

**UNIVERSITY "ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA" IAȘI  
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF FACULTY OF HISTORY**

**THESIS**

**TESTING MODERNIST AND PRIMITIVIST  
MODELING ON ANCIENT ECONOMY IN THE  
LOWER DANUBE SPACE. A HISTORIOGRAPHIC  
PERSPECTIVE**

**SUMMARY**

**COORDINATOR:**

**PROF. UNIV. DR. LUCREȚIU-ION BÎRLIBA**

**PHD STUDENT,  
VALENTINA POPA**

**IASI,**

**2022**

# CONTENT

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. CHAPTER I. MODERNISM IN THE APPROACH OF THE ANCIENT ECONOMY.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.1. Doctrine.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.2. Sources.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>1.3. Precursors.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>1.4. Capitalism and industrialization in Mihail Ivanovich Rostovtsev's vision.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>1.5. Followers.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>2. CHAPTER II. MINIMALISM IN THE APPROACH OF THE ANCIENT ECONOMY.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>2.1. Doctrine.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>2.2. Sources.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>2.3. Precursors.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>2.4. Finley's primitivist model.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>2.5. Followers.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>3. CHAPTER III. NEW INSTITUTIONAL ECONOMICS.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>4. CHAPTER IV. TESTING THE MODELS OF ANCIENT ECONOMY.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>4.1. Testing the models of the ancient economy at the Lower Danube during the 1st-3rd centuries.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>4.2. The Roman economy in the vision of Alexandru Suceveanu.....</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>4.3. Nicolae Octavian Bounegru's scientific activity .....</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>5. CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>6. BIBLIOGRAFY.....</b>	<b>192</b>

The evolution of research on the stage of the development of the ancient economy from the Hellenistic and Roman era has been progressively carried out, from the beginning of the 20th century until today. In the context of modern historiography, a new research direction has appeared on the Hellenistic and Roman Economy. This new domain, which has been strengthened itself in an alert rhythm, has taken shape especially after the First World War and developed in the big university centers in Europe: Paris, Cambridge, Berlin, Milan, Leuven and America: Harvard, Princeton, Yale .

In the doctoral thesis entitled Testing modernist and primitivist models regarding the ancient economy in the area of the Lower Danube. A historiographical perspective, I will carry out an analysis of the development stages of the ancient economy in the Hellenistic and Roman spaces. In the analysis related to the thesis, I will present the historiographic research that was carried out in the 20th century.

The argument of the thesis can be found in the desire to research the evolution of the ancient economy from the 1st-3rd centuries, from the area mentioned above, from the perspective of historiographical writings. Added to these is the desire to study a subject that presents originality in scientific research.

Therefore, I will proceed to present the historiographical research of foreign and Romanian historians who explored the field of the ancient economy in different areas of the Roman Empire. The present work focuses on the controversies generated by the historiographical disputes regarding the two currents modernist and minimalist. Our research is intended to be an analysis and comparison of the mentioned historiographic views, but also of how the ancient economy evolved in the area of the Lower Danube and in the west of the Euxine Pontus. The way in which the economy and trade was conducted in antiquity has created disputes, misunderstandings and various arguments today. Some historians have argued that the ancient economy had a fulminant evolution, likening it to that of the modern era, others attributed to it primitive, minimalist features. The latter argued that the ancient economy did not go beyond the *oikos*-household stage. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to highlight the reality of the researched field as correctly as possible. Following this idea, we want to carry out a rigorous analysis of the information that relates to the previous contributions made on this issue, which was not treated separately but only in studies and specialized articles dedicated to the Roman economy.

We consider that until today no extensive comparative study has been carried out regarding the two models, modernist and minimalist, in the area of the Lower Danube and the western Black Sea. We believe that the realization of this doctoral thesis is welcomed, which could clarify the issue of the two economic models of development specific to antiquity in the mentioned area, from the period of the 1st-3rd centuries BC.

At the current stage of our investigation, there is no overview of the economic issues and how the mentioned activities took place in the area of the Lower Danube and the *Euxine Pontus*. Our aim is to provide some clarifying answers for the many problems raised by the historiography of the field and the discoveries from the Danube-Pontic space from the 1st-3rd centuries that complete the research of our theme.

We know that Rostovtsev saw the ancient economy as having modernist achievements. He presented the commercial role and financial operations that took place in the ancient cities. The author makes many comparisons between the ancient and the modern economy. Define the ancient economy with the terms modernism, industrialization and capitalism. We can say that Rostovtzev realized the role of economy and society by creating the most eloquent and comprehensive image of the Roman world.

Regarding the researches of Moses Isaac Finley, the historian formulated a different view than the one presented by Rostovtzev about the ancient economy and the realities of the Roman world. According to the minimalist view, there is a great difference between the realities of the Roman world and the ancient economy, and Finley argues that the ancient economy was not beyond the stage of primitivism. Finley criticized Rostovtzev's view that capitalist development in the modern era differs from antiquity only in quantity and not in quality.

The context in which the historiographical studies were carried out led to the imposition of the two models specific to the research of the economy of the Roman Empire. Moreover, in the interwar period, as a result of the studies carried out around the ancient economy, two directions of research were outlined: the modernist vision and the primitivist vision. The first one was supported by Mikhail Rostovtzev and the modernist historians, and the other minimalist vision had Moses Finley as a follower and the primitivist pleiad. It should be noted that two diametrically opposed research directions have gradually coagulated around these visions. Thus, the modernist vision was assigned economic benchmarks similar to those

of the modern era, and the minimalist vision was given economic characteristics more similar to the Middle Ages.

The first chapter entitled Modernism in the approach of the ancient economy is structured as follows: Doctrine, Sources, Precursors, Capitalism and industrialization in the vision of Mihail Ivanovich Rostovtzev and Followers. In the first subchapter I presented the modernist doctrine. The modernism has as its starting point the studies of Eduard Mayer. Rostovtzev continued the modernist direction of his predecessor, Eduard Mayer. Eduard Mayer is the one who penned the modernist theory. We can say that he is the forerunner of this theory. His theory was in opposition to the evolutionary interpretation of ancient economic history. Mayer therefore proposed a cyclical model, according to which economic development proceeds in a circular fashion from fairly primitive beginnings through highly developed forms of monetary economy and mobilized labor. We believe that Mayer through the stated conceptions paved the way for the modernist conception, a conception that presents the historical reality of the ancient economy. Rostovtzev theorized and defined the modernist model using different types of sources and documents in order to demonstrate that the ancient economy experienced a remarkable evolution which he likens and compares to that of the modern era.

In the second subchapter I described the ancient sources that modernist historians used in their documentation. In order to reproduce as realistically as possible the economic and social development during the Roman Empire, modernist historiographers use various sources of documentation from antiquity. I think it is very difficult to present all the literary, historical and legal sources that the modernist historians used in their documentation and this is the reason why I have summarized the main ancient sources that the modernists used in their research.

In order to reflect as realistically as possible the evolution of trade in antiquity, the presence of industrialists and the bourgeoisie in transactions, Rostovtzev uses literary sources as often as possible. The historian judiciously combines them with archaeological, epigraphic and papyriological documents and with the results of systematic research carried out throughout his career.

For describing the professional categories – *nautae*, *emporos*, *negociatores*, etc. from antiquity, Rougé uses as literary sources, Flavius Philostratus, Cicero and Fonteius, but also Greek inscriptions that relate the commercial activity of Roman citizens. Also, when he writes about

annona he uses the work of Pilnius as a literary source. Starting from the work of Pilnius, Rougé distinguishes between annona and the free distribution of products during the time of the emperor Trajan. In the same issue of the annona and the great trade that took place in the Roman Empire, Rougé compares the ancient literary texts of Ulpian with those of Pilnius the Younger. From the analysis of the two texts, Rougé concludes: Trajan left the administration of the annona practically for wheat which was supplied by free taxes, mainly by supply and demand, and did not represent a point of intervention in the transactions of free trade in grain-copiae, therefore this trade continued to exist in Rome, at the same time the annona quotas were nationalized in other areas. The text of Ulpian which corroborated despite the text of Pilnius the Younger shows us that the annona was part of the great trade.

Historian Jean Andreau uses modern terms such as: bank, bank deposit, bankers, who belonged to a professional and financial group engaged in intense commercial activity. In his work, *La vie financière dans le monde roumain: les métiers de manieurs d'argent and in Banking and Business in the Roman World*, the bank represented a professional institution that consisted of receiving customer deposits that bankers provided in the service of the house. Therefore, the bank and the bankers were clearly elements of modernity that the historian uses quite frequently in his works. Historiographical studies regarding the issue of ancient economic modernity were prepared by many researchers: M. I. Rostovtzev, F. Heilchelheim, R. Bogaert, Jean Rougé, Jean Andreau, André Tchernia, and the list can be continued.

Their views are similar regarding the modernist model. They have been backed up with thorough research and specialized studies carried out throughout the career. The field of the ancient economy was also researched by the Romanian historians, Alexandru Suceveanu and Nicolae-Octavian Bounegru. Our researchers have prepared studies and specialized articles on the evolution of the ancient economy in the area of the Lower Danube and the western Pontus Euxine. Their studies represent a solid foundation of information on the field of ancient economics.

R. Bogaert, the founder of the study on Greek or Roman banks, puts a precise and limiting definition of the bank. The bank was the first professional and legal organization of commercial activity.

According to modernists, the bank was run by a dual credit and deposit service. Bankers took money from customers and deposited it in a deposit, while others engaged in various

financial activities. Andraeu writes about business banks that have few deposits, where bankers invested their own funds. That's why he calls them financial companies. They provided the industry's finances for long-term investment.

Jean Rougé is another historian, follower of the modernist theory. Rougé's economic modernism is everywhere in his work. In one of his works, *Recherche sur l'organisation du commerce maritime en méditerranée sur l'Empire Romain*, the commercial organization in the Roman Empire and the professional categories that were involved in various commercial transactions are reproduced. The historian writes what was the primary role of the negotiator in the Roman Empire. He was the intermediary between the producer and the buyer. Negotiatores were those persons qualified for commercial activities. In this sense we find them mentioned in inscriptions with *cives Romani qui negotiantur*. The negotiators were the veritable rich of Rome. They belonged to the class of knights having an interest in having good relations with the governors of the provinces and each other, and they helped and facilitated their economic activities.

In the second chapter entitled *Minimalism in the approach of the ancient economy*, I started from the study of the primitivist doctrine, namely from Adam Smith, continuing with Max Weber.

It was Smith who said that wealth was based on all kinds of work, especially productive work. Labor was and acted as a measure of the value of a product. But, Smith - he was different from the economists of the 19th century - D. Ricardo, K. Marx and others - he considered not the amount of labor that was invested to obtain a product, but that this good could be bought for another product. Money represented only one commodity category, it was not the main purpose of production. For the historian Weber, the citizen of the ancient world never sought the development of an enterprise. The compatibility system used by the ancients was primitive, minimalist.

Minimalist historians saw the Roman economy as a conglomeration of primitive rural economies located in the orbit of urban habitats that they supplied through the transfer of goods. Goods traffic was carried out only regionally and over short distances. I have described the role of historians, Bucher and Polanyi who through their works contributed to the conceptualization of minimalist theory.

*The Ancient Economy* is the work in which Finley describes the economic system of classical antiquity. Finley interprets the economy of 1000 BC. until 500 AD sociological, instead of using economic models, as Mikhail Rostovtzev did. Finley attempted to demonstrate that the ancient economy was largely a by-product of the state. In other words, economic systems were not interdependent but embedded. His analysis was influenced by sociologists such as Max Weber and Karl Polanyi.

Following the example of Karl Polanyi, Finley argued that the ancient economy should not be analyzed using the concepts of modern economics because ancient man had no notion of the economy as a separate part of society and because economic actions in antiquity were not determined primarily by economic concerns.

Finley's model is based partially on substantivist anthropological theories that paid more attention to cultural and social factors. The mentioned factors acted in the economic life of primitive peoples and hence the name minimalist vision.

Primitivist historians have drawn on various ancient sources to support their minimalist theory. To present the role of slaves in the ancient economy, Finley uses the testimony of Theopompus in his works. According to Theopompus, the inhabitants of Chios were the first to buy slaves en masse.

Taking up Aristotle, Finley wrote: *the distribution of food in the market offered no limited place of this mechanism* to what extent this information was false which the various passages in Lysias and Demosthenes show us. Finley said: *a society is not organized to satisfy its own material needs by the means of an enormous conglomerate of interdependent exchanges*, it would have been impossible to discover or formulate the laws of economic behavior, without which the concept of economy has little chance of being developed and there would be no need for an economic analysis. The absence of the interdependent market conglomerate in antiquity explains for him the lack of autonomous, reciprocal thinking through the absence of the idea of economy in the modern sense, being for the author an error of the great unified market or commercial exchanges. M. I. Finley showed that the wealthy owners who take on debt to preserve their social status, but have nothing in common with the world of fund loans.

***Finley's primitivist model*** is the subchapter dealing with this historian's minimalist vision. The primitivist Finley saw the ancient economy as a conglomeration of primitive village economies. He believed that there was only inter-regional trade that took place with little



intensity due to the limits of production. Trade was directly related to technological underdevelopment, while transport costs remained extremely high. Finley's view, which depended mostly on written sources rather than archaeological evidence, was based on the immobility of the Greco-Roman world in terms of technological progress.

In order to highlight how the economies of ancient Greece and Rome differed from our own, Finley firstly examined how the ancients lacked the concept of an economy. This concept was totally different from the way we refer to the economy in our times. Economy derives from a Greek word, οἰκονόμος and denoted the person who runs a household. The household was the most important economic unit and it did not go beyond the house stage. Of course, the ancients mined, taxed, and traded, but what they didn't do was to combine all their trading activities into an overall societal subsystem. They did not have a huge market where the means of production and distribution did not respond to commercial forces such as: labor cost, supply and demand, trade routes.

Finley dealt with the roles and orders of state. He argued that because the ancients placed so much emphasis on the state, which heavily regulated what business activities were acceptable to the upper orders as well as the lower, their economy was different from any modern economy where everyone was free and able to participate in any lawful commercial enterprise.

The founder of the primitivist trend believed that in the context of universal history, not slavery, but free work, paid work constitutes the uniqueness of ancient society. For most thousands of years of human history and in most parts of the world, labor power was not a commodity that could be bought and sold apart from the person of the worker.

In the last part of the second chapter, I briefly presented the followers of the primitive model: Karl Marx, Max Weber, K. Polanyi, M.I. Finley, A. Bresson, Duncan Jones and others. K. Polanyi stated that the main forms of integration in the human economy are, as we find them, reciprocity, redistribution and exchange. These forms describe different ways of organizing the economic functions of any society. Reciprocity, as the term suggests, is a system in which people pursue a rough balance between the goods and services they receive and provide to others. Mutual obligations are determined by social obligations and by tradition, and they change very slowly. Redistribution is a system in which goods are collected in one hand and distributed by virtue of custom, law, or ad hoc central decision. This system is present in

small units such as households, where it is known as the household, as well as in the taxation levied by modern states.

Pryor, another minimalist historian proposed tests in a study of primitive and peasant economies that can be used to differentiate Polanyi's forms of integration. Pryor distinguished between what he called exchanges and transfers. Exchanges are balanced transactions in which goods or services are exchanged for other goods or services of equal value. This is the kind of behavior most often seen in the markets. Transfers are one-way transactions where goods and services are given without direct return. Grants, tributes and taxes are all transfers. Pryor excluded the invisibles from this accounting, so taxes are seen as transfers rather than an exchange of goods or money to buy social order or military success. This exclusion is necessary because one can make the assumption, always, of an invisible gain that makes all trades balanced. In this case, there is no way to discriminate between different forms of behavior.

Another historian, follower of the minimalist trend is Allain Bresson. In the work, *L'économie de la Grèce des cités: Les structures et la production*, Bresson wants to emphasize what were the limits of land transport. Therefore, transport was carried out weighted over short distances, which could reach a few kilometers, this was only the opinion of the primitivists regarding land transport that took place in limited spaces and which was not in accordance with the realities of the ancient world.

In the third chapter I presented the role played by New Institutional Economics in the new historiographical research. The shift from the barter market to a market economy brings another level of complexity to the historiographical discussion. This new historiographical treatment of ancient economics is today called *New Institutional Economics*. New Institutional Economics (NIE) represents an innovative perspective of economics that seeks to expand economics by focusing on institutions - that is, the legal and social norms and rules on which economic activity is based - and on studies from neoclassical economics and institutional economics. Unlike neoclassical economics, NIE also considers the role of culture and classical political economy in economic development.

The name New Institutional Economics was invented by Oliver Williamson who wanted to differentiate the subject of costs from old institutional economics.

The roots of New Institutional Economics can be found in Ronald Coase, in the two articles *The Nature of the Firm*, published in 1937 and *The Problem of Social Cost*, published in 1960. In *The Nature of the Firm*, Coase fixes the concept of transaction costs to exemplify how firms came to be, and in *The Problem of Social Cost*, from 1960, correctly defines property rights by reference to transaction costs. Coase talks about the definitive economy that he calls the *mainstream*. Of course the *mainstream* continued on its way without any significant change. And it continues to do so. When I talk about mainstream economics, I mean microeconomics, Coase said.

When transaction costs are high enough, initial property rights will have a significant effect. From the perspective of economic efficiency, property rights should be allocated in such a way as to achieve an efficient economic action. Transaction costs also involve an issue related to the effects that firms have on the environment in which they operate.

Oliver Williamson, founder of New Institutional Economics describes four levels of social analysis. The first concerns social theory, particularly the level of embeddedness and informal rules. The second focuses on the institutional environment and formal rules. It uses the economics of property rights and positive political theory. The third level focuses on governance and population interactions within the transaction cost economy, *the play of the game*. Williamson gives the example of contracts between groups to explain them as realistically as possible. Finally, the fourth level of analysis is governed by neoclassical economics consisting of resource allocation and employment. The New Institutional Economics focuses on levels two and three of social analysis.

A new approach to the ancient economy was made by Neville Morley who in *Trade in Classical Antiquity* clearly defines certain features of ancient trade. If there was trade, it was the result of there being a commercial economy, which it looks like a trend toward modernization. Morley asks himself many questions that he evokes with the title of the comparison regarding the role that international trade has had in today's world. He pertinently questions whether this is a positive response to the problem of underdevelopment or an exploitative and imperialist tool. They are good questions that we see as essential and that make us reflect. Morley believes that this ancient trade was confined primarily to ring circuits on the one hand and luxury goods on the other, such as lions from Africa for the amphitheatres of Rome, perfumes from Arabia for the beauties of Ostia, seals from Arezzo for the great tables from Pergamon or the beautiful slaves from Bithynia for the warm

evenings in Trivoli. The analyst believes that the biggest mistake made by most current economic historians is not admitting that it was a big trade. This is the impasse at which true trade in my sense is thus *les fairs* and markets as well analyzed by L. De Light.

Another historian who is part of NIE is Annalisa Marzano. She produced a remarkable case study entitled *The Roman Villa in the Mediterranean Basin* in which she writes about the socio-economic role of the aristocratic elite in central Italy. Villas were signs of Roman economic organization and signifiers of Roman cultural presence in the annexed lands and coasts, and became normal by the end of the 2nd century BC. in central and southern Italy and a little later in the northern Peninsula.

In the same pleiad of the NIE, Pascal Arnaud's synthesis of *Les routes de la navigation antique* should also be exemplified. Arnaud defined the known and used roads on the map of the ancient Mediterranean. In his work he used all sources, underwater archeology with astronomical knowledge, stories of travelers. He added as well the mapping of the list of roads that were interrupted by stable links. Arnaud analyzes the information and finds that the Mediterranean brought many benefits and did not separate the riparian peoples, demonstrating the dynamics of trade flows. It shows the navigation on rivers and long waterways that was segmented by space, was rarely direct and fragmented in time. It featured winds and water currents along with seasonal changes that did not dominate with classic thrusters, thrusters that allowed them to go and return immediately.

The consideration of ancient societies can be enriched by using the *New Institutional Economics*. The NIE is an innovative body of thought arising from a belated recognition by economists that institutions affect economic activity and are also affected by economic pressures. The analyzes carried out are built on certain principles, but also methodological criteria. NIE historians work within a modified neoclassical framework. They took into account both efficiency and distribution issues. Their studies differ from traditional, old or original institutional economics, now criticized related to neoclassical economics, the main one. NIE historiographers approach the ancient economy from the perspective of achievements in all areas of agricultural, economic and commercial life. They saw these developments as an economic boom. They suggested that the Roman economy was not substantially different from recent agrarian economies. In other words, they are followers of ancient economic modernism, thus combating the primitivism as a theory, which leads to the failure of the minimalist model.

Testing the modernist and primitivist models in the area of the Lower Danube and the Black Sea is a challenge for us because it is more than difficult to make a clear and concrete presentation of the evolution of the ancient economy and trade in this area in a long-forgotten era time and people, but also in a period of which little information has been preserved. There are no extensive thorough studies of economic life and how it can fit into the currents mentioned above.

I began the study of chapter IV with the presentation of the writings of ancient authors that reveal the economic life of the mentioned area. For example, Strabo qualified the flourishing trade of Histria with the term *pulcherrima*. As elements that add to the global information we possess about the evolution of the economic weight of the fortress, the economic evolution of the Greek cities from the West of the Euxine Pontus is realistically reproduced by numerous inscriptions, documents and data.

Through the inscriptions that I have exemplified, I have shown the importance of the port fortresses in the western Black Sea, but also of other commercial centers engaged in the economic life of the studied area. The importance of the Tomis fortress in the interprovincial trade in the west is very well known and attested by the numerous inscriptions and documents, associations, etc. Here no less than three associations of sailors, one part were foreigners, and another part were local, and a last part came from Alexandria.

Trade routes. The province of Moesia Inferior had a privileged geo-political position - the lower course of the Danube, the exit to the Black Sea, the location on the border of the Empire, at the same time constituting the absolutely mandatory connection between the eastern provinces and the Baltic Sea regions - it fully benefit from the constructive, civilizing efforts of the Romans, it could not remain outside the commercial interests of those times.

Amphorae - we believe that a small part of the economic development of the region researched by us can be reflected in the circulation of amphorae and in the archaeological discoveries made over time in the cities in the west of the Euxine Pontus and from the Lower Danube. The best represented material, used to be ceramics. In the framework of archaeological excavations, ceramics play a primary role in finding out some essential features of the economic and cultural life in the Dobrogean area from the ancient period. The typological variety of ceramics was structured chronologically and functionally and from early on required the creation of classifications as nuanced as possible even today through the discovery and identification of new categories of ceramic pots. Among these, amphorae have

a prominent place in archaeological sites due to their large number. They were used as pots for transportation and storage. Amphorae show a diverse range of characteristics determined both by the place of manufacture and by their utility.

Manufactured to "package" liquid products, but also solid products such as dried fruits and vegetables that were to be transported over long distances, amphorae provide us with extremely useful data regarding the relationships between certain areas of the Empire at different times, trade routes, the production of goods and their distribution. They were the main means of transporting products necessary for living and in high demand, they represent an important indicator of the knowledge of the economic and commercial life in the area.

Table ceramics and especially *terra sigillata* ceramics, to which are added glass cups of various shapes and sizes, tell us undoubtedly about the area where they were manufactured, about the similarities with other products, about their adaptation and large-scale production of these models in local workshops in the area of the Lower Danube and west of the Euxine Pontus. The circulation of vessels, amphorae, coins, as well as the establishment of merchants in the area studied by us is more than telling, certifying the existence of trade with different areas of the ancient world.

The Roman economy in the vision of Alexandru Suceveanu. In this sub-chapter I have made an exhaustive presentation of how certain aspects of the Roman economy in the Dobrogea area were approached by the historian and archaeologist Dr. Alexandru Suceveanu.

The purpose with which Alexandru Suceveanu meticulously combines the information he possesses is one close to the historical truth that this area, as in others in the Roman Empire, where an intense agricultural and craft activity took place, activity resulting in a surplus of products. The varied range of products obtained by the natives was intended for trade. All this is a clear proof of the existence of the Taurus college which reveals to us the occupation of the Histrians, a dedication in honor of Poseidon Helikonios. The documents reflect the ancestral and religious concerns of the ancient Milesians for the activity at sea. The local coins with the image of the eagle with the dolphin in its claws represented the emblem of the fortress which drew its main income from the fishing activity as some sculptures seem to attest.

Follower of the modernist theory, Al. Suceveanu notices the progress of any activity carried out in the area starting from the rural settlements to the Tomis fortress. Deposits discovered

over time consisting of epigraphic inscriptions, agricultural tools, amphorae, coins, etc. are clear evidence of the modernism of the ancient economy existing in the Lower Danube, but also in other remote areas of the Roman Empire. All of them were exemplified by Suceveanu to highlight the modernity of the Roman period in the Dobrogean area and not only this area.

On this subchapter I have tried to present information that I believe is not sufficient, but I was able to outline a broad picture of the commercial life in the area of Dobrogea. It can be said with certainty that there was a rural life that harmoniously integrated into the tumult of urban life and that created an economic prosperity, causing the inhabitants to actively participate in the commercial exchanges generated by the wealth of these places. I believe that the modernist theories of the historiographical specialists privileged to the ancient economy are well founded, and in them are found realities and particularities of the active Roman trade in the area of the Lower Danube and the west of the Euxine Pontus.

The scientific activity of Nicolae-Octavian Bounegru was treated in the last subchapter. Nicolae-Octavian Bounegru is the new representative of the Romanian Historiographical School. He was born in 1956, in Ploiesti and died in 2019, in Iasi. He was a professor of ancient history and classical archeology at the Faculty of History of the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iasi. He was the holder of the Ancient History, Greek Epigraphy, Toponymy and Ancient Topography courses. We can say that he was a specialist in the fields of Economic and Social History of the Roman Empire, Hellenistic and Roman ceramology, Roman provincial archeology and Paleo-Christian archaeology.

In the work *Studies on the Pontic and Aegean Economy*, O. Bounegru reports on the extraordinary character of Nicomedia which was an important trade route. In the context of the economic life of the Roman Empire, Nicomedia had a decisive role in the goods traffic of Protipendida. The citadel's trade was oriented towards the Pontic and Aegean worlds, as well as the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Mediterranean. The importance of Nicomedia in Mediterranean trade and beyond is found in Diocletian's Edict where we learn that the center of the city was the departure or arrival point of the trade routes from Alexandria to Rome, Ephesus, Thessalonique, Salona and the Black Sea, Trapezunt, Sinope and Tomis.

Historian and archaeologist Bounegru concludes as follows: the West-Pontic area was part of the great maritime traffic of the Greco-Roman world. In the same idea of the intensity of the exchange of goods, the author presents the primary role played by large commercial ships, along with auxiliary vessels of various categories. These ships had an important role in the

interprovincial trade in which ports such as Histria, Tomis, Callatis, Odessos represented the main commercial centers and hubs in the area. They were distribution points for products transported to the interior of the provinces of Moesia and Thracia.

An eloquent inscription regarding the trade between the Dacian regions, respectively the North Danube and Greece, is given to us by the epigraphic document discovered in Mytilene. This inscription it shows that a merchant named P. Aelius Alexander erected an altar in honor of Theos Hypistos specifying the quality of Βουλευτης Δακιας κολωνιας Σαρμιζεγεθουσης. The reason for the presence may be the very stay that Alexander had in Mytilene. We cannot know whether he was involved in commercial relations because the term εμπορος is not expressly mentioned. Certainly, we can understand the quality that this trader had in the Island of Lesbos, and hence the commercial relations that the merchants of the Pontic area had with the remote spaces of the Aegean Sea.

Writing about the modernist vision and the evolution of the ancient economy, we deduce that there is no difference between the latter one and the economy of the modern era. The stage of economic and social development existing during the Roman Empire, in the area of the Lower Danube and the west of the Euxine Pontus, had reached a fairly high level. Bankers, banks, bank loans, professional associations and commercial activities were common throughout the territory of the Roman Empire. These were the conceptions that the modernist historiographers supported in their works were also present in the works of Nicolae Octavian Bounegru. His work is eloquent evidence that the historian saw economic progress in every relic discovered and document researched, thus motivating the progress of society in antiquity.

Conclusions. In my doctoral thesis *Testing the models of the ancient economy in the Lower Danube during the 1st-3rd centuries* I carried out an analysis of the stages of development of the ancient economy in the area of the Lower Danube and west of the Euxine Pontus. To these historical subjects I have added the related comparisons with other more or less far away areas and territories. It is known that the historiographical research specific to the field of the ancient economy led to its division into two currents, modernist and primitivist respectively. The division of the ancient economy was viewed according to the progress or regression it made. Thus, the premises were created for extensive historiographical disputes that took place in the 20th century. Historiographers and researchers have analyzed the



ancient economy from the perspective of evolution, but also of its transformations in ancient times.

I chose this theme because I wanted to research a topic that presents originality in historical-scientific research. I carried out a rigorous analysis of primary information that related to previous contributions made on the issue of the ancient economy, explored from the end of the last century to the present day.

I started from the concepts stated by the two historians Rostovtzev and Finley which led to the creation of two historiographic currents and which generated disputes in this regard.

I presented the evolution of the stage of the ancient economy starting from the visions of the two great historians, Rostovtzev and Finley. I continued with the doctrines of the two historiographical models. The sources used by modernist and primitivist historians have been detailed in the first two chapters. (I reported from which ancient sources the modernist historians started in their research in order to render as correctly as possible the economic reality of the ancient world.) The primitivists used the ancient sources in their documentation, but did not combine them with the archaeological documents.

Thus, I tried to make a brief presentation of the specialized terminology regarding economic life. In this analysis, I started from the actual term (*emporos*, *oikos*, *mercatores*, etc.) and tried to highlight what those merchants were carried out their economic activities in different areas, but also at the area of spilling the Danube into the sea. The inscriptions that tell us about these economic activities are varied, they reflect the intensity and extent of the trade that took place from the areas of the Pontus Euxine to the far away Mediterranean Sea.

The diversity of economic activities and the extent of trade are difficult to be described, but we have tried as much as possible to present valuable information in the sub-chapter *The Vision of Mikhail Ivanovich Rostovtzev*. We believe that the economy in antiquity experienced a rapid evolution and was reflected in the development of agriculture, in the commercial transactions carried out, in the permanent demand for products for different exchange markets, in the monetary circulation, but also in various activities specific to the researched field.

Not all historians involved in researching the ancient economy had a modernist view. Others did not notice the modernism of the ancient economy and did not categorize the activities of this field as capitalist. They were generically referred to as minimalists. They also saw the

Roman economy as a conglomeration of primitive rural activities, located in the orbit of the urban habitats that they implicitly provided through the transfer of goods.

To these were added the works of Romanian researchers regarding the economic evolution in the area of the Lower Danube and the west of the Euxine Pontus. The studies carried out by the Romanian historians, Al. Suceveanu and N.O. Bounegru details this aspect, but until today no comparative study has been carried out regarding the testing of ancient economic models in the area of the Lower Danube and the western Black Sea.

Follower of the modernist theory, Alexandru Suceveanu notices the progress in every economic activity carried out in the area. He analyzes economic progress from the rural settlements in the Lower Danube area to the port cities on the west bank of the Pontus Euxine. We can say about the deposits discovered over time by Suceveanu and O. Bounegru that they are clear evidence of agricultural and commercial progress in the area. Agricultural tools, amphorae, coins, epigraphic inscriptions are clear signs of the modernism of the ancient economy in the Lower Danube, but also from other far away areas of the Roman Empire, during the 1st-3rd centuries.

The topic of our research *The testing of modernist and primitivist models in the area of the Lower Danube and the Black Sea* represented for us a challenge and an attempt to realistically capture information that reproduces the evolution of the economy and trade in the mentioned area. From the analysis I have carried out, it can be confirmed the primary role played by the commercial centers of Moesia Inferior that were heading towards the Greco-Oriental world, as well as the fortresses on the Pontic coast. The presence of different categories of products discovered over time, from the period of the 1st-3rd centuries BC, proves to us that the mentioned area was a market that led to trade with different areas. Ample agricultural, economic and commercial activities took place in this territory, which are part of the modernist trend.

## BIBLIOGRAFY

### I. IZVOARE LITERARE

- Apicius, *De re coquinaria*, edidit Mary Ella Milham, Teubner, Leipzig, 1969.
- Apuleius, *Apologia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, vol. 25, no. 3, may, 1911.
- Arrian, *Anabasis Alexandri*, I-IV, The Loeb Classical Library, translation edition Iliff Robson, B.D., William Heineman LTD, London, vol. I, 1929.
- Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander*, 1-4, translated by P.A. Brunt, Loeb Classical Library, 1976.
- Arrianus, *Periplus Maris Euxini*, translated by William Falconer, Oxford, 1805.
- Aristotel, *Historire des animaux*, VIII, Collection des Universités de France, traduit par Pierre Louis, Société D'édition Les Belles Letres, Paris, 1969.
- Ammien Marcellinus, *Histoire*, tome III, livres XX- XXII, Collection des Universités de France, traduit, Jacques Fontaine, Société D'édition Les Belles Letres, Paris, 1996.
- Ammianus Marcellinus, *De bello Gothico*, în *Izvoare ale Istoriei Românilor. Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae XIII*, vol. 01-15, edidit G. Popa Lisseau, București, 1934-1939.
- Cicero, *De officiis*, I, Cambridge, with an English translation of Walter Mille, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, London, 1913.
- Claudius Aelianus, *De natura animalium*, traducere, M. Garcia Valdes, L.A. Rodriguez- Noriega Guillén, Berolini et novi eboraci de Gruyter, University of Oviedo, Spain, Gruyter, 2009.
- Dio Cassius, *Istoria romană*, vol. I, traducere A. Piatkowski, Editura Stiințifică, București, 1973.
- Dio Crysostom, *Orationes*, XXXVII, translated by J.W. Cohoon, H. Lamar Crosby, The Loeb Classical Library, 1940.
- Filostrat, *Viața lui Apollonios din Tyana*, traducere realizată de Marius Alexianu, prezentare și note efectuate de Adelina Piatkowski, Iași, 1977.
- Gaius, *Gai Institvtiones* Or Institutes Of Roman Law by Gaius, with a translation **and commentary** Edward Poste, Edition Poste, 4th edition, at The Clarendon Press Oxford, 1904.

- Herodot, *Istorii*, vol.I, II. Traducere, notițe istorice și note de F. Vanț-Ștef (cărțile V, VI, IX) și A. Piatkowski (cărțile VII, VIII), București, 1964.
- Iornades, *Romana et Getica*, in dem Monumenta Germaniae Historica, edidit Societas Aperiendis Fontibus Rerum Germanicarum Medii Aevi, Theodor Mommsen, Apud Veindmannos MDCCCLXXXII, Berlin, 1882.
- Itinerarium antonini, în *Itineraria romana*, I. Lepzig. edidit Otto Cuntz, conspectum librorum recentiorum adiecit Gerhard Wirth. Ed. Stereotypa editionis primae, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana, 1929.
- Juvenal, *Satires*, Translated by A. S. Kline, text disponibil pe site-ul [https://web.ics.purdue.edu/~rauhn/Hist\\_416/hist420/JuvenalSatirespdf.pdf](https://web.ics.purdue.edu/~rauhn/Hist_416/hist420/JuvenalSatirespdf.pdf), 2011.
- Lucian din Samosata, *De Dea Syria*, in translation Strong, A. Herbert, The Syrian Goddess, Constable & Company LTD, London, 1913.
- *Notitia dignitatum : accedunt Notitia urbis Constantinopolitanae et Laterculi provinciarum*, Berlin, 1876.
- Ovidiu, *Tristes*, III, Collection des Universités de France, traduit par Jaques André, Société D'édition Les Belles Letres, Paris, 1968.
- Ovidiu, *Epistulae ex Ponto*, traducere în limba română de Teodor Naum, Ediție bilingvă îngrijită de Livia Buzoianu, Ex Ponto, Constanța, 2019.
- Petronius, *Satires*, Classical Philology, volumul 72, nr. 1, published by The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1977.
- Plinius cel Bătrân, *Natural History*, XXXVII.11, translated by H. Rackham, William Heineman, LTD The Loeb Classical Library, LTD, London, 1963.
- Plinius, *Epistolae*, VI, VII, the edition by R.A.B.Mynors in the Bibliotheca Augustana, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1963.
- Plutarh, *Moralia*, în fifteen volumes, III, Havard University Press, London, 1931.
- Polybius, *Histoires*, livre IV, Collection des Universités de France, traduit par Jules de Foucault, Société D'édition Les Belles Letres, Paris, 1972.
- Procopius Caesariensis, *De aedificiis*, IV, 11, in *Opera omnia*, edited by Jakobus Haury, in Aedibus B. G. Teubner, Lepzig, 1905-1913.
- Ptolemaei, *Geographia*, edition C. Müller, C. T. Fischer, Paris 1883-1901.
- Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae morales*, 3 volumes, with an english translation by Richard M. Gummere, ph.d. of haverford college, London, 1925.

- Strabo, *Geography*, Volume VII, Books 15-16, translated by Horace Leonard Jones, Loeb Classical Library, MA Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930.
- Tacitus, *Histories*, books 1-3, translated by Clifford H. Moore, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard, 1925.
- Tertullian, *De cultum feminarum* text disponibil pe site-ul: <https://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf04/anf04-06.htm>,
- Ulpianus, *The Enactments Of Justinian, The Digest Or Pandects*, Book XLVIII, *The Civil Law*, XI by S. P. Scott, Cincinnati, 1932.
- Vitruvius, *De Architectura*. V, 12,1, By F. Krohn. Lipsiae. B.G. Teubner, Leipzig, 1912.

## II. CORPORA DE INSCRIPTIÏ

- CIL – *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin, 1863.
- CGL- *Corpus Glossarium Latinarum*, ed. G. Goetz, Leipzig- Berlin, 1888-1923.
- IG – *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin, 1903.
- IG - *Inscriptiones Graecae II et III: Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores*, Berlin, 1913 -1940.
- IG - Aegean Islands includes Crete: Lesbos, Nesos and Tenedos, XII, 2 134.
- IGB I – *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae, I. Inscriptiones orae Ponti Euxini*, ed. G. Mihailov, Sofia, 1966.
- IGB II – Mihailov, G. 1958, *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae. II. Inscriptiones inter Danubium et Haemus repertae*, ed. G. Mihailov, Sofia, 1966.
- ISM I – *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine, Histria și împrejurimile*, ed. D.M. Pippidi, București, 1983.
- ISM II – *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine, II. Tomis și teritoriul său*, ed. Stoian, București. 1980.
- ISM III - *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris III, Callatis et vicinia*, ed. A. Avram, Paris, 1999.
- ISM V - *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine, Capidava-Troesmis-Noviodunum*, ed. E. Doruțiu-Boilă, București, 1980.
- SEG – *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden, 1923-1954.

### III. DICȚIONARE

Oxford Classical Dictionary, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

### IV. LUCRĂRI GENERALE ȘI SPECIALE

- Andreau, J., (1988), *Introduction à M.I. Rostovtzev, Histoire économique et sociale de L'Empire romain*, Paris.
- Andreau, J. (1989), *Introduction à M.I. Rostovtzev, Histoire économique et sociale de monde hellénistique*, Paris.
- Andreau, J., (2002), *Twenty Years after Moses Finley's The Ancient Economy*, în Scheidel, W. Von Reden, S. (éds.), *The Ancient Economy*, Edinburgh.
- Andreau, J., Chankowski, V., (2007), *Vocabulaire et expression de l'économie dans le monde antique*, Ausonius Editions, Bordeaux.
- Andreau, J., (2010), *L'économie du monde romain*, Edité par Ellipses, Paris.
- Arms, J. (1981), *Commerce and Social Standing in Ancient Rome*, University of Chicago Press, Harvard
- Bounegru, N.O., (1986. A), *Über die Cives Romani consistentes von Scythia Minor*, Münstersche Beiträge zu antiken Handelsgeschichte 5, 1, p. 59-73.
- Bounegru, N.O., (1986. B), *Contribuții privind portul cetății Callatis în antichitate*, în Pontica 19, Muzeul de Istorie Naturală și Arheologie, Constanța, p. 267-272.
- Bounegru, N.O., (2008), *Comerț și navigatori la Pontul Stîng și Dunărea de Jos*, Muzeul de Arheologie „Callatis” - Mangalia, Demiurg, Iași.
- Bounegru, N.O., (2009), *Studies on the Pontic and Aegean Economy*, Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, Iași.
- Bounegru, N.O., (2013), *Mercator, Studie zur antiken wirtschaf im Ponttosgebiet und in dr Agais*, Parthenon Verlag, Kaiserslautern und Mehlingen, 2013.
- Coase, R., (1998), *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Hundred and Tenth Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association, May, p. 72-74.

- De Ligt, L. (2002), *Tax Transfers in the Roman Empire*. in: De Blois, L., Rich, J., eds. *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire*, Amsterdam, p. 48-67.
- Duncan-Jones, R., (1974), *The Economy of the Roman Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Duncan-Jones, R., (1990), *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Finley, I.M., (1959), *Historia VIII*, repris dans *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece*, *Historia VIII*, p. 97-115.
- Finley, I. M., (1965A), *Technical Innovation and Economic Progress in the Ancient World*, *Economic History Review* 18, issue 1. p. 29-45.
- Finley, I.M., (1965B), *Classical Greece*, in *Second International Conference of Economic History: Aix, 1962, Paris*.
- Finley, I.M., (1973), *The Ancient Economy*, Chatto and Windus, London- Berkeley.
- Finley, M.I., *Aristotle and Economic Analysis*, in: Finley, M.I. (ed.) *Studies in Ancient Society*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London/ Boston 1974.
- Finley, I.M., (1976), *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece*, London-Toronto.
- Marzano, A., Métraux, G., (2018), *In the Mediterranean Basin Late Republic to Late Antiquity*, Cambridge.
- Morris, I., Saller, R., Scheidel, W., (2007), *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*, Cambridge, 1-12.
- Rougé, J., (1966), *Recherches sur l'organisation du commerce maritime en Méditerranée sous L'Empire romain*, S. E. V. P. E. N. 13, Rue du Four, Paris, Paris.
- Rougé, J., (1975), *La marine dans l'antiquité*, publié en Presses Universitaire de France, Paris.
- Rougé, J., (1987), *Navires et commerces de la méditerranée antique*, Cahiers d'histoire, tome XXXIII, Lyon.
- Suceveanu, Al., (1980), *Piese de sculptură și arhitectură din așezarea rurală de epocă romană de la Fântânele (jud. Constanța)*, *SCIVA* 31, 4, p. 559-584.
- Suceveanu, Al, (1982 A), *Histria VI. Les thermes romains*, București - Paris, p. 94-120.
- Suceveanu, Al., (1982 B), *Objets en verre et pierres semi-précieuses*, p. 120-123.

- Suceveanu, Al., (1998), *Fântânele. Contribuții la studiul vieții rurale din Dobrogea romană*, Bucuresti.
- Suceveanu, Al., Barnea, Al., (1991), *La Dobroudja romaine*, Editura Enciclopedică, Bucarest.
- Suceveanu, Al., (2000), *Histria X. La céramique romaine des Ier-IIIe siècles ap. J.-C.*, Editura CIMEC, București.
- Suceveanu, Al., (2010), *Opuscula Scythica*, Editura Academiei Române, București.
- Tchernia, A., (2011), *Les romains et le commerce*, Publication du Centre Jean Bérard, Naples.
- Temin, P., (2001), *A Market Economy in the Early Roman Empire*, JRS 91, p.169-181.
- Temin, P., (2013), *The roman market economy*, Princeton University Press, Oxford.

## V. MONOGRAFII

- Andreau, J., (1987), *La vie financière dans le monde roumain. Les métiers des manieurs d'argent IVe siècle av J.C. - III éme siècle ap. J.C.*, École française de Rome Palais Farnese, Roma.
- Ligt, L., (1993), *Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire*, Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire: Economic and Social Aspects of Periodic Trade in a Pre-Industrial Society: 11 (Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology), Brill Academic Publishers, Amsterdam.

## VI. SURSE WEB

- <https://oxfordre.com/classics>.
- <https://econpapers.repec.org/bookchap/cupcbooks/9780521876605.htm> .
- [https://www.persee.fr/doc/mcarh\\_1220-5222\\_2014\\_num\\_10\\_1\\_965](https://www.persee.fr/doc/mcarh_1220-5222_2014_num_10_1_965).
- <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40750690>
- <https://revistapontica.wordpress.com/revista/nr-45-2012>.
- <https://ro.waykun.com/articles/michael-ivanovich-rostovtzeff-arheologul-american>;
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Adam-Smith>.
- <https://dbcs.rutgers.edu/all-scholars/8692-finley-moses-isaac>.
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Max-Weber-German-sociologist>



- <https://dbcs.rutgers.edu/all-scholars/8692-finley-moses-isaac>.
- <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/bucher-karl>.
- <https://delong.typepad.com/files/ancient-economy.pdf>.