

# MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS AND THEIR SHOPS IN THE LIPSCANIA OF BUCHAREST. THREE BUILDINGS IN ȘELARI STREET, NEW ARCHIVE-BASED REFERENCES\*

Ruxandra Nemțeanu\*\*

**Keywords:** *Bucharest, the Lipschani, Șelari Street, bookseller Th. Ioanițiu, manufacturer J. Haug, and architect Al. Săvulescu*

**Abstract:** The architectural expression of the commercial historical centre of Bucharest is no exception among European parallel forms, the spread of a multitude of historicist stylistic alternatives, Art Nouveau, was assimilated under the cultural interconnections and adapted to the place. The programme of architecture, a shop with workshops developed vertically, was spread in the same formula in all towns previously fairs/burges, from Strasbourg to Odessa, throughout Vienna, to illustrate only three towns, acknowledged as major commercial centres, travelled through with the intention of discovering suppliers coming from there in the land of Bucharest.

One of the main suppliers of the Lipschania was the J. Haug company in Bucharest, established starting with 1891 precisely, and awarded with the certificate of a Royal Supplier, specialized in shop windows and metallic shutters. The shop of Th. Ioanițiu, the bookseller, the work of the beaux-artist architect Alexandru Săvulescu, continues to stand up today, with the same façade and planimetry as in the building permit drawings, with an additional storey, but with the shop windows at the ground floor slightly changed. The building can be easily recovered and restored, having many of the original building elements. The metallic shutters of the J. Haug company were certainly present at the shop window of the bookseller's shop.

**Rezumat:** Expresia arhitecturală a centrului negustoresc istoric al Bucureștiului nu este o excepție printre formele analoage europene, difuzia multitudinii de variante stilistice istoriciste, Art Nouveau, a fost asimilată în virtutea interferențelor culturale și adaptată locului. Programul de arhitectură, prăvălie cu ateliere dezvoltate pe înălțime era răspândit în aceeași formulă în toate orașele foste târguri/burgeni, de la Strasbourg la Odessa, prin Viena, pentru a exemplifica numai trei orașe, recunoscute ca importante centre comerciale, parcurse în intenția descoperirii unor furnizori veniți de acolo pe meleagurile Bucureștilor.

Unul din principalii furnizori ai Lipschăniei era firma J. Haug din București, întemeiată încă din 1891, distinsă cu diplomă de Furnizor Regal, specializată în execuția de vitrine și obloane metalice.

Prăvălia librarului Th. Ioanițiu, opera arhitectului beaux-artist Alexandru Săvulescu, este și azi în picioare, cu aceeași fațadă și planimetrie ca în planșele de autorizare, cu un etaj în plus, dar cu vitrinele parterului puțin modificate. Clădirea poate fi relativ ușor recuperată și restaurată având multe din elementele constructive originare. Obloanele metalice ale firmei J. Haug erau cu siguranță prezente la vitrina prăvăliei librarului.

In Bucharest, the area which got an urban character the fastest was the commercial centre around the former Princely Court, also named the Old Court or the Princely Palace.<sup>1</sup> The Old Court was abandoned starting with the 18<sup>th</sup> century precisely, being later on covered and surrounded by buildings with a new urban architectural expression<sup>2</sup>, only a little known before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the capital of Wallachia.

The Great Fire in 1847 in Bucharest<sup>3</sup> destroys massively and extensively the main commercial central core of Bucharest, built prior to the disaster, but it also allows the first modern interventions in the area.<sup>4</sup> The affected area was crossed by its main commercial street, Lipschani Street, a medieval route which also provided the name of the commercial quarter, *the Lipschania*.<sup>5</sup> The retail commerce, specialized on products and services of Saxon origin, comes up in a whole series of Wallachian fairs, such as the Lipschania in Craiova, in Slatina, in Târgoviște, remained as such, but impaired, where they faced the communist demolitions. *The Lipschania* name

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\*\* "Spiru Haret" University, București.

<sup>1</sup> Mucenic 1997, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> Potra 1990, p. 154: "The most terrible fire ever faced by Bucharest was that in March 1847. The news on it went round all over Europe, forcing cities and even nations to sympathize and support the unfortunate victims of this disaster who found in that support, welcome, an emotional comfort and a material support."

<sup>4</sup> Mucenic 1997, p. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Lipschania - The term „Lipschănie” designates the main commercial area of historical Bucharest, developed around the Old Princely Court (Curtea Veche) and named after the local name for Leipzig, „Lipsca”, which got to indicate all those engaged in trade relations with the centres of the Germanic lands.