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Article

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CES Working Papers

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Suggested Citation: Parasca, Alexandra Georgiana (2014) : Economic Implications of Churches in the Development of Human Settlements. Study Case: Iasi City, CES Working Papers, ISSN 2067-7693, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Centre for European Studies, Iasi, Vol. 6, Iss. 4, pp. 92-105

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/198351>

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ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF CHURCHES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS. STUDY CASE: IASI CITY

Alexandra Georgiana PARASCA*

Abstract: *It is not wrong said that monasteries and churches were one of the elements that led to the development of human settlements in Iasi, especially the city of Iasi. Most churches/monasteries from the feudal period, received from princes / noblemen vast areas of land in order to develop economically, so buildings can survive in time, but also the administrators. Gradually, this lands got to be populated by those who worked and eventually they built houses to live closer to the land they worked on. Subsequently, these small settlements led to the formation of rural settlements and with time they gained an urban character. Today, we have reached the stage where these religious buildings have grown importance in the development of tourism, attracting tourists from around the country and abroad.*

Keywords: churches; human settlements; development; Iasi

JEL Classification: N93; N94

Introduction

We tend to label buildings like mosques, synagogues and churches as sacred, while villages, suburbs, employment places by the definition of secular spaces. Contemporary research has considered many issues such as religious adherent's mobility on pilgrimage and tourist heritage, sacred dimensions of domestic space, iconography and symbolism of religious spaces, sacralization of nature, the contribution of religion in the workplace and the economy, geopolitical dimension of religion, mediation of national and ethnic religious entities, postcolonial perspectives of religion (Brace, Bailey, Harvey, 2006).

In the urban context, sacred and secular varieties go hand in hand. Theories of urban space and society take into account how social constructions religious overlap, complement or conflict with secular locations, but with other religious and social constructions. It is necessary to identify the link between church and human settlements, the church being a fulcrum for the development of towns and villages. As we will see in this paper, churches/monasteries were the basis for the development of villages in the city of Iasi, as they subsequently become an integral part of the city, these are actual neighbourhoods. Identifying this link will help understanding the evolution of Iasi, this perspective is one less exploited.

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1. Research Issues

This research considers space analysis, faith and religion. In order to understand the layout of settlements and the sense of space and society, it is essential to know religious practices, both institutionally and in terms of personal experiences. It is important for the spiritual life of society and the building and reconstruction of that society.

The purpose of this paper is to observe the dynamics of settlements regarding the evolution of Iasi county, especially the city of Iasi and what impact did monasteries and churches have on the development of these settlements and the influence they have on the present day in tourism.

2. Literature review

The most relevant studies are those that consider space as a point of contact, exchange and conflict between religion and culture. Such spaces cannot be seen just as sacred or profane, but also as a reflection or reproduction of religious and social aspirations. A culture cannot be understood without understanding firstly the implicated connections and their development, regarding the religious beliefs and practices. It is vital to understand the historical constitution of religious identities in space (Weidenfeld, 2006).

In the urban context, sacred, secular and sacred varieties go hand in hand. Theories of urban space and society takes in consideration the way how religious social constructions overlap, complement or enters in conflict with secular sites, but also with other religious social constructions.

Mircea Eliade believes that the man who belongs to a traditional society can only live in an area which offers access "to high" and whatever the space that he chooses to live he feels the need to live in an organized world. Thus, like the universe has developed from a central point, the most settlements were established at a crossroad. Given this, in the centre of the settlement a portion of the territory was left, so it could be constructed a house of worship / church. People lived with the idea that human settlements amounted to the foundation of a world and assume its creation. Assume responsibility to preserve and renew. It can be said that the settlement represented the universe which man was building it so, feeling closer to divinity, trying to imitate the creative process (Eliade, 2000).

There are a number of researchers that identified construction policies of sacred spaces, and among them we can remember Van der Leeuw. These are:

- Positioning policy, any territory who has a church built on, is another gained territory;

- Property policy, in which any sacred place is held, his sacrality is maintained through claims by the owner;
- Exclusion policy, in which the sanctity of the sacred space is maintained by imposing limits;
- Exile policy, under a form of a loss or nostalgia for the sacred (Kong, 2001).

Besides sacred spaces, we should also take in consideration religious routes. Thus, we can bring into question the pilgrimage routes. They are acquired by local authorities, giving them a commercial side, in addition to the spiritual one, considering this a marketing strategy (Graham, Murray, 1997). An example is the route to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, where a prayer becomes tourist attraction, a ritual is an event for tourism, the difficulty route is seen as a route for adventure tourism, etc. (Kong, 2001).

Michell believes that while sacred places are a result of sacralization processes such as rituals, landscapes are also designed to recreate the sacred world seen by different religious groups (Michell, 1994).

Tourism often has been associated with the pilgrimage. Although religious heritage has attracted millions of people, churches, temples, monasteries and other sacred sites have attracted tourists for various reasons. Pilgrimage depends on several factors such as income, leisure and social rules allowed for travel (Smith, 1989). Others describe tourism as a sacred journey in which the individual escapes from everyday life in another realm (Graburn, 1989).

There are a number of features that describe the phenomenon of religious tourism:

- Tourists are becoming sophisticated in terms of their requirements for travel and are willing to pay more for the experience and facilities.
- Almost all communities around the world want tourism to be developed to achieve an economic boom and communities around sacred places want to take advantage of what tourism offer them.
- Religious organizations and sacred places partner cannot operate separately from each other. Community needs money generated by religious tourism and religious organizations need the support of the community (Brace, Bailey and Harvey, 2006).

However there is a concern regarding the development of tourism marketing of these sacred spaces, considering that it could have a significant socio-cultural and environmental impact to their detriment. It would be required a trusting relationship between civil authorities responsible for tourism and heritage, church authorities and travel agencies (Tilson, 2001).

This type of tourism should come in hand for a new ethical dimension. It is essential that managers propose as a priority the spiritual development and religious support. Tourists face the idea

that sacred spaces might become too commercial and that the primary purpose of these locations could be overshadowed by economic issues. A balance between these it is necessary and managers should not become profane through aggressive selling souvenirs, design and excessive promotion of products (Weidenfeld, 2006).

3. Method and Methodology

This work is based on bibliographic study given the history of Iasi, how the city evolved from pre-Cucuteni phase until today, how religious elements contributed to the development / extension of settlements. I analyzed a series of bibliographic resources containing historical research and then synthesizing this information. The methods used were theoretical, descriptive.

4. Relationship between settlements and territory

4.1. The evolution of Iasi city from pre-Cucuteni phase until early feudal period.

Arguably, Iasi was first developed as a rural settlement, knowing some progress by the name of "fair". He noted the presence of traces of civilization in this territory following the discovery of primitive tools of flint split in 1954, on the territory of current antibiotic enterprises, leading to the conclusion that in this area had lived a band of hunters, living now approx. 200 000 b. c. (Bogdan, 1997). It began a series of investigations that led to the discovery of tools from different periods, and remains of animals including the mammoth bones.

Also, were discovered traces of pottery in pre-Cucuteni and Cucuteni phase, reported around the area Palace of Culture, Targul Cucului area, Nicolina and Valea Lupului. Observing the findings it was concluded that their main occupation consists in agriculture, here being found charred wheat grains and bones of domestic animals.

Later, they discovered Bronze Age material or ceramic pots with characteristic paintings, with shaped mound settlements, with activities such as grazing. Such settlements are found in "Ceairul lui Peretz" and "Crucea Armeneasca", near the Galata monastery (Cihodaru and Platon, 1980). The Iron Age is characterized by other findings of pottery near the Frumoasa monastery, areas near the Nicolina stream, Cetatua, Galata hill. It was also discovered Dacian pottery type inside the Royal Court of the Palace of Culture, Israelite cemetery, Ciurchi, Sorogari etc.

The Dacian Period made its presence felt through the discovery of some tombs, pottery remains, Dacian vessels, ornaments, mirrors, beads, found at Valea Lupului, Tatarasi neighbourhood, Cetatuia hill etc.

The beginning of feudal period had known civilizations like Cumans, Vlachs, Tatars, and the excavations led to discovering sickles, axes, knives, ceramics shaped as jars or ornated bowls, furnace for reducing iron ore, tartar coin silver etc. (Barbu and Ungureanu, 1987).

4.2. Iasi City in feudal period

In this period, predominated constructions with a religious character, only this ones being built of stone, the rest of buildings being built from wood, because the nobles were afraid of the Turkish people, some of the historians assumed the fact that building a house of stone was considered an affront brought to the Turkish people. Most of the foreign travellers, at that time, noticed the multitude of churches, 60 in total.

It goes on the principle that the church was the main ideological support of feudalism, putting his mark on schools and everything that involves feudal philosophy and art. The monasteries stands out in the city life through the mills they held, also being a source of income, generating conflicts however. Such mills were owned by the monastery Socola, Hlincea by the eighteenth century. They also had in their property the so-called "booths" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, bought by the monastery Dealul Mare, Trei Ierarhi, Galata, St. Sava, Barnova etc., being used for marketing products made by them (Cihodaru and Platon, 1980).

In addition to booths they had inns which traded food and beverages, owned by monasteries like Barnovschi, Golia, and Armenian Church etc., which are exempt from paying taxes to the Royal Court. Following these tax exemptions, monasteries were able to win over the market and achieve significant revenue. Another occupation of the monasteries was gardening, such land is owned by the monastery Barnova and Dealul Mare, which were maintained by Greek gardeners (Vasiliu, 2008).

Many monasteries were built in this period by the princes and boyars, to every monastery being assigned the surrounding territories. Such a monastery is Socola, whose founder was Lapusneanu, in 1557, he also was the one who assigns its surrounding territory till Vasluiet (Erhan, 2003).

Galata din Vale Monastery, built between 1577 and 1579, followed the same pattern. Its founder, Petre Schiopul, was the one who gave to the monastery several villages and a pond. As a result of poor positioning, the monastery collapsed, Petre Schiopul will raise the current monastery Galata, at that time called Galata din Deal. So, he offers to the monastery the current land of Miroslava

village. Bishop Teofan offers apiary near the monastery, and hermitages. Finally the monastery reaches to own the territory of Miroslava Vorovesti, Mihailesti, Petresti villages and also the vineyards (Bogdan, 1997). These are just some examples, since most monasteries at that time received properties, among them counting monasteries like Aron Voda, Hlincea, Barnova, Cetatuia, but also monasteries that in the present day does not exist anymore.

Another fact which attests orientation onto religion since ancient times, is when Lapusneanu initiated in Iasi in 1558, a school of religious songs, where recruited students learned Slavonic and Greek, and religious songs in those languages. Later, in the 1600s, such schools have appeared at Trei Ierarhi monastery, bringing as teachers, priests who teach in Latin, but the church is serving in Slavonic. Also during this time, at Trei Ierarhi monastery religious books were printed and another Greek typography was set up at Cetatuia monastery (Iacob, 2009).

At that time, was started another school at monastery of St. Sava and the language of instruction was Greek. First of all, in the existing schools, they were teaching theology and then other areas of interest such as rhetoric, grammar, arithmetic, astronomy, etc., which shows interest in religion. There was a Catholic mission school founded by the Jesuits, having in his property also a library (Erhan, 2003). Later, in 1700 schools came under Metropolitan Administration at the request of Grigore Ghica, providing its money to support them, but it exempted from certain taxes. Among students of these schools were chosen future priests who will serve in churches and monasteries. Students studied in these schools only 4 days a week, the remaining time is allocated for individual study and homework. In the eighteenth century functioned Jesuit, Armenian and Jewish school (Cihodaru and Platon, 1980).

5. The link between church and territory

On Iasi territory we can find many churches, the oldest ones being Sfantul Nicolae Domnesc church, Armenian church, Catholic church, Nicorita church, Cetatuia church, Galata church, Sfantul Sava church etc. I chose to talk about some of the most known churches at a local and regional level, to reveal their importance for the community and tourism.

Figure 1 - Cetatuia monastery, April, 2014



Source: Author's representation

The oldest church is Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc church or the “Royal Church”, which started to be built in 1491, being finished in 1492, during the reign of Ștefan cel Mare. It can be said that it was built during the clotting of Moldavian style, with characteristic elements such as Moldavian arch, star shaped basis on which towers relied, carved stone, brick etc. This was subject to frequent disasters such as fires and earthquakes, and restoration became necessary. In the church were officiate marriages of the daughters of Vasile Lupu, here were appointed rulers and Constantin Cantemir was buried in 1863, (Tofan, 2008).

With the appointment of Iasi as capital, it becomes a major monastic center. It still feels some influence of the characteristic elements of the Țara Românească, because of the architects who contributed to their construction, these elements can be observed for the first time at Galata and Aroneanu church. In the eighteenth century Italian, architectural elements make their presence felt.

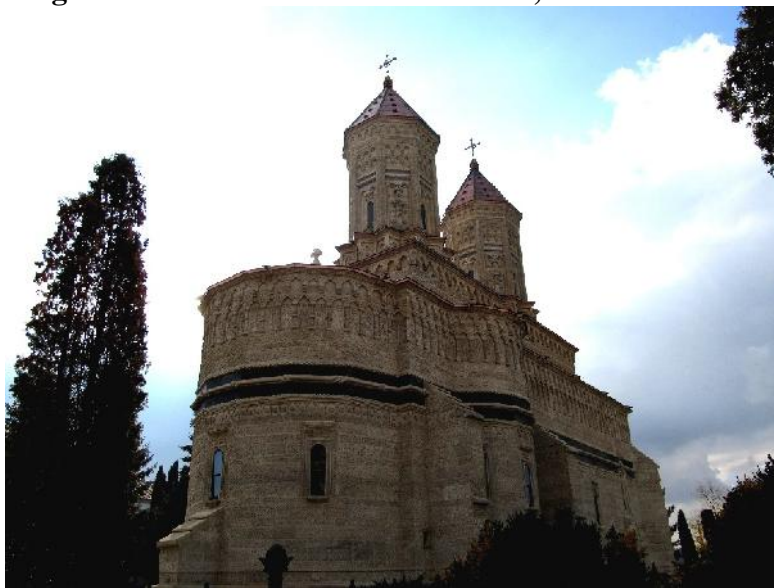
The current Galata monastery, at that time Galata din Deal, was built starting with 1583, the construction having Moldavian elements, but also from Țara Românească. Here are buried 2 children of Petre Schiopul ruler and his wife, this being discovered in 1963, after some diggings, the signet ring having engraved the following message “Maria’s seal of Petru Voda”. Beside this monastery there were built other buildings, but they got ruined through time, being exposed to deterioration¹

¹ For further details see: <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/biserici-manastiri/manastirea-galata-68011.html> (accessed on 8th May 2014).

The old construction of Sf. Sava church is since the 18th century, although there is no trace until now from the old construction, the actual building being built in 1625, the architecture having powerful oriental influences, the door being rebuilt in 19th century (Bogdan, 1997).

During Vasile Lupu reign, Trei Ierarhi church was built, between 1638 and 1639. The architect, according to the Greek inscription, was Gheorghe from Constantinople, while other researchers sustain that the architect was another Greek named Enache². The church was restored by Lecomte de Nouy between 1882 and 1884, and it suffered some modifications. Here we have the Gothic Hall, modified ulterior in a chapel. Over time, the church was reconditioned in 1905, 1952-1953. Among all the religious objects and the ones which ornated the church, until now there are preserved artistic embroidery, and the objects made of gold and silver were taken to National Museum of Arts from Bucharest (Cihodaru and Platon, 1980). Here are submitted the remains of Vasile Lupu ruler, some members of his family, Dimitrie Cantemir, but also Alexandru Ioan Cuza ruler (Vasiliu, 2008).

Figure 2 - Sfintii Trei Ierarhi Church, November 2012



Source: Author's representation

Another old church is Golia (XVth century), the founder being Ioan Golia scribe, and it was dedicated by his wife and son to a monastery from Athos mountain. Its construction started during Vasile Voda reign and ended during Stefanita reign, as it was engraved in Greek on top of an entrance (Erhan, 2003). In the following years it was subjected to fires and earthquakes, and sometimes people

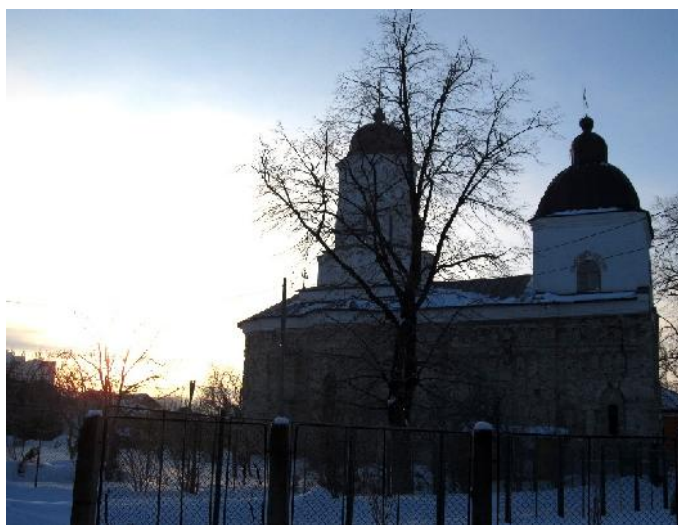
² For further details see: <http://manastireasftraiierarhi.ro/> (accessed at 8th May 2014).

who served the church lost their lives. Vasile Lupu gave as a gift to the church a bronze candelabrum with Moldavian coat of arms and the two-headed eagle³.

One of the most important churches is Cetatuia, this one being built in the second half of the XVIIth century (1666-1670), and the founder was Gheorghe Duca. By 1800, the church suffered from fires, afterwards fell into ruin, but the church got restored between 1910 and 1912. Inside the monastery there is also a building which served as a private residence for Gheorghe Duca (Vasiliu, 2008).

Nicorita church was built by 1500, the first time built from wood, and by the 1626 to be built the current church instead of the wood one⁴. The founder of this church was Ioan Nicoara, hetman and chief magistrate from Suceava (Tofan, 2008). This church was positioned on Tatarasi hills, as it is today, and Miron Barnovschi gave as a gift to Nicoara some land surrounding the church to build houses, an inn and a pond in the Ciric area. Thus, a little rural settlement was developed and over time got an urban aspect (Cihodaru and Platon, 1980).

Figure 3 - Nicorita church, January 2013



Source: Author's representation

In terms of religious buildings of Jewish affiliation, most of them could be found on Cucu Street. This street was named Fainariei street, bordered by Fainei fair (in the present day, Cucu fair), this fair being situated at a crossroads between Cuza Voda, Cucu and Costache Negri. After the research of Gh. Ghibanescu, Fainei fair was situated in front of Saint Pantelimon church, down of

³ For further details see: <http://www.golia.ro> (accessed at 8th May 2014).

⁴ For further details see: <http://bisericanicorita.blogspot.ro/2012/02/istoricul-bisericii-nicorita-iasi.html> (accessed at 8th May 2014).

present Cucu fair. It's said that it was the second most important market from the South Fair (Bogdan, 1997).

After analysing a map of Iasi city having mapped Jewish buildings, the map being a property of Jewish Community of Iasi, on Cucu Street were numerous Jewish buildings, such as Furriers Synagogue, Haif Hoffman Synagogue, Big Synagogue, Meniche Synagogue. This fact shows that on this street there were many Jewish buildings (Bogdan, 1997), and through time they were subject to degradation and in the end they disappeared, in their place being built collective housing in the communist period.

There are many opinions regarding the building of Synagogue. Thus, it is said the land on which is built the Big Synagogue was bought in 1657, afterwards the rabbi Natan Nata Hanover insisted that this synagogue to be completed in 1670-1671. Another story tells us that she was built between 1657 and 1682 and the land which was built on belonged to Aron-Voda monastery⁵.

Figure 4 - Big Synagogue between 1939 and 1980



Source: Jewish Community from Iasi

The Big Synagogue was reconditioned over time, in 1762, 1914, 1924-1925, 1980, the synagogue being subject to fires during 1800s. All this time it existed beside the synagogue, other ones of much smaller dimensions which belonged to different guilds, the oldest one belonging to Jewish tailors. In the present day the synagogue is in restauration⁶.

⁵ For further details see: <http://www.turismland.ro/sinagoga-mare-din-iasi/> (accessed on 8th May 2014).

⁶ For further details see: http://www.fcer.jewishfed.ro/public_html/index.php/actualitate-comunitati/118-comunitatea-evreilor-din-iasi (accessed on 8th May 2014).

Figure 5 - Big Synagogue, November 2013



Source: Author's representation

On the one side and the other side of the entry in the synagogue there are two inscriptions, one of this inscriptions being in Hebrew, giving thanks to rabbi Moses Rosen and Caufman pharmacist, president of Jewish Community of Iasi.

Figure 6 - Saint Pantelimon church, November 2012



Source: Author's representation

Another interesting church, although little publicized, is the Saint Pantelimon church, situated on Cucu Street. It was built in 1762 at the initiative of several merchants from Iasi, using as construction material rolls and beams. Her building had a purpose – the merchants believed that it will banish epidemics that haunted the city in that period. Then, in 1805, it was restaured from the

ground, but this time from stone. Saint Pantelimon was considered the protector of guilds of doctors, barbers, being described as a healer (Cihodaru and Platon, 1980).

Here it was found a book, which currently is at the Metropolitan typography of Iasi, printed in 1797, and it was written the following text: "This book is called Ciaslov, given by His Grace Metropolitan James Stamati when I became a priest along with a liturgy, and a sum of 100 lei and 12 for all my priesthood, for the Bishop who have consecrated catachismus, for the soul of the deceased nephew of His Hollines Grigorie, who died of plague in 1799, and who would feel tempted to steal to be unforgivable by me forever and ever – September 1799" (Bogdan, 1997).

Conclusions

After this research, I can firmly say that churches and monasteries contributed to the development of human settlements, due to economic activities that churches and monasteries had and land they received from their founders and noblemen. Most of the churches had inns, stores in which they commercialized their own products, they had farmlands and houses. Thus, they contributed at the economic development, but also at the expansion of the city. These churches had the support of the rulers, most of them being built by them.

We can observe from the analysed documents that across Iasi we can find many churches, including between the oldest ones churches like Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc, Armenian, Catholic, Nicorita, Cetatuia, Galata, Sfântul Sava etc. Thus, I chose to write about some of the most known churches at a local and regional level, to highlight their importance for the community and tourism.

Iasi became a monastic centre of great importance, once it became the capital of Moldova. In their architecture we can feel some Vallachian elements, because of those who contributed at their building, these elements being noticed for the first time at Galata and Aroneanu church.

Due to the many religious buildings that our city enjoys, we can rely on religious tourism, even though it is not as developed as we wish. The most promoted event from a touristic point of view it is represented by the pilgrimage at the relics of Saint Parascheva which gathers year by year many Christians. On the basis of this religious celebration, accommodation units can enjoy, also the food establishments, traders from all over the country, in this period of the year being an entire collaboration to satisfy the needs of the tourists.

Acknowledgement

"This work was published with the support of the ERASMUS MUNDUS Project EMERGE (Erasmus Mundus European Mobility with Neighbouring ReGion in the East), Action 2 – Strand 1 (2009-2013), Grant Agreement no. 2011-2576/001-001-EMA2, (Lot 8: Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus), funded by the European Union".

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