting and disharmonious setting. In architecture, the experiments based on elements adopted from the West, blended in achievements which also took heed of local traditions, started as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> century, occasionally in Wallachia and much more frequently in Moldavia. Anonymous local or foreign artisans engrafted their personal experiences in the more or less ambitious or extravagant orders of a small elite. The development of settlements had a long tradition, based on intuitive principles and the “local custom”,<sup>2</sup> accomplished “...on the spot, by exchanging looks and good words”.<sup>3</sup> The first attempts of legal acts to regulate the development and administration of towns had been made as early as the Phanariot rule, in the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; the most significant legal initiative in this line was the one issued by Mihail Fotino between 1775-1777 in Wallachia during the reign of Alexandru Ipsilanti. The regulation included general provisions, based both on the old traditions of Byzantine law and on local customs, and its content was mostly designed for Bucharest.<sup>4</sup> It is against this background that the first few names of foreign architects are documented in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; these architects were given commissions and paid from state treasury to carry out projects outside monastic premises - mostly fortified - or princely and noblemen’s residences.

In the absence of any local specialised education, professionals from Central Europe and later on from Western Europe (either with formal education or self-taught) continued to be involved in the urban and architectural modernisation of the Principalities. A first institutional structure, in which the architectural practice gained its own place, was created against the modernisation background brought about by the Organic Regulations<sup>5</sup> – the first stage of the endeavour for the legislative unification of the Principalities – and its related legislation. The contributions of many foreign practitioners were decisive in orienting the Principalities’ architecture towards Western models and

1 Charles I of Romania (Karl Eitel Friedrich Zephyrinus Ludwig von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, 1839-1914), ruler (Prince) in 1866-1881 and King of Romania between 1881 and 1914.

2 D. Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român*, (Bucharest, (1907) 1996), 307.

3 Cincinat Sfințescu, *Urbanistica generală*, vol. I, *Evoluția*, (Bucharest, 1932), 186.

4 Nicolae Lascu, *Legislație și dezvoltare urbană. București 1831-1952*, (PhD diss., Bucharest: I.A.I.M., 1997), 26-27.

5 The Organic Regulations (“Regulamentele Organice”), adopted in Wallachia in 1831 and in Moldavia in 1832, were established as legal acts of a constitutional nature. The laws were drafted under the supervision and with the direct involvement of Russia, being afterwards countersigned by the Ottoman Porte. In addition to introducing some fundamental principles (such as the separation of powers in the state), the Organic Regulations included a large number of provisions on administration, state institutions, economy, infrastructure, army etc., their content being afterwards completed by further adopted laws.

developments; their achievements illustrated, to a smaller or larger extent, what was considered as novelty in the artistic world they came from and where they had been educated. The early 19<sup>th</sup> century until the fourth decade and even beyond was the period of “technicians,” when the architect was often mistaken for a civil or military engineer. The clear differentiation between the two professions, materialised in guild organisations, which however did not specifically regulate the right and conditions for free practice, started to take shape only towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The activity of “state architects” and “town architects” in the period following the implementation of the Organic Regulations in the two Principalities is a subject still insufficiently studied. This paper attempts to outline an overall picture based on the research of a small share of the rich documentary materials in archives and of secondary bibliographic sources; however the subject remains of course open to further detailing and refining.

### Legislation and Central Administration: Public Works in Wallachia and Moldavia

Despite the inherent difficulties associated with the beginnings of officially establishing architecture as practice, the first forms of a controlled organisation of construction activities were materialised after the adoption of the Organic Regulations. There was a slow progress during the first decade of the Organic Regulations period, with only one engineering section (“massa”) existing in Wallachia between 1833 and 1840, subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs,<sup>6</sup> employing one engineer and one architect. Similarly in Moldavia the Public Works and Water Supply Service was established as part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In Bucharest the first to take the position of “state engineer” (employee of the ministry) was Vladimir Blaremburg,<sup>7</sup> followed by Rudolf von Borroczy,<sup>8</sup> while the position of architect was held in turns by Achille August Theodor Thillaye, followed since 1843 by Johann Schlatter<sup>9</sup> (transferred in 1845 to the Department of Religion in the position of “monastery architect”)<sup>10</sup> and then by the Armenian architect Iacob Melik,<sup>11</sup> a former student of Henri Labrousse’s at the *École des Beaux-Arts*.<sup>12</sup>

6 *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei*, vol. I, ed. Paul Negulescu and George Alexianu (Bucharest: Întreprinderile “Eminescu” S.A., 1944), 69-70 and 267-68. The institution was established by the Organic Regulations, with the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of both legal texts (Wallachian and Moldavian) specifying in detail “the responsibilities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs”.

7 Vladimir Blaremburg (1811-1846), of Flemish - Belgian origin, arrived in Wallachia as a Russian army officer in 1828. In addition to his position of state engineer (1832-1846), in 1841 Blaremburg also received the title of Minister of Religion (“Logofăt al Crediinței”) and Head of Prisons (“Vornic al Temnițelor”). The appreciation of his qualities of good administrator and competent amateur in architecture is proved by the large number of tasks and projects he was commissioned by the court and the government.

8 Rudolf von Borroczy was an officer in the Prussian army. After a period spent in Greece serving the state, he came to Wallachia and was employed as “captain and engineer in the Wallachian police”. Borroczy is mainly known for performing the detailed topographic plans of Bucharest (1844-46 and 1852).

9 The Swiss architect Johann Schlatter (1808-1865) was trained in the teams of well-established German architects, his most important collaboration being with the Bavarian court architect Friedrich von Gärtner. Schlatter arrived in Wallachia at the beginning of Prince Bibescu’s reign. Author of a large number of projects, involved in state services at an early stage, Schlatter is mostly known for his interventions upon some of the most important Wallachian medieval architecture works (see Horia Moldovan, *Johann Schlatter: cultură occidentală și arhitectură românească (1831-1866)* (Bucharest: Simetria, 2013)).

10 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.C.I.P. Collection, file 12/1844, 12.

11 *Buletin. Gazetă administrativă*, XIV (Bucharest, 1845), 70. After his return from the French exile, Melik resumed his position of architect at the Ministry of Interior, Agriculture and Public Works (N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.L.P. Collection, file 36/1865, 60).

12 David de Penanrum, Roux et Delaere, *Les Architectes élèves de l’École des Beaux-Arts. 1793-1907* (Paris: Librairies de la Construction Moderne, 1907), 345 and Marie-Laure Crosnier Leconte, “L’enseignement de l’architecture en France et les élèves étrangers: le cas roumain”, *Revue Roumaine de l’histoire de l’art*, XXXVI-XXXVII (1999-2000), 87.

During the enforcement of the Organic Regulations in Moldavia, besides the foreign architects (Moritz Hartl or Ștefan Bersak<sup>13</sup>), the first local professionals trained in Western schools and benefiting from state scholarships, were employed as “state architects”. Alexandru Costinescu, a former student in Vienna where he had graduated engineering, land surveying and architecture courses with the highest grade,<sup>14</sup> was appointed “state architect” (the first architect of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) in 1838 and held this position until after 1850. His career continued after the Unification of the Principalities in 1859,<sup>15</sup> being involved in the public service in Bucharest.



Fig. 1. Iacob Melik, architect in the Engineering Department within the Ministry of Internal Affairs: Main elevation for the county administration office buildings; standard project designed in 1845

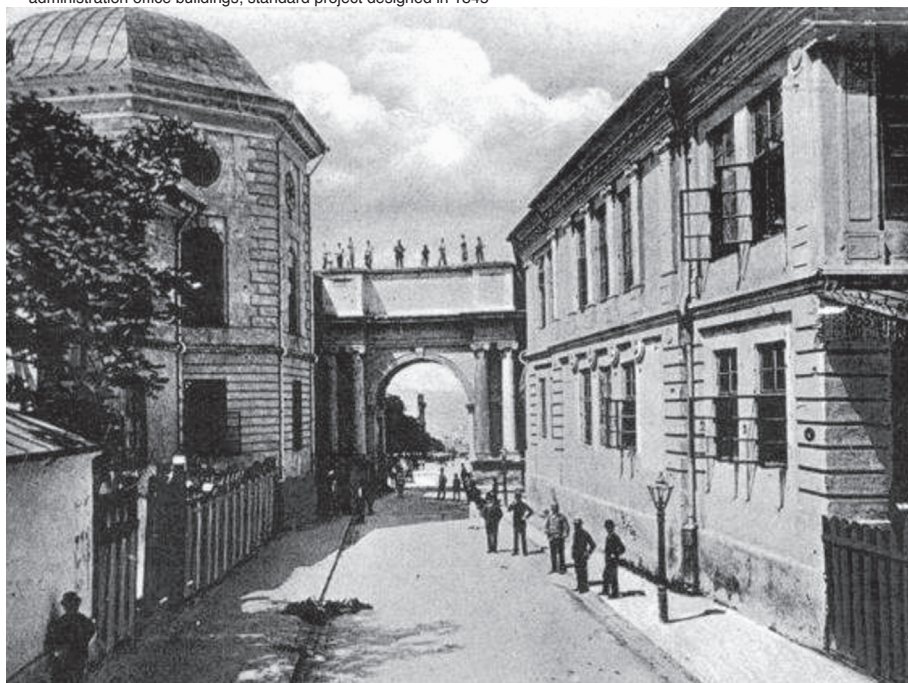


Fig. 2. Alexandru Costinescu, “state architect” of Moldavia - the Triumphal Arch connecting the buildings of the Mihăilean Academy in Iași (demolished at the end of the 19th century). The building had been erected between 1841-1845 but the sculpted decoration in the approved project was not completed. The high construction costs were criticised by his contemporaries, who suspected Costinescu of committing embezzlement in order to build his own residence in the Copou neighbourhood

<sup>13</sup> N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.L.P. Collection – Moldova, file 396 / 1849 (n.v.), 90 v.

<sup>14</sup> V. A. Urechia, *Istoria culturii naționale, Istoria Școalelor de la 1800-1864*, tom II, (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1892), 52-53. Constantin Sion wrote briefly and ironically about Alexandru Costinescu in *Arhondologia Moldovei* (Iași: Tipografia Buciumul Român, 1892), 167-68.

<sup>15</sup> The unification of Moldavia and Wallachia on 24 January 1859, by the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza in Iași and Bucharest, was the fundamental event contributing to the establishment of the future national state. The unification was only recognised in 1861 by the Ottoman Empire (as suzerain power) and a unique government and parliament were established in Bucharest only in 1862.



Fig. 3. Alexandru Costinescu – View of “St. Demetrius” hospital in Târgu Neamț in 1882 (still existing), designed in collaboration with architect Ioan (Johann?) Fux in 1852 “...in a beautiful modern Byzantine style” (*Gazeta de Moldova*, XXV (1853), 2), actually a *Rundbogenstil* interpretation of various medieval and classical elements

Since 1840, given the more detailed legislation, the Technical Department was reorganised, being split in two sections: an engineering section (to cover roads, highways, bridges etc.) and an architectural section (with responsibilities for public buildings, prisons, schools, military barracks, repair works on monasteries - the latter being transferred beginning with 1844 under the responsibility of the Office of Faith within the Ministry of Cults and Public Education etc.). In 1847, following the adoption of a new act, the structure of the Technical Department in Wallachia was altered again and the Department (Direction) for Public Works was established; it consisted of four sections: engineering, roads and bridges, architecture and hydraulic works.<sup>16</sup> The activity of the department sections focused on public commissions and the directors of the four sections formed the Committee of the Public Works Administration. This body was in charge of coordinating and approving projects and construction sites. The activity was interrupted by the political events of 1848 and was resumed during the reign of Barbu Știrbei who, in 1852, appointed the French engineer Louis Chrétien Leon Lallane as director of the Department for Public Works. The Austrian architect Anton Hefft, invited in Wallachia by prince Bibesco in 1846, was appointed director of the Architectural Section in 1849, thus becoming a “state architect” subordinated to the French engineer. Hefft stayed in Wallachia until 1853, being trusted with many responsibilities in the field of public buildings, the most important one being the project for the National Theatre (“The Great Theatre”) in Bucharest.<sup>17</sup> Following the unification of the Principalities, the “state architect” position is assimilated to that of director of the Architecture Division within the Ministry of Public Works; in 1860 the ruling prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza

<sup>16</sup> Georges Bibesco, *Roumanie 1843-1859. Règne de Bibesco*, tome II (Paris, 1894), 218-21.

<sup>17</sup> Anton Hefft (1815-1900), in his capacity of chief of the architectural section, was in charge with rebuilding the monument at the foot of the Metropolitan Church hill in Bucharest (initially dedicated to Russian soldiers), collaborated with architect Karl Hartl (who later on became the architect of the town of Ploiești) for the civil hospital project in Brăila, which however was not completed, inspected the construction sites of Johann Schlatter and Karl Benisch for the reconstruction of Tismana, Bistrița, Arnota monasteries, etc. In 1852, upon the request of the Ruling Prince Barbu Știrbei, he undertook the project for the interior design of the princely summer residence at Cotroceni monastery.



appoints Alexandru Orăscu,<sup>18</sup> the most remarkable figure of Romanian architects of the 19th century,<sup>19</sup> in this position.

A Department of Public Works similar to the one in Wallachia was established in Iași after 1848, to replace the Administration of Public Works and Water Supply within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The statute of the department included the supervision of the "... construction of buildings intended for public use", the preparation of instructions "... regarding the responsibilities of architects and contractors of construction works" (art. 19), as well as "acquiring (...) instruments and books on engineering and architecture for the training of such specialists" (art. 20). The technical staff of the Principality was to be subordinated to the Department, the permanent employees of which consisted of "a head engineer for bridges and roads and a head architect, plus sub-architects and sub-engineers" (art. 5).<sup>20</sup> Similarly to Wallachia, the most important technicians in the Moldavian public service were mainly foreigners. The state engineers Alexander von Braun<sup>21</sup> and Joseph Raschek from the Austrian Empire, the Russian Nicolai Singurov<sup>22</sup> (appointed chief of the Department for Public Works after the reorganisation in 1854<sup>23</sup>) or the French Celestin Peytavin,<sup>24</sup> coordinated public works until the unification of 1859.

The legislation covering the organisation of institutions in charge with public works and the activity of specialised public servants enters a new stage after the 1859 unification, during the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866). The reorganisation of the Ministry of Public Works was approved by the Decree no. 627 of 10 August 1862;<sup>25</sup> it existed under this name in Moldavia and as the Ministry of Supervision in Wallachia.<sup>26</sup> In 1864, given the scarce financial resources, the Ministry of the Interior merged with the Ministry of Public Works, which in the meantime had also been assigned the coordination of agriculture administration. The Ministry of the Interior, Agriculture and Public Works was thus created, which operated as such until 1883 when the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, Trade and Public Domains was established,<sup>27</sup> and the internal affairs and public works became a separate field altogether.

In the "Regulations for Organisation of the Civil Engineering Corps" of 1862, the purposes of public works were defined as follows: "... building and maintaining communication roads, opening and improving navigation and rafting on rivers and channels, flood prevention measures, regularisation and cleaning of non-navigable waters, regularisation of towns and providing their

18 Ion Ionașcu, "Condițiile edificării Palatului 'Academiei' (Universității) din București în anii 1857-1864", *B.M.I.M.* III, (1965), 113, note 6.

19 Alexandru Orăscu (1817-1894) studied engineering and arts in Berlin with a scholarship from the state. Upon his return to Wallachia he was appointed architect of the town of Bucharest (in 1848) and was also engaged in teaching activities. The most important works of Orăscu include the University of Bucharest, Hotel Bulevard etc. Former Rector of the University of Bucharest, Orăscu had an important contribution to the establishment of the Society of Romanian Architects (1891) whose first president he was.

20 *Buletin. Foae ofițială*, (Iași, year XVII, no. 76 of 26 September 1849), n.p.

21 Sion, *Arhondologia*, 41. Alexander von Braun, of German origin, had settled with his family in Roman during the reign of Scarlat Callimachi (1806, 1807-1810, 1812-1819) and was awarded a nobility title during the reign of Mihai Sturdza (1834-1849).

22 Gheorghe Bezviconi, *Contribuții la istoria relațiilor româno-ruse* (Bucharest: ed. Academiei R.P.R., Institutul de Studii Româno-Sovietic, 1962), 218. Nicolae Singurov (1805-1888) studied in Sankt Petersburg and settled in Moldavia in 1828. In the first part of his career he was chief of the military engineering section, being in charge with the reorganisation of the Moldavian army. He was also responsible for starting the construction of roads in Moldavia at the beginning of the Organic Regulation period.

23 *Gazeta de Moldova* (Iași, 1854), 109.

24 Vasile Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive asupra activității arhitecților și asupra arhitecturii din Moldova și Muntenia între anii 1840-1860*, mss., C.S.C.A.S., 1954, n.p.

25 *Monitorul. Jurnal Ofițial al Principatelor Unite* (23 august 1862), 196.

26 Grigore Chiriță, *Organizarea instituțiilor modern ale Statului Român (1856-1866)* (Bucharest: ed. Academiei Române, 1999), 77.

27 C. Hamangiu, *Codul general al României*, vol. II, *Legi uzuale 1860-1900* (Bucharest: ed. Librăriei Leon Alcalay, 1903), 2024-29.

water supply.”<sup>28</sup> Public works, including those with a special character, funded from other sources than the central budget but supervised by specialists (engineers) in the ministry, were outsourced, being subject to a “detached service”.

At the beginning of the reign of Charles I the state bureaucracy became more complex. According to the legal acts adopted at the beginning of the 1890s, a special architecture service was to be established within the Ministry of the Interior, with few staff members, whose responsibilities would include “... preparing plans, bills of quantities, terms of reference for all construction works associated with the Ministry of the Interior; supervising such works; the intermediate and final inspection and acceptance of such works upon completion; mandates from the ministry to supervise, control, assist the inspection of construction works associated with counties and communes; preparing standard plans for building hospitals, prisons or other institutions associated with the Ministry of the Interior or laid under its control.”<sup>29</sup> The architect-in-chief of this department (“head of service”) had to be an architecture school graduate, while at the same time maintaining his right to freelance practice. The rest of the staff within the service (the assistant architect and the draftsmen) were also supposed to be preferably graduates of specialised schools.<sup>30</sup> This is not circumstantial considering, on the one hand, the higher number of young people returning to the country after having completed their studies abroad and, on the other hand, the fact that the newly established Society of Romanian Architects (1891) founded, after several attempts, a specialised school in 1892, whose authorisation was endorsed by the Ministry of Religions and Public Education. The school functioned under the management of Ion N. Socolescu and George Sterian, with 13 professors, none of them paid, until 1897, when the National School of Architecture was founded as a section of the School of Fine Arts, with its own regulations and teaching staff.<sup>31</sup>

However the legislative acts and the enhanced institutionalisation of control upon (public and private) construction works only had an immediate impact in the capital towns of the two principalities, while in smaller provincial towns and in rural areas they were felt, but only later and not so consistently.

### Local Administration and the Position of “Town Architect”

In Wallachia the Organic Regulations provisions<sup>32</sup> and the related acts referring to the capital town Bucharest included the first references to the election of the Town Council (“Eforia”) and the creation of the “town architect” position (paid from the local budget); the latter had mostly bureaucratic responsibilities, supervising the fulfilment of the large number of measures and duties provided in the “Regulation for the health, landscape and civil security within the town of Bucharest”.<sup>33</sup> The architect-in-chief’s responsibilities also included: “... taking good care to ensure that all works contracted through tenders should be performed as per the technical specifications,

28 I. Brezoiianu, *Reformele românilor sau colecțiune de toate legile și regulamentele introduse în administrația românească (1859-1864)* (Bucharest, 1864), 231.

29 Hamangiu, *Codul general al României*, vol. II, 2471, “Legea pentru organizarea serviciului administrației centrale a Ministerului de interne (19 aprilie 1892)”, Art. 20, with further amendments adopted on 30 April 1895.

30 *Ibid.*, 2471-72, 2478. Art. 20, 24 and 31.

31 Grigore Ionescu, *75 de ani de învățământ superior de arhitectură* (Bucharest: I.A.I.M., 1973), 44-47.

32 *Regulamentele Organice*, 57. The public position of architect, remunerated with 6,000 lei annual salary, was provided in the Annex on public servants.

33 Emil Vîrtosu, Ion Vîrtosu, Horia Opreșcu, *Începuturi edilitare 1830-1832*, vol. I, *Documente pentru istoria Bucureștilor* (Bucharest, 1936), 29-48. The text came as an addition to the Organic Law adopted in 1831. Actually in 1847, during the reign of Gheorghe Bibescu, “The Regulation for the health, landscape and civil security within the Police of Bucharest” (“Regulamentul pentru starea sănătății, înfrumusețarea și paza bunei orânduiei în poliția Bucureștilui”) was reedited as part of the “*Organic Law embodying the legal acts of 1831, 1862 and 1833 and finally with the legal acts of 1834 until present, separated per years*” (“*Regulamentul Organic intrupat cu legiurile din anii 1831, 1862 și 1833 și adăogat la sfârșit cu legiurile de la anul 1834 până acum, împărțite pe fiecare an*”).

pavements, rainwater run-off culverts and the like; often responsible to go on site and actually see the ongoing works and in case of noticing any non-compliance, they should immediately report to the commission in writing so as to mitigate in time any potential error due to the contractors' lack of care or greed.<sup>34</sup> With support from the police ("Agia"), the town architect was also in charge with identifying and ordering the demolition of buildings affected by past earthquakes. This position also included the fulfilment of certain responsibilities associated with the older position of "maimarbaşa"<sup>35</sup> (from the Turkish words *mimar* – architect and *bashaw* or *pasha* – a high ranked official in the Ottoman political hierarchy), or some of the responsibilities incumbent on the Town Administrative Council ("Obşteasca Epitropie") established during the reign of Alexandru Ipsilanti, at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>36</sup> The position of "maimarbaşa" was assigned by the ruling Prince, through an act meant to grant the person who was the chief of the united guilds of carpenters, masons, brick makers, sand dealers and joiners a high rank ("ofichion de boierie")<sup>37</sup> and privileges. Each of these guilds (known until the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the Turkish names of *rufet* or *isnaf*) continued to be led by a chief ("ceauş") assisted by "... four or five top masters, better, older and more reliable craftsmen, so as to constitute the *lodge*."<sup>38</sup> It should be noted that the official status given by the princely act (issued by Alexandru Ipsilanti) to the position of chief of construction craftsmen and hence the reorganisation of their statute was not accidental but rather a consequence of the significantly damaged buildings in the earthquakes at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

When the "maimarbaşa" rank disappeared, the position of "ceauş" (chief of craftsmen) continues to be mentioned in various documents until mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is a result of the legal reorganisation of guilds which acquire the right to have their own church and flag figuring their patron saint. During the entire Organic Regulations period no craftsman was entitled to practise as long as he was not registered in a corporation and did not pay the required fee ("patenta").<sup>39</sup>

The town architect (also called "director architect") became chief of the "architecture department"<sup>40</sup> established in Bucharest in the autumn of 1834 under the direct supervision of the Town Council (Eforia). However, the legal provisions on the obligation to have a town architect for the important towns of Wallachia and Moldavia were applied inconsistently until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when, during the reign of Cuza, the "Act for urban and rural communes" was adopted (31 March 1864).<sup>41</sup> According to article 78 thereof, the town architect and the "public servants in charge with buildings or the conservation of communal edifices" were appointed by the local Council, the decisions of which were subject to approval by the Permanent Council and sometimes by the ruling Prince. The town architect had to refer to the Council "the construction, significant repairs or demolition projects which the community plans to undertake", "openings or closures of lanes and public squares, as well as alignment projects."<sup>42</sup> Although the

34 I. M. Bujoreanu, *Colecţiune de legiuirile României Vechi și Nnoi câte s-au promulgat pene la finele anului 1870*, (București, 1873), 941 and T. Evolceanu, "Principiile pentru sistematizarea Capitalei cuprinse în legiuirile ce însoțesc Regulamentul Organic al Țării Românești", *Arhitectura*, 3 (1954), 31.

35 Toma T. Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților care au lucrat în România în epoca modernă 1800-1925*, (Bucharest, 2004), 42.

36 Sanda Voiculescu, "Arhitecți șefi ai orașelor în prima jumătate a secolului trecut", *Arhitectura*, 3 (1974), 76. The statute and role of the Town Administrative Council ("Obşteasca Epitropie") were provided in the Organic Regulations (see Bujoreanu, *Colecţiune de legiuirile României*, 470-74).

37 V. A. Urechia, *Istoria Românilor. Seria 1800-1830*, Tom IX (Bucharest: Lito-tipografia "Carol Göbl", 1896), 131. The "nobility act" ("Ofichionul de boierie") certified a position which, although had nothing in common with nobility, was equivalent to nobility ranks. The tradition of awarding this act appeared towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and those who benefited from it included, in addition to the above mentioned "maimarbaşa", the chief of the construction guild, the chief of the bread makers guild etc., in general chiefs of guilds.

38 Ibid., 130.

39 Ionel Zănescu, "Meșteri și arhitecți constructori în Bucureștii primei jumătăți a veacului al XIX-lea", *B.M.I.M. XII* (1997), 76.

40 Florian Georgescu, "Regimul construcțiilor în București în deceniile IV-V din secolul al XIX-lea", *B.M.I.M. V* (1967) 42.

41 Bujoreanu, *Colecţiune de legiuirile României*, 877-87.

42 Ibid., 882, Art. 71.

Act was amended in 1887 and later on in 1892 and 1894, the provisions regarding the town architects (and engineers) were maintained, with the additional one: following their appointment by the Communal Council, they also had to be confirmed by the Ministry of Public Works.<sup>43</sup>

In Bucharest the appointment of a town architect was a practice ever since the Phanariot times. For instance in 1816 this position was held by Joseph Hartl, involved in public construction works and the supervision of new buildings in the town.<sup>44</sup> Hartl kept this position after the adoption of the Organic Regulations, and since 1832 he was assisted by the land surveyor Moritz von Ott.<sup>45</sup> Both were members of the commission appointed by decree of General Kiseleff, aiming to "... consider all means regarding the cleanliness of the town and its inhabitants".<sup>46</sup> After Hartl, through the Princely Act ("Ofisul Domensc") of 1834,<sup>47</sup> the "Architecture Service within the Town Council was established", for a short period of time, and the "director architect" position was assigned to Michel (de) Sanjouand, author of the interesting *Examen et développement de la ville de Bucarest*, based on the 12-plates town plan (not identified but certified by references in the period documents).<sup>48</sup> Sanjouand was followed by Heinrich Gottfried Feusser von Mentzen (1836-1841) (who was assisted between 1837-1841 by Alexandru Orăscu<sup>49</sup>), Johann Freywald (1842), Xavier Villacrosse (with three mandates: 1842-1848 and 1848-1850, 1855, assisted by Mihail Kaçachi, former copyist of maps<sup>50</sup> and baker Nicolî<sup>51</sup>), Alexandru Orăscu (during the revolution of 1848<sup>52</sup>), Gaetano Burelly (1850-1853 and 1856-1859, assisted by Alexandru Karkalechi<sup>53</sup>), D. Marinescu (1860), Dumitru Berindei (1861), I. Botta (1861-1862), Karl Kuchnovsky (1860, 1864-1867 and 1868-1871), Mihail Capuțineanu (1863 and 1868), etc.

One year after the devastating fire of 1847 the "Regulation for alignments and buildings"<sup>54</sup> was adopted, and according to it the town architect's involvement in the construction activity in Bucharest became more complex and more important; he had to verify and countersign the written projects, which became compulsory once the legal act was enforced. The project drawings - which could be prepared by a building craftsman - were to be submitted to the Town Council and the town architect was obliged to "go and check on site" (art. 47). By signing the contract the building craftsmen undertook the project conditions, and failure to comply with such conditions made them directly accountable, together with the management of the corporation they belonged to (art. 47). The legal act, applying only to buildings in the capital town, also defined the content and the scale of the drawing representations. Thus the project was supposed to include a general plan with the plot where the building was to be erected, the plans of all floors of the building, a cross section and the "building facade towards the public road" (art. 1). Presenting the main facade of the building points to the important role given by local authorities to urban aesthetics. The aspects related to the presentation of the project are completed by very detailed information on the compliance of various parts of the building, execution details, materials, construction methods etc., all of these determined by safety measures against the burst and spread of fires in the town.

43 Hamangiu, *Codul general al României*, vol. II, 2257.

44 Florian Georgescu, "Probleme de urbanism și sistematizare în București în anii 1831-1848" *B.M.I.M.* IV (1966), 36.

45 Dan Berindei, "Cu privire la biografia inginerului și "arhitectonului" Moritz von Ott", *Monumente și muzee. Buletinul Comisiei Științifice a Muzeelor și Monumentelor Istorice și Artistice* 1 (1958), 202-15.

46 Evolceanu, "Principiile pentru sistematizarea Capitalei", 28.

47 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., Vornicia din Lăuntru Collection, file 7570/1834, Ofis domnesc nr. 78 din 27 septembrie 1834.

48 Georgescu, "Probleme de urbanism", 47.

49 Andrei Pănoiu, "Un memoriu adresat de arh. Al. Orăscu căimăcămiei Țării Românești în 1848" *B.C.M.I.* 3 (1991), 64.

50 *Almanahul statului din Principatul a toată Țara Românească*, (1841, 72; 1844, 70; 1846, 72; 1848, 80).

51 Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive*, n.p.

52 *Monitorul Român* (București, 1848), 25.

53 Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive*, n.p.

54 Bujoreanu, *Colecțiune de legiurile României*, 943-47.



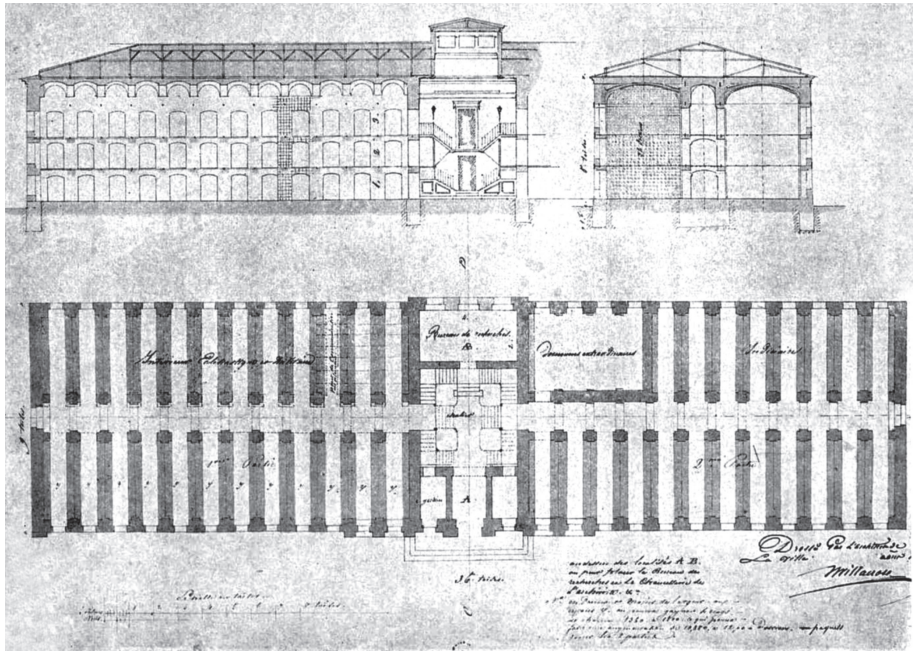


Fig. 4. Xavier Villacrosse, architect of the town of Bucharest - Project for the headquarters of the National Archives on the Metropolitan Church Hill (not realised)

Whereas in the capital most town architects were selected from among foreign professionals, many of them with specialised studies, in the country towns this position – where it existed – was often held by land surveyors or sometimes by amateurs, many of them Romanian. The names and activity of Wallachia's town architects are little known to us, being usually mentioned in relation with the development of some important projects or initiatives.

For instance we know only few things about Karl Weyrach, the architect of Craiova,<sup>55</sup> who was co-opted in the team led by Borroczyn to perform the land survey of Bucharest (completed in 1846), with his place being taken in 1844 by architect “Teodor Tili” (Achille August Theodor Thillaye)<sup>56</sup> and later on, towards 1850 by Alexandru Orăscu, granted the noble rank of “pitar”<sup>57</sup> for his services to the state. Having probably a background of land surveyor, Weyrach was involved in the discussions held in 1854 on the necessity to appoint an architect in Râmnicu-Vâlcea; he was also required to prepare a plan for the regulation of streets and alignment of houses in this town.<sup>58</sup>

55 We do not know to what extent Weyrach (Vairauh, Vairaunch) had architecture studies. It is certain that he acquired his experience during his practice as assistant in the Engineering Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Almanahul statului din Principatul a toată Țara Românească*, 1841, 72).

56 Florian Georgescu, “Marele plan al orașului București ridicat de maiorul Borroczyn între 1844-1846” in *B.M.I.M.*, I (Bucharest, 1963), 50. Thillaye was transferred to Craiova from Bucharest from the position he held in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

57 Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive*, n.p.. The nobility rank of “pitar” (baker) has its origins in the Romanian medieval court ranks. The grand *pitar*, in charge with supplies to the princely court or with some other tasks related to the army, was a member of the princely court council. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the title of “pitar” is granted, without any obligation, as a reward for merits and services performed for the state.

58 Andrei Pănoiu, “Moșii, sate, târguri și orașe (I): Râmnicu Vâlcea. Câteva date despre orașul Râmnicu-Vâlcea în secolele XVIII-XIX”, *B.C.M.I.* 3 (1992), 52.

There is also little information about the land surveyor Alexandru Popovici, an amateur archaeologist, appointed at the end of the 1830's as the "engineer" of the new town of Turnu-Severin. Despite his title of engineer, he most likely had the same responsibilities as the town architect. Praised by Mihail Kogălniceanu in his writings<sup>59</sup> for his historical knowledge, Popovici was mentioned in the monographs of the town of Severin for his initiatives as an antiquarian rather than for his skills as administrator of the town's construction problems. In 1839 in Craiova he was filing a request for the founding of a periodical called "Dacia veche și nouă" ("Old and New Dacia"), where he envisaged publishing archaeological discoveries and the writings of ancient authors pertaining on the historical region of the old Dacia.<sup>60</sup> However his initiative was never put into practice. Together with Weyrach, Popovici was a member of Borroczy's team for preparing the map of the capital town. His amateurish disposition in the field of archaeology appears to have been also displayed in his activity as land surveyor; his failure to fulfil his commitments entailed his exclusion from Borroczy's team in May 1845.<sup>61</sup>

Things were not the same in other towns. For instance, in Ploiești, starting with the 1840s, documents mention the names of several town architects selected from among experienced foreigners. In the spring of 1843, Johann Schlatter (later on "monastery architect", a key figure in the interventions upon the Wallachian medieval heritage) signed an alignment plan in his capacity of town architect,<sup>62</sup> probably one of his many responsibilities fulfilled in this capacity. Schlatter was followed in 1846 by Karl Hartl (Hartel), author of projects for the headquarters of the magistrate (the town hall) and the police.<sup>63</sup> The town hall building was only completed in 1869 under the coordination of one of Hartl's successors, the Hungarian Iosif Varga, who also managed the construction works of the fire tower (watch tower) located above the main entrance. The town hall compound was also modified after the town architect position was assigned to Christian Kertsch (Cherciu) of Brasov in 1873; he gave it its eclectic aspect, with many elements belonging to the widespread *Rundbogenstil*, which was of course very familiar to the author from his years spent at the Polytechnic University of Vienna and at the *Akademie der Bildenden Kunst* in Munich.<sup>64</sup> Kertsch held this position until 1877, being responsible for important buildings and urban and construction interventions: the Boys' School, the design of the first section of Independence Boulevard, the town water supply and sewage system (which was not achieved), etc.<sup>65</sup> Kertsch was followed by the Austrian Franz Wessel, the German Rudolf Lieber (author of the new town hall headquarters, completed in 1894), etc. Only towards the end of the century was this position held by Romanian professionals.<sup>66</sup>

59 Mihail Kogălniceanu (1817-1891), one of the most outstanding personalities of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Moldavia and Romania. Kogălniceanu was a Romanian luminary, a historian, publicist, lawyer, politician and diplomat. Between 1860 and 1861 he was president of the Council of Ministries in Iași and in 1863-65 president of the Council of Ministries of Romania. Towards the end of his life, in 1887-90 he was the chairman of the Romanian Academy.

60 C. Pajură, D. T. Giurescu, *Istoricul orașului Turnu-Severin (1833-1933)* (Bucharest, 1933), 114.

61 Georgescu, "Marele plan", 55.

62 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., Plan Collection, Prahova County, no. 259.

63 Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 38 and 46. Paul Constantin, *Dicționar universal al arhitecților*, (Bucharest: ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1986), 146.

64 Friedrich Stenner, *Die Beamten der Stadt Brassó* (Brașov, 1916) apud. Ovidiu Talos (coord.), *Arhitecții și arhitectura în Brașov 1870-1914*, s.a., 7.

65 Gheorghe Marinică, Constantin Trestioreanu (coord.), *Marea Carte a Ploieștilor*, vol. I (Ploiești: ed. Ploiești-Mileniul III, 2011), 666, 675, 684, 686.

66 Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 46.



Fig. 5, 6. The old town hall of Ploiești (demolished) completed during the mandate of the town architect Iosif Varga, based on the project of architect Karl Hartl (above) and the consolidation project for the fire tower above the access to the town hall, drawn in 1873 by town architect Christian Kertsch (opposite page)

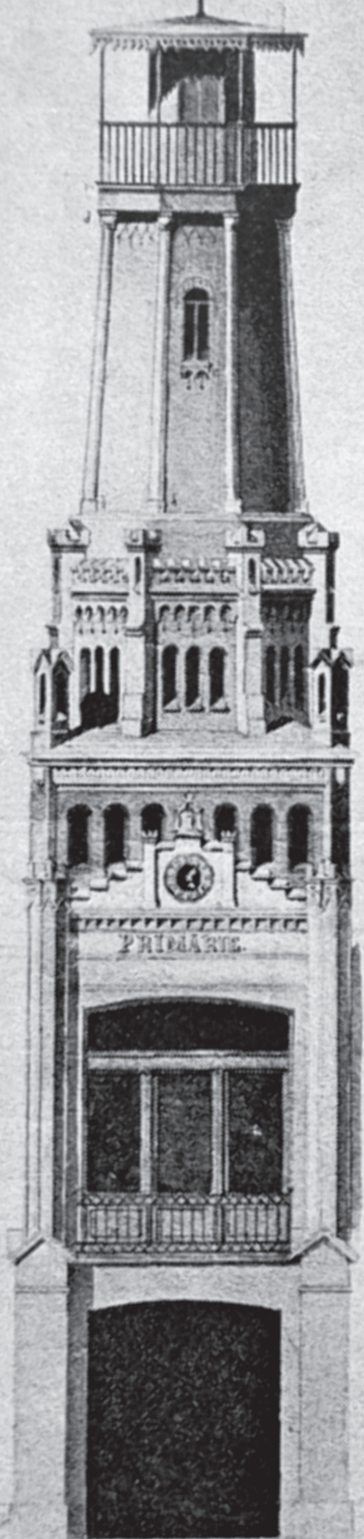
However there were also many towns with no architects to coordinate their development. This appears from archive documents in which local authorities were requesting the Ministry of Internal Affairs to send specialists (often referred to as “conductors” or “engineers”) “with knowledge of architecture” to coordinate construction activities. In Câmpulung Muscel, for instance, at the beginning of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century “people used to build their houses as they could: lopsided, askew, with no regard to the alignment along the street and to the principle of withdrawing the house 4 hands back”.<sup>67</sup> In addition to this uncontrolled development, another important issue which required the presence of an architect was the need to keep evidence of the state of constructions and the hazard they would pose in case of fire. The lack of experienced practitioners delayed some concrete measures to be taken by the Ministry of Internal Affairs which, at least at the level of statements, was taking into account the needs of country towns. The Communal Act of 1864 transformed the villages, market-towns and towns into independent administrative sections, with the Communal Council being in charge with appointing or dismissing “the architects and public servants in charge with the construction or conservation of communal buildings” (art. 78). Even if such public servant had existed, its freedom to decide upon projects of major importance was limited, and so was the freedom of the Council to decide. Similarly to the restrictions imposed by the “Regulation for the town councils in the Wallachian Principality” (1832), “the projects for buildings, significant repair works or demolition works...”, those for opening and closing streets and public squares as well as alignment projects, required approval from the permanent ministerial Committee and in some cases even a princely ordinance or even a law (art. 71).

In Moldavia the measures adopted took a different course. Similarly to the Wallachian capital, the Moldavian Organic Regulations also included special provisions for the town of Iași (“Municipal Regulation for Iași”<sup>68</sup>) with the Town Council (Eforia) in charge of their application. Although the legal act contained detailed provisions regarding the administrative division, water and

67 Andrei Pănoiu, *Arhitectura și sistematizarea așezărilor din Argeș și Muscel. Sec. XVIII-XIX* (Pitești, 2004), 63.

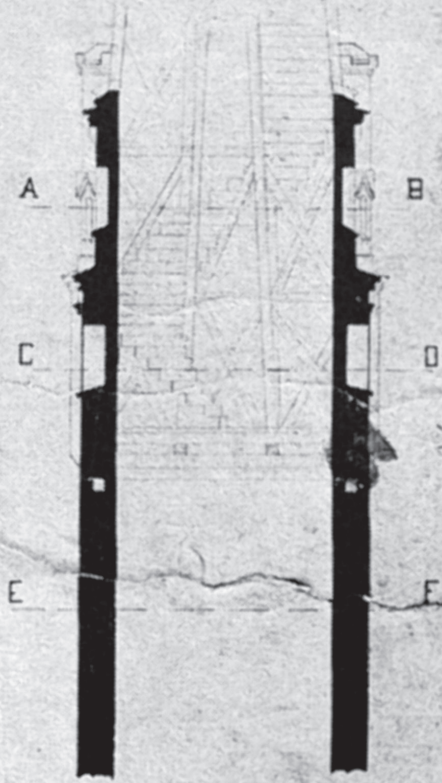
68 *Regulamentele Organice*, 239. Annex letter F.





Planul  
 pentru interiorul observatorului  
 Oraşului Ploesti.  
 1873.

Profilu



Ploesti, Mai 31 - 1873

A. H. Murescu

No. 031

air hygiene, as well as fire prevention measures, according to which houses should be built in compliance with architectural rules<sup>69</sup>, or regarding the aesthetic aspect of the town, the text does not specifically mention those specialised officers (town architects or engineers) who should have ensured the application of prescriptions. The architects active in Moldavia in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were mostly foreigners from the Austrian Empire. Although involved in commissions funded by state budget (the Eforia's budget), until the fourth decade they did not hold any positions established as such in the administrative hierarchy but mostly carried out their work according to contracts for clearly defined projects. Such an example is the often mentioned architect Martin Kubelka, author of the gate tower and the residence ("The Palace on the Walls") at Frumoasa Monastery near Iași (about 1819).

While quite similar from many viewpoints to the "Architectural section" in the Wallachian capital, the "Committee for the supervision of construction of houses in the town of Iași" was established in Moldavia in 1834; the committee was funded by and subordinated to the Eforia and led by architect Johann Freywald<sup>70</sup> and the military engineer Nicolai Singurov. Freywald had returned to Moldavia at the beginning of the Organic Regulation period, after having been in charge in Bucharest with the deepening of Dâmbovița river bed and the stone paving of the main streets of the town, and after having spent some time in Ioannina, in the service of Ali Pasha.<sup>71</sup> The setting-up of the "Direction for the town embellishment" and the "project for the establishment of the committee for communications and public buildings" are owing to these two men.<sup>72</sup> We could therefore assume that the first architect of Iași was Freywald, subordinated to the Town Council and in charge with construction or architecture-related public responsibilities, whereas Singurov was in charge with engineering issues. One of the most important projects supervised by Singurov was the consolidation of the structure and the rebuilding of the collapsed vault of the monumental Metropolitan Church in Iași, commenced on the project of Gustav Freywald<sup>73</sup> in 1833. In 1840, Singurov had proposed a lighter wooden structure, but despite the solution adopted the church walls continued to crack and the new structure yielded in 1857;<sup>74</sup> at that time religious services were no longer performed in the church. Except for a few attempts to repair and redesign the church vaulting, owing to architect Anton Kaietanovici and engineer François Cazaban, the site was closed around 1854<sup>75</sup> for almost four decades. The building was completed between 1880 and 1886, under the coordination of Alexandru Orăscu.

In 1841 Freywald is followed by Joseph Raschek<sup>76</sup> (who had a technical rather than artistic background, being often mentioned as an engineer: *Staatingenieur und Nivelant*<sup>77</sup>), who takes over the coordination of the construction works for paving the town streets. Singurov had probably kept his position, as long as in 1842-1843 he was completing the restoration works

69 Ibid., 246.

70 Johann Freywald was the first architect mentioned with this title in the official Moldavian documents at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He had come from the Habsburg Empire and had settled in Moldavia in 1802; in 1803 he became a state officer in charge with both architecture and construction works, for a monthly salary of 150 lei. Data on Freywald's career are available in Viorica Malacopol, "Date în legătură cu activitatea arhitecților Freywald", S.C.I.A. 11, 2 (1964), 325-34.

71 Malacopol, "Date în legătură cu activitatea arhitecților Freywald", 326-28.

72 Dan Dumitru Iacob, "Măsuri de sistematizare a zonei centrale a orașului Iași în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea. Demolarea "baratcelor", *Monumentul – Tradiție și viitor*, X (2008), 25-26.

73 Gustav Freywald, probably of Austrian origin, settled in Moldavia at the beginning of the fourth decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The blood relationship between architects Gustav and Johann Freywald – often taken for one another - has not been documented. Few data are known about the biography and activity of Gustav Freywald. However some of his works are among the most important examples of classicist architecture in Moldavia in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the palace Roset-Roznovanu and the plans for the Metropolitan Church of Moldavia both in Iași etc.).

74 *Gazeta de Moldova* 41 (May 1857), apud. Preot Scarlat Porcescu, *Catedrala Mitropolitană din Iași* (ed. Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei, 1977), 68.

75 Porcescu, *Catedrala Mitropolitană*, 66.

76 Ioan C. Filitti, *Domniile române sub Regulamentul Organic. 1834-1848* (Bucharest, 1915), 498.

77 Ibid.





Fig. 7. Anton Kaietanovici – Metropolitan Cathedral in Iași (Northern façade), project dated around 1854, for the repair and completion of the building initiated by Gustav Freywald in 1833 (above)

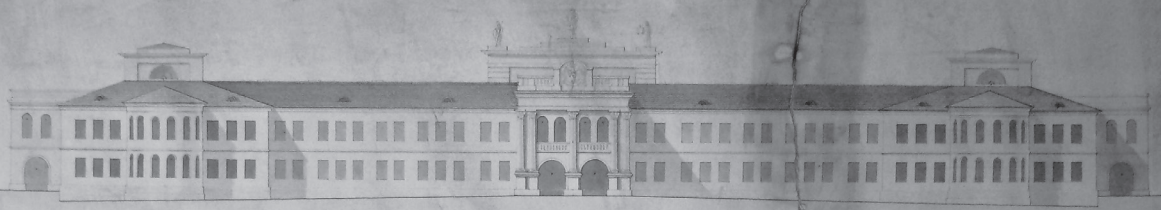
Fig. 8. Nicolai Singurov – Project for the restoration of the princely court in Iași, destroyed by fire (project approved by the state engineer Iosef Raschek), not dated (following page)

at the old princely palace affected by the fire of 1827. With its new structure project signed by Singurov and approved by Raschek,<sup>78</sup> the “ruling prince palace” became the headquarters of the central administration of Moldavia. The building - which had maintained the classicist architecture of the previous stage of 1804-06, from the reign of Alexandru Moruzi<sup>79</sup> – was one of the most important references for the 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture of Iași, raising both admiration and criticism from the capital’s visitors.<sup>80</sup>

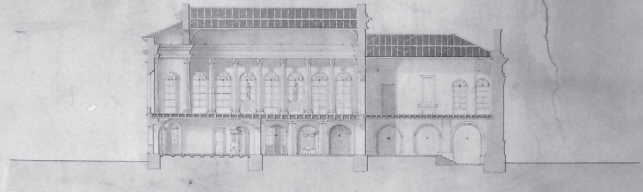
78 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., Plan Collection, Ilfov county, no. 387 and *Analele parlamentare ale României. Obicinuita Obștească Adunare a Moldovei*, Tom IX, Partea a II-a bis, 1840, 610-613. The estimated costs of the refurbishment works rose to 1,091,653 lei, this significant amount being approved by the Common Assembly of Iași.

79 Malacopol, “Date în legătură cu activitatea arhitecților Freywald”, 326. The ruling prince Alexandru Moruzi had convened specialists from Western Europe for building the palace on the site of the former court burnt in 1784, and it can be assumed that Johann Freywald was among them.

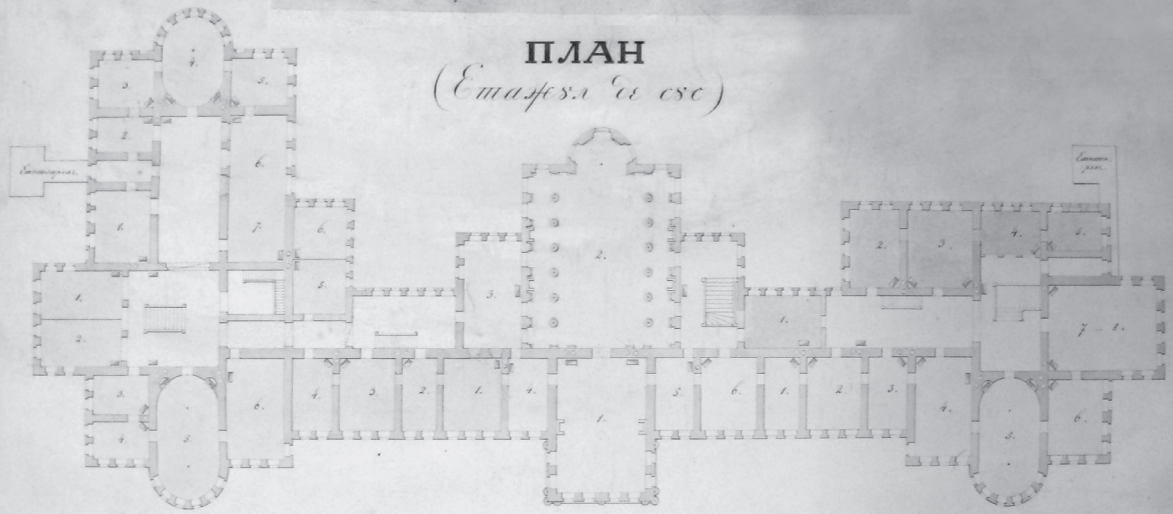
80 Adriana Ionuc, “Călători străini despre dezvoltarea urbanistică a orașului Iași în secolele XVIII-XIX (I)”, *Monumentul – Tradiție și viitor IV* (2002).



Πρόσκλησις εὐαγγελίου ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος

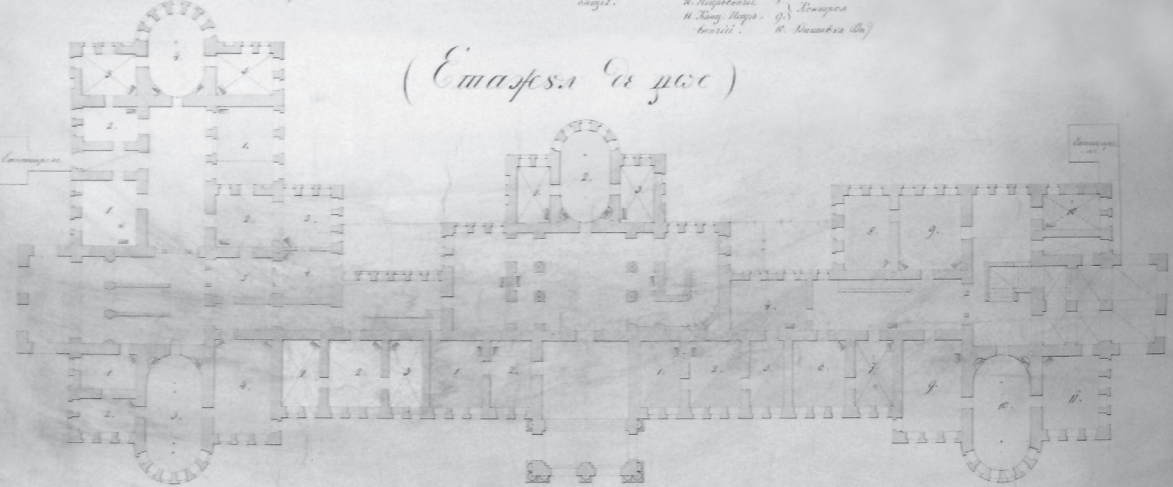


ПЛАН (Εὐαγγελίου ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος)



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(Εὐαγγελίου ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος)



In 1844 Matei Nițman (Mathias Nitschmann)<sup>81</sup> became the architect of Iași and was assisted between 1849-1851 by Ștefan Bersak (Berzac), the architect of the military barracks in Copou, deceased in 1852.<sup>82</sup> For a short period of time, around 1850, Nițman's team also included Moritz Hartl, author in 1846 of the standard projects for the facades of the public and private buildings in the town centre; this initiative of the Committee established in 1834 was aiming to control the architectural image of the streets in the town centre and in its outskirts.<sup>83</sup> The project plans came to complete some detailed regulations (in force since 1841) on the restrictions imposed to building methods, after previously obtaining an approval from the Town Council through the town architect.<sup>84</sup>

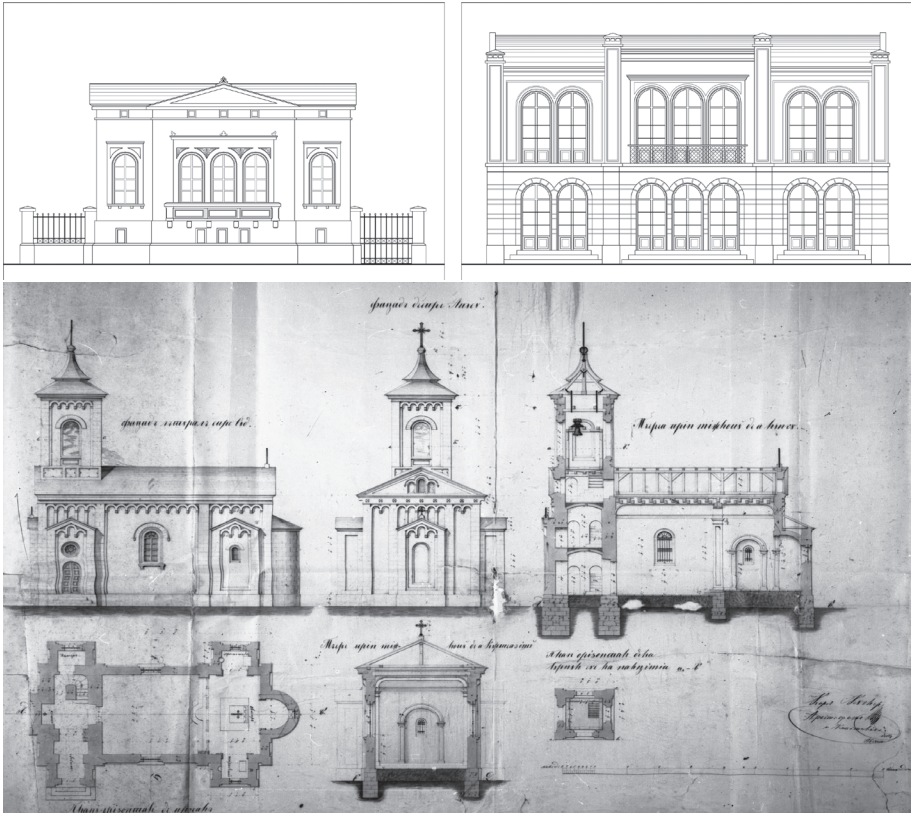


Fig. 9, 10. Moritz Hartl – standard projects of 1846 for one storey houses and two storey houses with shops for the town centre of Iași (top left and right)

Fig. 11. Karl von Kugler (“the architect of the capital city”), project of the church on the Sarnici estate, near Iași, 1854, built in *Rundbogenstil*, from many points of view similar to the stylistic formula of the military barracks building at Copou, completed in 1880 under the coordination of architect P. Tabai (bottom)

81 The Romanian documents mention the architect's name as “Matei Nițman”, whereas he was signing his projects as “Mathias Nitschmann”. Dănuț Doboș et al., *Catedrala romano-catolică Iași* (Iași: ed. Presa Bună, 2008), 94.

82 Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 22.

83 C. Chihodaru et al., *Istoria orașului Iași*, vol. I (Iași: ed. Junimea, 1980), 488 and Iacob, “Măsurile de sistematizare”, 26.

84 Some of the provisions on building methods are included in the *Manualul administrativ al Principatului Moldovei: cuprinzătorul legilor și dispozițiilor introduse în țară de la anul 1832 până la 1855: înorânduile de o comisie din naltul ordin al Înălțimei Sale Prințepelui Domnitorii al Moldovei Grigorie A. Gika VV* (Iași: Tipografia Buciumul Român, 1855), 200-01.



On 12 December 1851 Carl Kugler (Karl von Kugler) was appointed architect-in-chief of Iași, his main recommendation for this position being the construction of the hospital within the Spiridon Monastery.<sup>85</sup> The main responsibilities of the town architect were still of bureaucratic nature, Kugler mentioning in a report to the ministry the fact that in his position he was “called for all responsibilities associated with the embellishment and safety of the town”.<sup>86</sup> Until after 1866 Kugler was in charge with supervision of the execution works, and was also supposed to make some necessary additions for the completion of the Copou military barracks commenced by Bersak. Although he prepared a project which was “imposing in terms of aspect”,<sup>87</sup> the building was not completed according to his recommendations but instead on Peter Tabai’s project. This example or some of the few church architecture projects preserved show Kugler Kugler as an experienced architect, his works being in line with the neo-medieval architectural experiments in the Central European area. From Kugler’s correspondence with the ministry we see that town architects were supposed to get directly involved in public construction projects only in exceptional cases;<sup>88</sup> however their names are frequently quoted in the correspondence and documentations of some of the important interventions: for instance Kugler was requested to get involved in the repair works at the unfinished building of the Metropolitan Church in Iași, in the intervention at the Galata monastery church<sup>89</sup> or in the preparatory measures for the necessary restoration works at the Trei Ierarhi monastery church.<sup>90</sup> His involvement and interest demonstrated in all such cases pleaded for his being appointed in the position of architect in the Moldavian Ministry of Religions and Public Education, while his place at the Iași Town Council was taken by another foreign architect (most probably Austrian), Josef Gruber.<sup>91</sup>

The provisions of volume I of the *Administrative Manual of the Principality of Moldavia* (1855) established the annual salary of the town architect at 6,000 lei, a relatively low amount which nonetheless could ensure a decent living. These provisions also mentioned the obligation to draft the town master plan, as a requisite instrument for a controlled development, based on the engineering and land surveying knowledge the public officer should hold.<sup>92</sup> Thus Iancu Volber, architect of Fălțiceni, was assisted by the surveyor Iancu Staiber for preparing the map of Fălțiceni; later on Ignat Rizer, “serdar” (army-related nobility rank) undertook, through a contract signed with the Town Council, to prepare the map of the town of Galați. Joseph Raschek had fulfilled the same task in Iași; given his technical background he accomplished this task as early as 1844, his map being an update of the measurements carried out by Giuseppe Bayardi in 1819. Rascek’s activity was continued in the following decade with the map drawn by the French engineer Frederic Peytavin (1857).

In many towns of Moldavia, however, the lack of resources and the frequent professional limitations of the technicians employed by the Town Council generated delays in the preparation of town maps, or even resulted in the maps not being drawn. For instance in 1862 the architect of

85 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.L.P. Collection – Moldova, file 396/1849, 402, apud. Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive*, n.p.

86 Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive*, n.p. and Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 28.

87 Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive*, n.p.

88 Ibid., M.L.P. Collection, file 36/1865, 60.

89 *Monumente Naționale. Monastiri și biserici ortodoxe. Raporturi de la comisiunile întocmite pentru cercetarea lor*, Partea I (Bucharest: Tipografia Statului, 1881) 27, 30.

90 *Restaurarea monumentelor istorice 1865-1890. Acte și rapoarte oficiale*, (București: Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice, Tipografia Carol Göbl, 1890), 69. The letter from the mayor of Iași with no. 7719 to the Ministry of Cults regarding the repairs at the Trei Ierarhi Church in Iași.

91 There is little information available on Gruber’s activity. In 1860 he was invited to draw up the restoration project of the Catholic cathedral in Iași, a project which remained only on paper. Later on, in his capacity of town architect of Iași, he was in charge both with supervising the construction interventions and with coordinating constructions and interventions upon some old architecture monuments (see for instance his involvement in the construction site at the Metropolitan Church in Iași - N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.R.P.E. Collection, file 309/1873).

92 *Manualul administrativ al Principatului Moldovei*, 205 and N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.L.P. Collection, file 288/1859, 14.

Bacău, Ștefan Horvath, was complaining to the minister about the insufficient financial resources for "... such a huge work, and even less for the expenses associated with the assistance without which such a work is not possible."<sup>93</sup>

Similarly to Wallachia, experienced professionals only activated in larger towns, while skilled practitioners were lacking in less important towns. For instance in Fălticeni the town architect between 1836 and 1849 was a Saxon, Iancu Volber, already mentioned, appointed by contract with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Surprisingly, after more than ten years since his appointment, during which we do not know very much about the town architect's activity, the central administration was notifying the Council of the town of Fălticeni on the following: "... the architect of this town is also the said Iancu Volber, as he has no capacity, *being not even able to write* (emphasis added), lacking skills in the field of architecture, as proved by the state architect Hartl himself."<sup>94</sup> Perhaps the town architect of Bacău, Andraș Tefner, was less unacquainted with architecture, being skilled in the "stone hewing craft" (also called in the documents "building master"<sup>95</sup>) – thus probably a stone mason lacking a solid technical background but supported by local noblemen and merchants who, in their memorial of 1850 requesting his appointment, called him a "honest and diligent man".<sup>96</sup>

Despite the lack of professionals and resources for their remuneration, in 1849 the ruling prince Grigore Alexandru Ghica approved the decision of the State Council according to which, following the model of Iași, Galați or Botoșani, there should be "... architects appointed in all regions",<sup>97</sup> paid from the town budgets or, in case of lack of fund availability, paid from the reserve of the Department for Public Works.<sup>98</sup> Following this princely decision, the archive documents over the next two decades mentioned many names of architects or merely holders of the position of architect for the majority of important towns in Moldavia:<sup>99</sup> Ignat Rizer in Galați, Ștefan Horvath in Focșani and then in Bacău,<sup>100</sup> Fridrich Dirth ("building master") in Botoșani and later on in Bârlad and Târgu Ocna, Ignat Lorenzo in Bârlad, C. Udrișchi in Botoșani, Anton Kaietanovici (architect with studies at the Polytechnic University in Vienna<sup>101</sup>) in Roman and Botoșani (replacing a certain Prinsperg, "... a simple worker, a stone carver (...) lacking the necessary skills"<sup>102</sup>), Johann Peter Bordon in Piatra Neamț, Johann Făgăraș (?) in Bârlad, Franz Kurek in Fălticeni, Tecuci and Focșani,<sup>103</sup> Rudolf (von) Kugler in Botoșani and Dorohoi, Wilhelm Lefelman (deputy) in Botoșani, Joseph Grispek (sub-architect) and Franz Kramer ("building master") in Roman, Friedrich Veseli in Roman, Bacău and Ismail, Johann Brandel in Tecuci,<sup>104</sup> Iosef Gherghel in Huși etc. In Fălticeni, a certain Haubitz was appointed to replace Volber, shortly afterwards followed by Franz Kurek, Bobinski, Poplaski and, towards the end of

93 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.P.W. Collection, file 288/1859, 13.

94 Ibid., 17-18. The fact that Volber was illiterate was also confirmed by Artur Gorovei, *Fălticeni. Cercetări istorice asupra orașului* (Fălticeni: Institutul de Arte Grafice "M. Saidman", 1938), 166.

95 Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 20.

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., 23 and N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.P.W. Collection – Moldova, file 396/1849, 40.

98 Ibid., 41 and 158. The salaries of town architects appear to have been established according to the town size and importance: the architects of Botoșani, Focșani and Bârlad were to be paid with 120 golden coins ("galbenii") per year, the architects of Roman and Fălticeni with 80 galbeni etc.

99 The names of town architects in Moldavia for which no source is given are taken from the work of Toma T. Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților care au lucrat în România în epoca modernă 1800-1925*, (Bucharest, 2004), cap. "Arhitecții care au lucrat în Moldova de la începutul până către finele secolului al XIX-lea", 9-35. See also Socolescu's main reference Vasile Panopol, *Cercetări de arhive asupra activității arhitecților și asupra arhitecturii din Moldova și Muntenia între anii 1840-1860*, mss., C.S.C.A.S., 1954.

100 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.P.W. Collection, file 97/1858, f. 6 and 288/1859, 13.

101 Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 27.

102 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.P.W. Collection, file 97/1858, 289.

103 Ibid., 306, 306 v., 307, 307 v.

104 Ibid., f. 6.



the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Peceny, author of the project for the town hall (about 1896-1899).<sup>105</sup> None of the names listed above is Romanian, most of them originating from the Eastern regions of the Austrian Empire. Some of them, although permanently settled in Moldavia, had not received yet the citizenship (“the naturalisation certificate”).<sup>106</sup> The conditions imposed by the ministry could often be inconvenient: relocating from one town to another, taking over the architect position for two towns at the same time, managing works in other areas in a time when transport and roads were more than difficult, low salaries and delays in payments, etc. However many of the mentioned architects proved flexible and devoted to the responsibilities assigned to them. Moreover, a certain competition appeared after the first series of students graduated from the Academy in Iași. I. Pancrati, expert “in the field of architecture and engineering which he had studied at the Academy in Iași”<sup>107</sup> submitted in 1852 an application to the Department of Public Works whereby he was applying for the position of architect of Galati upon termination of Ignat Rizer’s contract, bringing as argument the fact that he was Romanian. However the competent “serdar” Rizer maintained his position until the beginning of the 1860s, as mentioned somehow ironically in a short sentence in the *Arhondologia* of Constantin Sion, as being “...Jewish by nationality and religion”.<sup>108</sup>

Despite the inherent gaps and inconsistencies associated with the first stages of the institutionalisation of the “state architect” and “town architect” positions, the modernisation drive of the elites and particularly the large number of foreign architects (mostly not recorded by the specialised historiography), brought that decisive Western trend in the reorientation of fashions, which was the basis of the progress towards the Romanian architectural modernity. With administrative duties, being mostly in charge with the bureaucracy and the control of constructions, by taking over public orders or by free practice, some of these foreign architects had a consistent contribution to the aesthetic modernisation of architecture and its associated practice. In a world without drawn architectural designs, where the requirements or wishes of the commissioner prevailed, influenced to a smaller or larger extent by the taste and experience of the contractor (“ispravnic”)<sup>109</sup> and the craftsmen, the period after the adoption of the Organic Regulations marks a clear break with the past. Although the involvement of foreigners in projects and construction works of significance for the evolution of architecture in the Principalities had commenced before the Organic Regulations, a new orientation became obvious only in the 1830s, with the first legal and institutional initiatives.

Despite legal and administrative measures, often applied inconsistently - particularly in provincial towns - both the profession itself and the current architectural practice have not been regulated distinctly, being assimilated to artistic activities rather than to technical ones. The status of the technical sections within the ministries in the Principalities was amended with the adoption of the “Regulations for Organisation of the Civil Engineering Corps”<sup>110</sup> of 1862, which included

<sup>105</sup> Gorovei, *Folticeni*, 166.

<sup>106</sup> “Naturalisation” was granting the holder the same political and civil rights held by Romanian citizens. According to the Organic Regulations provisions, granting citizenship to a foreigner (of Christian religion) was only possible with the written agreement of the ruling prince who made his decision based on a report from the State Council. For a positive answer the foreigner had to demonstrate his usefulness to the state. Although the normal waiting time was 10 years, some of them had to wait for much longer to acquire their citizenship rights. For instance Franz Kurek was complaining to the minister in 1859 that, although he was in the country for more than 14 years and had worked in the state service (as architect) for 10 years, he had still not been granted citizenship, being under control from the Austrian Consulate (N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.P.W. Collection, file 97/1858, f. 237).

<sup>107</sup> Socolescu, *Fresca arhitecților*, 25.

<sup>108</sup> Sion, *Arhondologia*, 305.

<sup>109</sup> In the case of constructions the “ispravnic” was usually a member of the group of acquaintances (the court) of the commissioner or founder, with no special technical or art background, in charge with supervising and coordinating the site works.

<sup>110</sup> I. Brezoianu, *Reformele românilor sau colecțiune de toate legile și regulamentele introduse în administrația românească (1859-1864)* (Bucharest, 1864), 231-39.

detailed provisions only for engineers and technical conductors. The public works service, in addition to the ordinary or “permanent” sections and extraordinary or “potential” section, also included a “detached” section, to address those works which were not funded by the ministry: “the regulation and paving of the main towns as well as their water supply, which is to be covered from municipal budgets”. The article on the “detached” services made the only reference to the architects in various ministry departments who were in charge with erecting the public buildings in their responsibility. Except for those employed in the central or local state structures, architects continued to work outside any guild and without specific regulations, until the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Society of Romanian Architects was established (1891), chaired by Alexandru Orăscu. Architects were still not included in the Technical Corps of Romania not even after they became organised in a recognised corporation; the discussions in the Senate in 1894 concluded that they could not be in any way subject to the same law as engineers.<sup>111</sup>

The architecture of the first Romanian modernity of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is still insufficiently studied, being little appreciated by a posterity which was very subjective in selecting representative works. Moreover, the activity of many foreign architects (or architecture practitioners), freelancers or state employees, at central or local level, remained mostly unknown, just like their names. However the foundations of the Romanian architectural modernity were laid in this transition period, and it was the experience and experiments of these foreign professionals that shaped both the tastes of the elites and the general public, as well as the course taken by architecture until the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>111</sup> Oliver Velescu, “Ingineri și arhitecți. O discuție din anul 1894 în jurul acestei teme”, *Arhitectura*, 3 (1976), 60.

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Fig.1 Drawing after N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.P.W. Collection – Moldova, file 67/1845 and A. Pănoiu, *Arhitectura și sistematizarea așezărilor din Argeș și Muscel. Sec. XVIII-XIX*, Pitești, Argeș, 2004.

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Fig.6 M. Sevastos, *Monografia orașului Ploiești* (Bucharest: Tiparul "Cartea Românească", 1938), 189-190.

Fig.7 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., Plan collection, Iași county, no. 107.

Fig.8 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., Plan Collection, Ilfov county, no. 387.

Fig.9 Dan Dumitru Iacob, "Măsuri de sistematizare a zonei centrale a orașului Iași...", *Monumentul – Tradiție și viitor X* (2008), 35.

Fig.10 Dan Dumitru Iacob, "Măsuri de sistematizare a zonei centrale a orașului Iași..." *Monumentul – Tradiție și viitor X* (2008), 37.

Fig.11 N.A.R.-C.H.N.A., M.R.P.E. Collection, file 256/1858, 48.

#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

N.A.R.-C.H.N.A. – National Archives of Romania. Central Historical National Archives

B.C.M.I. – Buletinul Comisiei Monumentelor Istorice (Bulletin of the Commission for Historical Monuments)

B.M.I.M. – București. Materiale de Istorie și Muzeografie (Bucharest. History and Museography Materials)

I.A.I.M. – Institutul de Arhitectură "Ion Mincu", București ("Ion Mincu" Institute of Architecture in Bucharest)

M.R.P.E. – Ministry of Religions and Public Education

M.P.W. – Ministry of Public Works

S.C.I.A. – Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei (Studies and Researches on Art History)