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Property Trends among the Urban Population of Rumelia in the 18th Century As Indicated by Inheritance Inventories from Russe, Sofia and Vidin – a First Glance

(Abstract)

The article focuses on the property trends among the urban population of three “Ottoman” towns – Sofia, Russe and Vidin in the period from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries. The main source for the investigation are the kadi registers from which more than 5000 inheritance inventories are drawn up. They elucidate, to a great extent, the property status of the urban population in the period under examination. The strengths and weaknesses of this type of sources are presented and the initial results are statistically summarized in numerous tables and figures. The obvious tendency to enrichment of the citizens in the course of time, better property status of men compared to women, of askeri (Ottoman rulers) – compared to productive population (rayah), of Muslims – compared to Christians, can be outlined as a basic result of the research.