

In the Homes of Townsmen from the Olden Time. An Introduction to the Study of Town Houses in Eighteenth-Century Timișoara

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Abstract: Research on urban habitation can reflect various and sundry aspects. This study aims to undertake an analysis of the houses of Timișoara's eighteenth-century residents from a micro-historical perspective. Using methods of cultural and social history and examining archival documents such as inventories and wills, we shall try to find out what a house looked like inside, what decorations or furniture garnished the rooms, what activities the household members fancied, which kind of food or clothing was available for them, etc. The article starts by presenting a general frame of the living conditions in this Habsburg fortress, followed by details of the townspeople's private life. In order to do that, we highlight the association of several types of sources, but also the way information about assets appears in documents. From poorer inventories to the most complex wills, the sources cover a wide range of subdomains of the so-called "*la petite histoire*". Through the three case studies presented here, we shall attempt to understand if living in the town by the Bega resembled habitation conditions in Early Modern Europe, and whether Timișoara's dwellers were aware of what was in fashion on the rest of the continent. The analysis of the three examples starts by exploring the location of the house and continues with considerations on its internal structure, its landlords/ tenants and the description of the goods. The images resulting here provide an unexpected and vivid introspection into the domestic sphere three hundred years ago.

Keywords: Timișoara, eighteenth century, urban housing, domestic sphere, inventories.

Rezumat: În casele orășenilor din alte vremuri. O introducere în studiul locuințelor din Timișoara secolului al XVIII-lea. Cercetarea locuirii urbane poate îmbrăca diverse și numeroase fețe. Studiul acesta își propune analiza din perspectivă microistorică a locuințelor timișorenilor din secolul XVIII. Folosind metodele istoriei culturale și sociale și valorificând documente inedite precum inventarele și testamentele, încercăm să descoperim cum anume arata un interior de casă, ce obiecte de decor sau de mobilier înfrumusețau camerele, cum își împărțeau timpul membrii unei gospodării, ce hrană sau ce îmbrăcăminte aveau la dispoziție etc. Articolul pornește de la condițiile generale de trai în cetatea habsburgică, pentru a intra apoi în detaliile vieții private a orășenilor. Pentru asta, scoatem în evidență

alăturarea mai multor tipuri de surse, dar și modul în care informațiile legate de posesiunile oamenilor sunt dispuse în documente. De la inventare mai sărace la cele mai complexe testamente, sursele acoperă o arie largă de subdomenii ale "istoriei mărunte". Prin cele trei studii de caz prezentate am căutat să arătăm dacă locuirea în orașul de pe Bega se aseamănă cu cea din Europa premodernă și dacă timișorenii sunt la curent cu "moda" de pe continent. Analiza celor trei exemple a urmărit amplasarea locuinței, structura internă, locatarii săi și descrierea bunurilor posedate. Imaginile rezultate oferă o introspecție neașteptată și vie a sferei domestice de altădată.

Cuvinte-cheie: Timișoara, secolul al XVIII-lea, locuire urbană, sfera domestică, inventare.

In decrypting a town's past, the most challenging aims are describing the atmosphere, recreating the colours of buildings, the street noise, the life of its various neighbourhoods, and the daily activities of town dwellers. We can often refer to the houses' exterior appearance, to the public sphere and to everything that happens in the public eye. However, this time we shall try to open a few doors, to get inside the houses of yore, and get a glimpse of the most intimate spaces of eighteenth-century citizens. Town life three hundred years ago was completely different from nowadays. Reenactments of political and military events that shaped urban spaces hundreds of years ago are not enough to depict that world in great detail. Therefore, a series of research domains known, until recently, as "*la petite histoire*" can now complete the picture. Our goal is to find out, for instance, what ordinary things were defining for everyday life in eighteenth-century towns: what people ate, how they lived, how they dressed, if they read, what their favorite leisure activities were, etc. The attempt to depict the daily life of citizens in the Banat region starts with the documents we have at our disposal.

We found the inspiration that led us to embark on this study in several archival documents. Noticing that a series of documents preserved in Timișoara's regional archive include inventories, we decided to focus our attention on them. Regarding this kind of documents, one can ask the following questions: what are these inventories called and on what occasion were they written (marriages, deaths, inheritances, sale-purchase or lease agreements). Another curiosity concerns what these inventories tell us about the deceased and their families. This is the starting point of a long line of questions that will guide us in our future research. Sometimes the documents include information regarding the bequeather, such as that person's time of death, occupation, sometimes the name of the inheritor and his or her kinship

to the deceased. Still, the most precious type of information, from our point of view, is the list of assets itself, including house objects (from the smallest items of jewellery to books, tableware and furniture) and possessions like animals or means of transportation (waggons, carriages), as well as real estate (the house, the pub, the stable, or the garden). The inventories also include details relating to the amount of cash owned by that individual and the debt balance. This data can reveal interesting aspects concerning inter-human relationships among the town dwellers, the structure of domestic staff and the value of goods and services at that time.

Although we are only at the beginning of a more complex research, some points of interest and purposes of our study could be highlighted here. The main aim is to discover some benchmarks of urban material culture and everyday life, with emphasis on town houses. The time frame we have chosen is the period of Habsburg administration in Banat (1716-1778) and the area of our research is limited to urban dwellings in this province, but mostly Timișoara. The raw information extracted from documents will help us answer some interesting questions: what a house looked like inside, how many rooms there were and what purpose they served, what household annexes it had, what kind of movable properties and real estate a family owned, what the structure of a household was, how distinct the furniture was, what kind of tableware existed in the household, what luxury objects there were to be found, what books the houseowners had, if any, what clothes they wore, what perishable goods the inventories included, etc. Another type of analysis, after taking into account several more sources (other archival documents or secondary sources), will unveil further cultural aspects: eating customs, fashion, dominant colours and fabrics, hygiene habits, the places and objects associated with leisure activities, the relationship between public and private space inside a household, the particular types of objects that were not mentioned in the inventories. Moreover, this approach can shed light on the house owners' social status, on the "tastes" of that time, as well as on consumerist modes and cultural transfers. We shall be able to draw conclusions based on comparisons between the possessions of individuals from different social strata. The economic perspective (product pricing, asset value) is only relevant insofar as it allows us to understand the cost of living three hundred years ago. Furthermore, it would be useful to discover the origins of the goods found in the houses we shall be examining: were they from weekly markets, local manufactories, local craftsmen or were these products imported? And the list of questions could go on...

For a rigorous research approach, it is necessary to mention the domains covered in this study and the methods we shall resort to. The history of everyday life is by default an area of interdisciplinary research. Part of

broader areas such as social and cultural history, the concept of everyday life leads us immediately to think of the history of mentalities, the history of nutrition, leisure, clothing, and furniture. The concern for these "material" aspects of habitation has led to the emergence of another domain: the history of material culture or *Wohnkultur*. Furthermore, while we choose to study town life, we also take into account urban history, architecture, the latest archeological discoveries and economic history. The documentary analysis we shall undertake will highlight the details, the particular, our research being conceived from a micro-historical perspective. From a socio-historical standpoint, some of the inventories outline not only the social-religious status of the owners/tenants, the family or the household structure, but also the entourage, the nature of the services they needed or the activities they fancied. In any case, our research focuses on exploiting original archival documents. In addition, we shall try to identify complementary sources: church books that can provide us with details about the owners and their families, archival documents regarding the city (rules and regulations, citizens' petitions to the local administration, guidelines for the mayors), travelers' and clerks' accounts, or cook books from that era. Visual sources – in particular, engravings, paintings, blueprints that show urban landscapes, interiors or portraits are an important advantage. The published results of archaeological excavations conducted in Timișoara in recent years, including descriptions and plates representing objects, are also an appropriate research instrument. The maps of Habsburg Timișoara published by architect Mihai Opreș can be very helpful for understanding the changing layout of the city. Marionela Wolf's study¹ regarding the use of wills as historical sources has served to us as an example of a research method, offering also useful translations of archaic German words. The script and the language in which eighteenth-century German documents were drafted pose a serious challenge, so for an accurate translation and understanding of the terms we have used several dictionaries and lexicons of archaisms in German², as well as the specialized literature in this field.

¹ M. Wolf, *Chirurg-maior și înalt temnicer în Timișoara carolină. Studiu de caz asupra recursului metodic la testamente și acte notariale din prima jumătate a veacului al XVIII-lea (Major-Surgeon and High Jailor in Carol's Timișoara. Research on Methodic Recourse to Testament and Legal Papers in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century)*, in *Studia UBB Historia*, 51(2006),2.

² J. G. Krünitz, *Oekonomische Encyclopädie, oder allgemeines System der Staats-Stadt-Haus u. Landwirtschaft*, Berlin, 1812, <http://www.kruenitz1.uni-trier.de/>; J. Grimm, W. Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, http://woerterbuchnetz.de/cgi-bin/WBNetz/wbgui_py?sigle=DWB; W. Haas (Hrsg.), *Provinzialwörter: deutsche Idiotismensammlungen aus dem 18. Jahrhunderts* (De Gruyter Verlag, Berlin/New York, 1994).

Our present article is envisaged as a plea for this kind of history, for exploring unpublished archival documents and for tapping the resources of several interconnected fields of research. The following pages are a brief introduction into the fascinating world of daily town life in the eighteenth century, mostly focusing on habitation or the *domestic sphere*³ (a concept that includes the diversity of early modern houses). The structure of our study has four main parts: an introduction to living conditions in post-Ottoman Timișoara, a short description of the sources, the case studies – which form the core of the present article – and some concluding observations at the end.

Habitation in Habsburg Timișoara

Eighteenth-century Timișoara was a city built upon the ruins of the former Ottoman fortress or, rather, a city that was rebuilt and reconfigured to become the residency of the Austrian province of Banat. The effort to build new houses, to erect a different defense system, to create churches and military and administrative headquarters was completed by the end of the century. Over the first few decades, the old Turkish establishments were restored and used. Characteristic for the Habsburgs, the new rulers gathered information regarding the province they had conquered. For Timișoara, the authorities ordered a conscription of the buildings there. Carried out on 15 December 1717, the conscription certified the existence of: 401 houses, of which 243 had been ceded to the garrison (179 inside the Fortress walls, 61 in the *Große Pallanka* and 3 in the *Kleine Pallanka* – the two suburbs), 17 houses had been assigned to clerks or officials (Fortress), 32 to German citizens (24 inside the Fortress, 7 in the *Große Pallanka*, 1 in the *Kleine Pallanka*), 98 houses belonged to Orthodox Romanians and Serbs (3 in the Fortress, 95 in the *Große Pallanka*), 9 houses to Catholic Romanians and Serbs (3 inside the walls, 6 in the suburbs), and 2 houses to Jews. Besides these, there were 91 stores in the city, 3 in the *Große Pallanka*, 8 in the *Kleine Pallanka*, and 7 mosques.⁴ In order to cover the basic needs of this recently conquered town, some of the first measures undertaken by the authorities targeted housing. Therefore, in 1718 the mayor and his councillors received instructions to ensure public safety and sanitation by making it mandatory for citizens to keep barrels with water and ladders at home (in case of fire), and to have a wooden or stone pavement in front of

³ J. Eibach, I. Schmidt-Voges (Hrsg.), *Das Haus in der Geschichte Europas. Ein Handbuch* (De Gruyter Verlag, Berlin/Boston, 2015), p. 25.

⁴ A. Țintă, *Situația Banatului la cucerirea lui de către habsburgi* (Situation of Banat at the Habsburg Conquest), in *Studii de Istorie a Banatului*, I(1969): 104.

every house.⁵ A certain land plot outside the city walls (in the south) was organised for agriculture and a vegetable garden was created there – just enough to cover the citizens' basic food requirements. This was a 500 *Joch* lot, and the gardens were 1000 *Klafter* broad and at least 40 fathoms long.⁶ One of the most urgent needs was to acquire building materials. Besides wood, bricks were a necessity, so they were produced and burned in special kilns near the city walls.⁷

The plans and expectations of the Austrian administration are visible in the "*Building Regulation for the City and Fortress of Timișoara*" (1728), written under Governor Mercy's direction, and in other guidelines for the clerks called *Instructions-Verordnung* (1721). The former required the demolition of old wooden buildings and the erection of new ones, exclusively made out of brick, placed within a rectangular chessboard-patterned network of streets; the chimneys were no longer to be built of wood or clay bricks and the ground floor needed to be designed with an arch. An annex to this Regulation (1730) added further specifications; the Constructions Comitee had the following members: Eysersperg (Major of Paradeplatz), Deschan von Hansen (councilor of the Banat Administration), the two head architects Kunle and La Cass, cashier Reisenbüchler and accountant keeper Kempf. The citizens who wanted to build houses had to address themselves to this comitee for purchasing materials.⁸ All over Europe, these kinds of Regulations were intended to ensure harmonious and homogenous characteristics inside urban dwellings.⁹ The second document we mentioned, *Instructions-Verordnung*, brings a clear image of the living conditions in Banat to light: "the subjects in the province live mostly in disheveled homes, in hovels, in the woods, being, here and there, always on the move; that is why it would be better if they lived in permanent houses, as this minor change could bring only advantages; they should build tidy homes, with rooms, pantries, stables and gardens."¹⁰

It was not only Timișoara's physical appearance that had to suffer during the siege and the post-1716 reconstruction works, but also its social structures. For an ideal understanding of townspeople and how their social status was

⁵ *Instruction*, SJAN Timiș (Archives of Timiș County), fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara* (Timișoara's Town Hall), 2/1718, f. 4 v.-f. 5.

⁶ *Grundbrief des bürgerlichen Terrens*, SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 2/1718, f. 10 v., f. 11; J. N. Preyer, *Monographie der königlichen Freistadt Temesvár*, Ed. Amarcord, Timișoara, 1995, p. 189; 1 *Klafter*=1,896 m; 1 *Joch*=0,57 ha, J. Jakob, *Masse, Gewichte und Währungen im Banat 1718-1990* (Mainz, 2000), p. 7.

⁷ SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 5/1718, f. 4 - f. 4 v, 9/1718, f. 1, f. 2 v.

⁸ SJAN Timiș, fund *Comandamentul General Bănățean* (Banat General Headquarters), batch V, 1/1730.

⁹ J. Eibach, I. Schmidt-Voges (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, p. 221.

¹⁰ *Instructions-Verordnung*, legalized copy from 1789, SJAN Timiș, fund *Colecția de documente Muzeul Banatului* (Documentary Collection of Museum of Banat), 111/1721.

reflected by their living conditions, a description of the general framework is required. Habsburg Timișoara did not reflect perfectly the traditional division of early modern urban societies. The traditional upper class – the patricians or the older inhabitants, the economic and political elite, sometimes part of the nobility – was missing in post-Ottoman Timișoara. The few nobles to be found in eighteenth century Banat were an imported element. The oldest inhabitants of the city were the Romanians, Serbians and Jews who had chosen to stay after the Austrian conquest; according to the plans of the new authorities, however, the representatives of these ethnicities were to be part of the city's elite only to a lesser extent. Therefore we propose the following conventional classification: the upper layer consisted of the provincial governor, the fortress and garrison commander, the head councilors of the Administration, the garrison's high ranking officers, the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox bishops, people bestowed upon sometimes with noble titles and appropriate incomes; we would add the mayor and town councilors, on account of their position, and the wealthy merchants. The middle class consisted of all the skilled labourers working in construction, manufactories, the Administration, the garrison and court clerks or officials, members of religious orders (Jesuits, Salvatorian and Bosnian Franciscans, Misericordians), soldiers, craftsmen and merchants. The bottom layer of society comprised domestic servants, helpers or apprentices of various craftsmen, unskilled workers from manufactories, carriers, day-laborers, executioners, torturers, beggars, fugitives, and convicts. With the huge help of colonists, the authorities succeeded in creating this diverse urban society. In the following pages we shall try to reflect on the housing and living conditions of those times.

Sources: typology and classification of content

The main sources for our research on early modern towns are inventories. The names of these documents from Timișoara's Archive are typical for the time in question: *Inventarium* or *Specification*, followed by "über [...] rückgelassene Verlassenschaft/ Verlassenschaftsvermögen" (inventory/ specification on the estate/ legacy left behind).

Most of the documents we have chosen are wills, with lists of goods or just an inventory of objects possessed, written after someone's death. Also useful are some sale-purchase or lease contracts (of houses and/or pubs), the inventory of a café, one of the local brewery and brandy distillery. To these we can add some other interesting sources such as church books, food price tables, regulations and guidelines for townspeople (regarding hygiene and public safety, rules for the production and sale of alcohol, bread, construction regulations, etc.).

Going back to our inventories, we should first remark their proportions and complexity. At this point we believe that when it comes to humble citizens with few assets, the inventories are short and the goods are listed on only a few pages of the will. Let us take the example of Sebastian Neuer – master blacksmith, who died in 1747. In the four pages of the will, one can first read his debts and then his possessions. The modest blacksmith owned two sets of clothes (men's jackets and trousers), five shirts, a silver brimmed hat, two pairs of silk stockings and a pair of shoes, most of them old and worn-out. As part of the trousseau, the Neuer family owned a set of bed linens with 11 pillows, to be inherited by his widow. As for the dishes used in the household, the inventory included tin bowls, plates and mugs, copper pots and trays and a laundry cauldron. The furniture consisted of an oval table, an old chest for clothes, two beds (all made of wood) and three leather armchairs. From the tools used for his craft, Sebastian Neuer kept (probably in his workshop or in the room reserved for work) various nails, horseshoes, hammers, some bellows used to stoke the fire, a shackle, etc. The house itself was an old Turkish establishment valued at only 20 fl.¹¹

Long and detailed inventories were drawn up for the elites, who had a more prominent position within the old society and boasted considerable wealth. These inventories offer the most surprising and exciting forays into the past. In wills of the wealthy, the objects were grouped more clearly. The following categories appear in the inventories we have studied: money, real estate (usually at the beginning or at the end), precious metal objects (gold, silver), porcelain objects, books, clothes, linen, tableware, weapons, harnesses, copper, tin, brass and iron objects, furniture and decorations, animals, products such as wine or certain foods, followed by chariots and waggons. In some cases, the goods were not grouped by fabrics or the materials they were made of, but depending on where they were located (kitchen, bedroom, stable, cellar), giving the researcher a more viable insight from three hundred years ago, as will be shown further. To give an example, here is the inventory of the Arad fortress commander, Count of Bourg, the most comprehensive document yet analyzed. We shall avoid presenting too many details now because these will be the subject of another study. The document does not only offer a look at household items, fine clothes, fashionable furniture, wines, but also at other movable and immovable possessions (2 houses in Arad, 1 mill, 1 house in Belgrade, waggons, chariots, horses, cattle, sheep) that diversify the typologies of known objects from other inventories.¹² In any case, regardless of the form or size of the inventory, the greatest challenges of research are the

¹¹ SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 1/1719.

¹² SJAN Timiș, fund *Comandamentul General Bănățean*, batch II, 6/1728.

discovery of what lies behind words (often old words, vanished from the basic vocabulary), then understanding their functionality and how they fit into the context of habitation.

A glimpse inside old houses from Timișoara

Houses in Austrian Timișoara followed, as far as we know, the pattern of early modern habitation on the continent. The typology includes lodgings/rental flats (*Mietwohnungen*), houses of the bourgeoisie and villas of the nobility. The first category consists of residential complexes composed of several flats (each divided into one room - and a kitchen, at the same time, next to a pantry). The houses of townspeople with considerable income could be built with 1-2 levels, and in this case the lucrative activities (workshop, store, pub) were to be found on the ground floor, the owners living on the first floor (where the room, the pantry and the kitchen were located), while the servants lived on the second floor or in the attic. The patricians lived in larger houses, equipped with annexes, cellars and courtyards, whose ground floor was intended for the family business.¹³

The examples of two types that we will present in-depth are buildings from eighteenth-century Timișoara, for which we were able to find their exact location on the map. Firstly, we have a private home, owned by the Klang family in the 1750s, which also included the pub *Zum weißen Engel* (*At the White Angel*). The second case study is about a larger town house divided into lodgings, known among old (and contemporary) citizens of Timișoara under the name Solderer House or *Zur den drei Kronen* (*At the Three Crowns*). Although the original exterior appearance of these buildings remains unknown, it is possible to depict their structure, their interior and also to describe their furniture and other domestic objects.

At the White Angel. Researching Joseph Klang's house brings information regarding the owner's social status, possessions, fashion, interior design and gastronomic habits.

By a sale-purchase contract dating back to November 12, 1757, Joseph Kulterer sold the pub *At the White Angel* and the house to Joseph Klang, innkeeper, at a price of 7500 fl, to be paid in installments. Among the contract's signatories, we find that of the mayor back then, Anton Klang, and of the counselor Pietro Antonio Del Pondio, future mayor. The seller himself - Kulterer - was mayor of the town in the 1760s. The pub seems to have older roots if we are to trust the secondary sources. Its first known innkeeper was Adam Rohmleithner and the establishment was to be found inside the fortress.

¹³ R. van Dülmen, *Kultur und Alltag in der frühen Neuzeit*, Bd. 1: *Das Haus und seine Menschen* 16. - 18. Jahrhundert (Verlag C.H. Beck, München, 1990), p. 60-63.

Later, on a list of confirmed public houses from 1743, the publican here was Eusebius Rauch. According to a Memorandum of innkeepers from 1754, the owner of the *White Angel* was Maria Anna Hetzin.¹⁴ The last name is certified also by our archival document,¹⁵ because the sale contract reveals the fact that Joseph Kulterer was the guardian and trustee of one child of the Hetz family. Assuming that the husband of Maria Anna Hetzin was Jacob Hetz, as the church books attest (deceased in 1753), one notices that he appears to have been the owner of house no. 43 on a map from 1752.¹⁶ Thus we have the location for the building we are about to research: the establishment with an interior courtyard on the corner of the streets *Eugenygasse* (today *Eugeniu de Savoya* Street) and *Präsidentengasse* (*Mercy* Street today).

Joseph Klang was counselor at the city hall and publican *At the White Angel*. According to Timișoara's "Bürgerbuch", he was born not far away, in Raab/Győr and became a citizen in October 1753 at the age of 26,¹⁷ but we believe that he arrived in town one year earlier, when his first marriage took place. His marriages were unlucky, as both his first and second wives (Barbara Schmidt and Anna Maria Walter) died young and he remarried shortly afterwards. With his third wife, Margareta Seiler, he had two daughters: Clara and Anna Maria. It seems that the first child, born in 1760, did not live to the age of 7 (she is not mentioned among the successors in her father's will of 1767). Her sister also had a short life and died on September 15, 1772.¹⁸ According to our calculations, Klang lived 40 years. In the following pages details about his family's way of living in the 15 years he spent in Timișoara will be revealed.

Getting back to our primary source, the heirs of Klang's estate were his wife Margareta and his daughter Anna Maria. Just a quick look at the inventory suggests the Klang family was a wealthy one. Nothing could be more true. Their house had 6 rooms (mostly named by their dominant color: yellow, green, blue, red, then the penultimate room and bedroom), besides the pub. Also, Klang had cash and owned firearms, silverware, carts and horses, wine barrels with hundreds of liters in the house and other cellars. With a

¹⁴ S. Hirsch, *The Colorful World of Public Houses. Ownership, Clientele and Leisure Time Activities in 18th Century Timișoara*, in *Journal of Education, Culture and Society*, Wrocław, 2(2015): 339, 342.

¹⁵ SĀAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 8/1773; documents from this file are: a sale-purchase contract between Joseph Kulterer and Joseph Klang, dated November 12, 1757 and estate inventory of the deceased Joseph Klang, dated June 16, 1767.

¹⁶ E. Aldag, *Ortsfamilienbuch Temeschburg Stadt 1718-1861*, Band 2 (Cardamina Verlag, Buxtehude, 2014), p.1096; M. Opriș, *Timișoara. Monografie urbanistică (Timișoara. Urban Monography)*, vol. I (Ed. Brumar, Timișoara, 2007), pp. 65-66.

¹⁷ Bürgerbuch – Catastrum Civium, Muzeul Banatului Timișoara, p. 987.

¹⁸ E. Aldag, *op.cit.*, Band 2, pp. 1452-1453.

fortune estimated at almost 20,000 fl, this family was definitely part of Timișoara's upper class.

We shall begin with a central place in any bourgeois house. The Klang family's dining room was called the Yellow Room, due to the window curtains' color. It contained 3 small tables and an oak table, 12 armchairs and a rush sofa. The room also had a bar-buffet, or *kredenz*, of high quality, having been handmade by a sculptor. The walls were embellished with two mirrors and various stucco paintings with: hunting, agricultural, and maritime scenes, fruit images, alongside a portrait of "the Imperial Prince" (likely Eugene of Savoy¹⁹). Of course, the family also owned various types of dishware. The guests of the Klangs were served coffee and tea in some of the 12 porcelain cups, or enjoyed hot chocolate from cups or specially made glasses for this particular drink. In addition to other cups and kettles, we also find a set of 18 Bohemian glass tumblers, with gilded trims and 6 tumblers for Rosoglio²⁰ liqueur, another 6 glasses of Tokay wine, also with gilded trims and 6 simple glasses. They seemed to have had all necessities available for the meal ritual, especially since within this social class it had remained a lengthy activity.

The Green Room served as a place of prayer, as evidenced by the objects in this room, but also by its name - "Capelle oder grüne Zimmer". Being more modest than the one described above, the simplicity of space is given by a solid wood table, a carpet, a wardrobe, a small box for writing instruments, two green and two yellow armchairs. Piety is helped by the crucifix and the painting of the Virgin Mary, alongside which there are 15 smaller paintings

We shift to another room, called the Blue Room, which could very well have served as a relaxation space for the Klang family, as it contained a table, 6 blue-lined armchairs, two folding chairs and a sofa. On one wall there was a solid wood cabinet with drawers and shelves. The room was decorated by a mirror with 4 candlesticks, a crucifix and several paintings (one representing the seasons, a copper engraving) and, last but not least, the windows were covered with blue curtains. The following two rooms (the Red Room and the penultimate room) were similarly furnished: one or more tables, armchairs and a sofa, two mirrors and paintings. The Red Room had portraits of the

¹⁹ Eugene of Savoy (1663-1736), commander of the imperial armies during the Turkish wars, the conqueror of Timișoara in 1716, a figure with an impressive military and political career.

²⁰ Rosoglio (Rossoli) liqueur is a sweet alcoholic beverage of Italian origin, whose name can be used to indicate the *Ros Solis* plant (Tau der Sonne/Drosera) made from various spices and herbs: cinnamon, coriander, anise, cloves, nutmeg, together with fruits (lemons, oranges) and sugar, depending on the recipe; see the explanations and various recipes in the Encyclopedia of J. G. Krünitz.

Imperial couple Charles and Elizabeth,²¹ while in the other room were the portraits of Francis and Maria Theresa.²²

Finally, we reach the space meant for resting. The furnishing of the family bedroom consisted of a wardrobe with 3 drawers, four armchairs in yellow, assorted with curtains and, of course, a bed for which they had 8 quality linen and 5 normal bed linen. In this space, a pendulum rang every quarter of an hour.²³

Of course, the fine dishes and cups listed in the living room are not the only ones. They are joined by silverware, made up largely of 12 or 24 piece cutlery sets, as well as a sugar bowl with 6 coffee teaspoons, a glass or a kettle. Also worth seeing are the Klang-owned weapons: Damascus style pistols and muskets (two of each), two pistols and brass slings, two normal muskets, two pocket pistols, and two other firearms. The Klang spouses' wealth included several special coins: 16 Souverain d'Or coins (valued at 198 fl), 3 Kremnitz ducats and 4 talers.²⁴ The house itself was valued at 7,000 fl (including the pub license), 10 years after its purchase, when it was priced at 7,500 fl. For the trips, they used the four-seat cart drawn by two horses, which, together with the harness gear, was valued at 200 fl.

From the inventory of the deceased, we can also establish what garments he wore. Being part of the wealthy bourgeoisie of Timișoara, Joseph Klang dressed in fine clothes made from materials that were trendy in Western Europe. Tunics of various colors and materials (one of French cloth in Pompadour style, one of red camgarn²⁵), white, blue, black, red, silk plush vests, with gold buttons or silver trims, plush pants, numerous shirts of Swiss cloth, silk stockings, night caps, a hat, a wolf fur and three pairs of new shoes.²⁶ What a difference to the wardrobe described above, belonging to the blacksmith Neuer, made up of few clothes, and even those shabby!

The private living space of the Klang family was at the same time - as was typical for the era - used for their trade. The head of the family was a bartender and he owned *At the White Angel*. Besides the initial data, we can also deduce that the pub functioned in one of the rooms of the building. Guests crossing the threshold of that pub could take a seat at one of the 16

²¹ Carol VI of Habsburg, Archduke of Austria (Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire: 1711-1740) and his wife Elisabeth of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel.

²² Francis Stefan, Duke of Lorraine, Grand Duke of Tuscany (Emperor: 1745-1765) and his wife Maria Theresa of Habsburg, Archduchess of Austria (Queen of Hungary and Bohemia: 1740-1780).

²³ Inventory of all rooms, SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 8/1773, f. 6v-9.

²⁴ Inventory of precious objects, 8/1773, f. 5-6v.

²⁵ camgarn (das Kammgarn/der Kamelott) = high quality fabric, made of fine wool, with a special weave.

²⁶ Wardrobe inventory, 8/1773, f. 5v-6.

tables, with 12 leather armchairs, 18 rush chairs and 19 chairs with backrests. The pub also had benches and sofas. Drinks were held in a buffet and served at the bar counter. Of course, the glasses for customers were not as valuable as those in the family's living room, but they were suited for such a place: 44 0.3 liter bottles, 34 0.5 liter bottles, 50 glasses, 5 mugs, 5 tin kettles, 2 wine funnels, one set of graded pots. The publicans served both types of wine that were once popular in Banat, namely Buda wine and a local variant. The inventory also gives us details about the total quantity of wine, as follows: in the house itself there were 10 barrels of Buda wine (1 Eimer at the price of 5 fl) and 37 barrels of Banat wine (1 Eimer at 3 fl 30 kr), totaling more than 400 Eimer. It seems that the same family took care of the town hospital eatery, while they owned 67 barrels of provincial wine in its cellar, and the guest-room furniture also belonged to them (7 tables, 5 benches and 24 chairs). We know that the civil hospital's eatery was part of those *Bierhäuser* attested in 1756, which had received the right to serve beer and wine.²⁷ The amount of wine preserved by the Klang family already seems impressive, but that is not all: Joseph Klang still kept 875 Eimer of wine from Buda in the Jesuit cellar and 461 Eimer in the new supply chamber's cellar.²⁸ According to our calculations, multiplying the amount gathered by 60 (1 Eimer = approx. 60 liters) results in a huge number of nearly 140,000 liters of wine. So Klang was not just an inkeeper but also a wine trader, this assumption being supported by the inventory, because among his debts we find one of 631 fl and 33 kr, owed to the customs office, with the mention "for the delivered wines". He also owed various parties over 2,000 fl. for procuring the same beverage from all around the province. This wine was served at the bar, but was also sold in Timișoara, as shown by an example from the same inventory: Bartolomeu Lederer bought 90 Eimer of wine from Klang. Of course, the success of Klang's business, his family's wealth and, implicitly, the complex inventory is partly due to his choosing to participate in the wine trade, given the poor quality of drinking water, as well as to oversee a public establishment. If we imagine the interiors of these people's house, they certainly reflect the owners' social status, which tallies with the position of town counselor that the head of the family eventually held.

At the Three Crowns. The second location chosen as an example was located near *The White Angel*. One of the most imposing of the city's buildings could be found at the intersection of *V. Alecsandri* and *E. Savoya* Streets, called *Zu den drei Kronen* or *Solderisches Haus*, valued at approximately 24,000 fl at the middle of the century. This palace is linked to the personality of Mayor Peter

²⁷ SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 2/1756.

²⁸ Pub and wine inventory, 8/1773, f. 9-14.

Solderer²⁹ (who held office from 1722 to 1741), remembered for the inauguration of the new Town Hall in 1735, for his business and offices (he was a merchant, an innkeeper, chief of a horse exchange station – *Landvorspannsbeförderer*, a leaseholder of beer and brandy production). Solderer was one of the first citizens of Timișoara (in 1717), settling there when he was 27 years old.

This building is important not only for its size, but because it gives us a close look inside it. Since construction was only financed through loans, even after Solderer's death, its income was intended to pay these debts. What better way to make a profit out of a palace if not by dividing it into several homes for rent and also allocating space for an ever present pub. The documents provide accurate information regarding the building's income and expenditure; therefore we can find the tenants' names, their jobs and the rooms they occupied. The palace's layout is square, with an internal courtyard, with a cellar and a stable. Two sides faced the perpendicular streets formerly called *Eugenygasse* and *Wienergasse*. The building consists of a ground floor and two storeys, dominating the quarter. Thus, in regards to types of premodern buildings, this is an example of *Zinspalais* divided into several accommodation spaces for rent (*Mietwohnungen* or *Wohngelegenheiten* – as they appear in documents).

Let us take a look inside the building. First of all, the inhabitants of Timișoara frequented the ground floor pub. We have confirmed its activity for June-August 1745, when publican Frantz Zwirner was paying 16 fl rent for 1 large room, 1 small room, pantry and cellar, followed by Rudolph Krauthann (master binder) who paid 48 fl for the months between August 1745 and February 1746; for the months of January-December of 1748, Franz Gumberth paid 83 fl 32 kr as rent. Later, the Solderer House was leased to innkeeper Gregor Taffner for 1,300 fl per year (we have proof of payment for 1754-1757).³⁰ Still, we believe Taffner was not the only one tending to the pub, but also a certain Michael Constantin. An inventory written after his death (1755) shows that he dealt with a *Zins-Gaststube* called "*drey Cronen*", sub-leased from Taffner,³¹ about which we shall return with more details.

Outside this leisure space, there were 24 other apartments of different sizes and compartments for all pockets and requirements, available for rent.³² Tenants could opt for one or more rooms, with or without a kitchen and a

²⁹ Details on Solderer's life and his palace in B. Schiff, *Eine alte Hauschronik. Aus dem Lebensroman des Stadtrichters Solderer*, in *Temesvarer Zeitung*, nr. 76(1934) and A. P. Petri, *Biographisches Lexikon des Banater Deutschtums* (Th. Breit Druck, Marquarstein, 1992), pp. 1826-1827.

³⁰ SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 6/1745, f. 64, 68, 74, 80, 86, 94.

³¹ SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 6/1745, f. 99.

³² All the details regarding partitions, tenants and price rates, 6/1745, f. 80-81v, 86-88v.

pantry, with a cellar, a fireplace, near the stairs or in the corner. If the tenants had horses or carriages, they could rent lodging in the stable. The ground floor was divided into 10 dwellings (including the pub) in the form of shops and another room with or without a kitchen; the first storey contained 9 apartments and the second one only 5. As was the practice at the time (and it still is to the present day), the ground floor of the town buildings often accommodated workshops, offices, shops, stalls for merchants or craftsmen, and our example is no exception. The building hosted Armenians and Jews dealing with small trade, a tailor, a furrier, but also the so-called coffee makers, who either had a small stall or simply prepared and sold the coffee at the counter to all customers. The first storey provided accommodation to several other Jews, including Rabbi Abraham Mayer. The apartment at number 12 (3 rooms, 1 pantry with a kitchen) was inhabited for a few years by Menas Barum, none other than the Armenian abbot who had arrived in town to help develop the leather goods trade. He laid the foundations for the city's morocco manufacturing,³³ for which he brought families of Armenian and Turkish specialists. The second floor hosted, for a while, an Administration clerk, a salt office inspector, a musician, another rabbi, an Armenian merchant and the building administrator, who lived there for free due to his job. We may notice that among the tenants there were many Jews, many of them among the oldest inhabitants of Timișoara: Menachem Salomon, Moyses Coronel, Nisim Tebet, and Baruch Isac - who remained in the city after the siege of 1716. Additionally, some Jews settled here in the following decades: Abraham Mayer came from Belgrade in 1740, Lazar Besanze/Peschanze from Alba-Iulia in 1723, Joseph Juda and Samuel Ledidy settled here after fleeing the war in 1737 precisely from the capitals of the neighboring provinces that would be lost by the Austrians: Craiova and Belgrade respectively.³⁴ The fact that Jews were present in the *intra muros* area of Habsburg Timișoara, and even in one of its hallmark buildings, should come as no surprise. Although officialy the authorities tried to limit their numbers, they admitted their partial failure to do so, as the cited document attests. Of course, on the first and second floors there were also flats of simple craftsmen, such as a bookmaker, a turner, a shoemaker, a cooper, a coach driver, or a grave digger.

Getting back to the Solderer House partitions, it is documented that some rooms remained empty for some periods, while others stored commodities. Those who afforded to pay 60 fl annually could stay in 3 rooms with a kitchen; the price for 1 room with a kitchen was 24 fl, while renting a

³³ morocco = fine goat/sheep leather, made for luxury shoes.

³⁴ Conscripton of Spanish and German Jews from Timișoara, SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 1/1743, f. 1-13.

shop on the ground floor with another 2 rooms and a kitchen would cost over 100 fl per year. A place for a horse in the stable costs just over 1 fl. At one point, two apartments were rented by the same person, which consisted of three large rooms, two small ones, two kitchens, a stable lodging and a cellar, for 13 fl and 20 kr per month. This *Zinspalais* had about 18 kitchens in total, and 3 rooms out of a total of 40 had a fireplace. The number of each type of room and apartment should be considered as an approximation, since the configuration and functionality of some of them could change from year to year.

As we proposed above, we will now look more carefully inside the pub *At the Three Crowns*, situated on the building's ground floor. In the 1750s it was already famous among Timișoara's inhabitants, because it was among the places where "there are many balls, the citizens are invited by tickets, using a box at the entrance, where they pay 30 kr." In order to avoid bothering the neighborhood because of party noise, the owners were warned by the authorities that they would have to pay an extra fee if the music continued after 10 pm.³⁵ But what did this pub look like during the day and what services did it offer? According to the inventory of Rascian Michael Constantin, there were tables, benches and chairs (6 in total). Although it does not appear to have been large, the pub provided not only alcoholic beverages but also food. Being a sausage manufacturer and vender, we consider that the host offered this specialty to customers, as well as other dishes, such as coiled baked bread, pies, or green beans. As evidence of his main occupation, the inventory shows that he also owned a tent used as a market stall. In fact, it seems that these *Wursthändler* were once often seen in German and Italian cities.³⁶ The Rascian publican, similar to those mentioned before, lived near the eatery, together with his wife, Stana, in a rented apartment on the ground floor of the Solderer House. Theirs was a modest home, fitted with an old closet, a table, three chairs and a bed. The walls were decorated with some paintings and two small mirrors, and lighting was provided by the two brass candlesticks.³⁷ Obviously, we can only imagine that this was just one type of home, and in other "apartments" in the same house there was more diverse furniture, richer inventories, because the tenants had other social and economic statuses, hence, different standards of living.

³⁵ SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 6/1756, f. 1.

³⁶ F. Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism, 15th - 18th Century*, Vol.I *The Structures of Everyday Life* (University of California Press, 1992), p. 198; our inventory uses the archaic term *Bratl Brater*.

³⁷ According to the inventory, the eatery also contained: 190 okka of green beans, 100 okka of bread flour, 8 pints of brandy, Rascian coiled baked bread, 2 copper kettles, 2 copper pie trays, one weight, 3 dough kneading bowls, 2 flour sieves, 3 graded pots and funnels, SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 6/1745, f. 98-99.

The Solderer House is an ideal case and has given us the possibility of an example inside an example, that is, it has enabled us to shift our gaze from the general partition of the palace to the particular case of the *At the Three Crowns* pub and to the bartender's home. Throughout the eighteenth century, this imposing palace was home for many of Timișoara's inhabitants, from public servants, church officials, businessmen or craftsmen. The examples of 1745-1746, 1748 and 1755 allowed us to find the living conditions inside it, but they also highlighted the social mobility – typical for that time in such an urban dwelling place. The colonists would come, seek a livelihood, set up homes and families, and when the challenges were too great, they would leave for other destinations.

At the end of our journey through the homes of Timișoara's inhabitants from almost three hundred years ago, some observations are required. Following the examples given in this study, we first notice the different forms of dwellings in the eighteenth century. Speaking strictly of houses, they were either old Turkish ones, still standing for a while, or were made of brick, as demanded by the new regulations, of various sizes, from single-family homes to those *Zinspalais* (themselves a habitation microcosm). It is difficult to showcase the complexity of the society that appeared in Banat after the Austrian conquest with just a few examples.

The Klang family house allowed us a virtual walk through the daily life of Timișoara's well-off bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the inventory mentioned at the start of this study (that of the blacksmith Neuer) and of the publican Constantin show the characteristics of another social layer, which we may call the lower middle class. In order to get closer to viewing the domestic sphere and to answering some of the initial questions, here we are going back to the details of these researched cases.

We will begin with the benchmarks offered by the general studies on habitation in the early modern age. It was found that on the inside, the rooms were usually painted white, and in the case of the wealthiest owners, the walls could be covered with wood panelling or wallpaper. The floor had originally been just compacted earth, and from the fourteenth century on there are attested ceramic tiles or parquet flooring, quite widespread by the time our research focuses on. The old ceiling had exposed wooden beams, in richer houses the beams were decorated by painting or engraving, and the eighteenth century brought along the trend of having the ceilings painted entirely in white, which was why the beams were covered with gypsum.³⁸ For the moment we can imagine that the interiors of Timișoara's dwellings looked similar, because we have not found any details on this matter yet; in any case,

³⁸ R. van Dülmen, *op. cit.*, p. 67; F. Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 294-296.

what is known is that some rooms had carpets covering the floors. In addition, using painting for wall decorations is often attested in our documents.

A house's structure was influenced by the economic status of the owners/tenants. The basic partitions of a dwelling were the kitchen and the room – sometimes that was all some townspeople had at their disposal during that time. Examining our chosen examples, we discovered that typical dwelling types of the European premodern era could be found in Timișoara: *Mietwohnungen* (the “apartments” in the Solderer House), homes of craftsmen or wealthy citizens (the Klang house) and patrician palaces (we could count the commander's new house in this category - located on the southern side of the Parade Square, or the Deschan palace of the Administration councillor Johann Anton Deschan von Hannsen, which still exists on the *Proclamația de la Timișoara* Street).

Returning to a dwellings' chambers, in the modest ones the family spent most of the time in the kitchen, due to the presence of the stove there - a source of heat. Concerning heating, we have documented the fireplace as the rooms' source of warmth. Terracotta stoves had spread into towns already in the sixteenth century. Although the upper class homes had at least one room with a fireplace, this "object", as other studies have observed,³⁹ was usually excluded from the inventory. For Timișoara, the fireplace appears in the description of rented flats *At the Three Crowns*, and the kitchen was also attested there. In the case of the Klang family, the inventory does not include the cooking space or a fireplace in any room, but we know they existed. In fact, the variety of dishware and cutlery implies activities such as cooking main courses or desserts, preparing and serving tea, coffee, hot chocolate and alcoholic beverages. In addition, the "tinware" category includes "kitchen utensils". For Michael Constantin these activities were part of his trade, so he had pots for kneading dough, bowls for pies, or graded pots for drinks. His inventory is also important because it includes perishable products (rarely mentioned in documents) such as green beans, flour or coiled bread. The Klang family dower is also proof of a rich meal ritual, using silver cutlery (knives, forks, spoons), tablecloths and napkins. Also, several drinks typical for the time found their way inside the glasses, cups, tea kettles in the family's buffet: beer, wine, liqueur, coffee, tea, hot chocolate. Other studied inventories also mention soup bowls, bowls, ladles, salad bowls, bowls for sweets or pralines, sugar bowls, various other plates and cups made of copper, tin, porcelain or silver. The Commander of Arad owned even bottles of olive oil and a

³⁹ C. Heß, *Danziger Wohnkultur in der Frühen Neuzeit. Untersuchungen zu Nachlassinventaren des 17. und 18. Jhs.* (LIT Verlag, Berlin, 2007), p. 31.

Gugelhopf cake tray. We can say without doubt that a variety of dishes graced the tables of townsmen from Timișoara three hundred years ago.

We can, therefore, establish that Timișoara was in line with the trend regarding meal rituals, because elements that have long been ignored – the fork or the napkin – were found in almost all the houses studied. Generally, there were certain elements that caused changes in the meal serving culture, but they were also specific only to certain social classes: tablecloths, napkins or damask napkins, porcelain dishes, etc. If cutlery such as the spoon and knife have an older history, it seems that the fork is a special case. Its older relative – the fork used to handle or serve food – has older origins, but the use of a fork was to spread very slowly from the sixteenth century on.⁴⁰ Of course, eating solid food using fingers seemed natural back then. As an example of the previous statement, the Klang family had 100 "fine and normal" napkins and 3 tablecloths, a porcelain cup set and a 36-piece silver cutlery set, which included forks.

Two types of indispensable pieces of furniture – tables and chairs – were needed to serve the meals – we might say at first glance. Still, the epoch we are dealing with complicated things a little. Firstly, at the dawn of modernity, people used benches more. The chair, used since the sixteenth century, was initially intended for a person with a special status, such as the head of the family – to emphasize his patriarchal position. Because in some social strata habitation had begun to limit the room's initial space, luxury moved towards the furniture, with all sorts of tables: gaming tables, card tables, "mute waiter" (a table with shelves), desks.⁴¹ These are also attested in Timișoara's inventories, some used as storage spaces for backup cutlery or dishes and for food before serving. In addition, all the Klang family's furniture is of considerable variety, considering the tables in each room (10 in total), sofas, armchairs and cupboards.

We shall now go to another type of room that had become essential in time: the bedroom. As we might have already noticed, day or night household activities did not necessarily have a correspondent in one room or another. It is true, however, that the eighteenth century gradually changed this mentality and the trend was towards intimacy and comfort. The bedroom became a separate space during this period. The central furniture of the bedroom was the bed. A first question has put our imagination to the test: why did the bed (*das Bett*) appear in the form of *Bettstatt* and what lay behind this term mentioned by the sources? In the past, the bed was made of cloth covered

⁴⁰ R. van Dülmen, *op. cit.*, p. 65; F. Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 205; B. Bryson, *At Home: A Short History of Private Life* (Doubleday, 2010), pp. 205-206.

⁴¹ F. Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 309-310; B. Bryson, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

straw, like a mattress, nothing more; as comfort increased, the rest of the elements – the wooden frame made up of the frame, the legs, and the perch came to be called *Bettstatt* (the skeleton of the bed).⁴² Thus, "*Bett mit Bettstatt*" attests that the owners were already sleeping in a bed similar to present day ones. The blacksmith Neuer, in our first example, had two old beds with a finished wooden frame in his house. The house owners of *At the White Angel* were sleeping in a "high" bed, and the Constantin family did the same. Sometimes, the bed linen including the pillows were mentioned alongside the bed; otherwise, they appeared in the "whites" category (along with shirts, handkerchiefs, curtains, tablecloths, napkins). The sausage merchant Constantin's dower included 15 cotton sheets, that of the Neuer family 1 change of bedding with blankets and 11 pillows, and Klang and his wife had 8 fine and 5 normal changes of bedding. In the wealthier houses the bed could be an expensive piece of furniture, as exemplified by that previously mentioned, which was worth 50 fl.

There are a few other elements that show the domestic sphere's degree of comfort. One of the most important daily problems brought by sunset was lack of light. Interior lighting was for a long time provided by wax candles, placed in candlesticks, or by oil lamps. The candlestick was an indispensable object in inventories, whether made of silver, brass or tin. Such a type of illumination greatly increased the cost of living. What was the price of wax candles in eighteenth century Timișoara? To answer, we have tables with the prices of the various consumables from 1773 and 1775, according to which 10 candles made up 1 pound, which cost 11 cr.⁴³ In terms of diversity, the documents attest a particular type of candlestick – the one with a mirror, which we have to imagine attached to the mirrors in the rooms exactly like today's lightbulbs or bathroom mirror lights function.

Other benchmarks of comfort in the old houses were related to hygiene. Physical hygiene left a lot to be desired, there was no bathing ritual, and clothes were not washed too often. Public baths had fallen out of use as a custom in the Middle Ages and premodern times because of the danger of illness. The streets or courtyards were enough for physiological needs, while chamber pots were emptied out the window. Closely connected with low living standards, the lack of cleanliness and modern hygiene left its mark on habitation. However, the bourgeois houses did not enjoy more comfort. For example, only in the sixteenth century were toilets introduced into town dwellings, but the bath itself remained a luxury and a rarity until the eighteenth century. People used a bowl to wash their face and hands, pouring

⁴²F. Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 308; B. Bryson, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

⁴³SJAN Timiș, fund *Primăria Municipiului Timișoara*, 29/1773 and 1/1775.

water from a carafe, and barrels or large basins were used for bathing. So far we have discovered only one chamber pot in the Klang family inventory and one "bowl" used for hand washing. In the case of the Neuer family, we have a laundry boiling pot, and the commander of Arad owned 10 glass washing basins and a small silver *lavoir*. Towels were found in almost all houses and the use of soap was documented by the same above-mentioned price tables.

From this short journey we can conclude that the eighteenth century was still a world of simplicity, of satisfying basic needs, of dark interiors without much comfort or cleanliness, regardless of furniture variety, the dishes or the wardrobe. Hence, a world of contrasts, in which we have looked in detail only through these few examples. We have been able to answer some questions and curiosities about the possessions of Timișoara's inhabitants, we have shown that wealthier townspeople were aware of trends popular on the rest of the continent and that there were some homes with a rich dower. Of course, the case studies could have given us the possibility to write about more subjects like the origins of objects, clothes and fashion, interior design, nutrition and gastronomy, entourage and the favourite activities of the house owners, etc. However, to all of them we will dedicate some other pages, at another time. Also, the researched inventories and those reserved for future studies will demonstrate in time how close we can get to the daily life of Timișoara in the past. We consider this incipient study to be an exercise of imagination and interpretation, by which we can anchor the benchmarks of the domestic sphere in Timișoara within the European framework, while emphasizing their originality and distinctiveness. For now, we have just opened a few doors but have found countless curiosities from the everyday life of an eighteenth-century city.