



THE 9TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
**EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES**

**Historical and Contemporary Aspects
of the Market for the Cargo Traffic carried on the Romanian Ports**

Florin-Dan Pușcaci¹, Rose-Marie Pușcaci², Mirela Mihalache³, Viorica Pușcaci⁴

Abstract: We hereby try to approach some aspects about the port traffic, analyzing this activity from the marketing point of view, on the one side, and looking at the ports as entities which represented real emblems, symbols of economic and social development, cities like Galați, Brăila, Tulcea, being zones which were wholly identified with the port activity, on the other side. This analysis is necessary in the context of the favorable geographical placement of Romania, which benefits both of the Danube river road, and also the Black Sea. Despite of all these historical and geographic aspects, and also of some directions of developing the commercial Romanian fleet in the past period, the Danube ports are going on a regress stage. In order to catch the now on quantitative and qualitative changes over which are on this market, we consider necessary an incursion in the inter-war period, basing both on the tradition of these maritime and river ports, and on the assertion of Joseph Schumpeter as per which the economic aspects can be studied by history, theory and statistics. The conclusion of the study points to that the port activities estimated by the tonnage shipped in these sea-Danube ports regressed, and the Romanian fleet is now almost absent, non-existent. We firmly underline the necessity of a national strategy in this field.

Keywords: market; ports; port traffic; commercial fleet; foreign trade

1. Presentation

The Adrianople Peace of 1829 gives to the Romanian principalities a series of commercial liberties, which up to that moment were cornered the market by the Ottoman Empire. As result of this situation, the Danube ports Brăila and Galați gain the status of free-ports, with all the privileges issuing from this regime, that is the attracting of the cargo quantities from Romanian principalities, but also from other territories in order to be exported or imported on the market. Due to the historical and geographical conditions, these ports which allowed the access of the maritime at is Brăila focused on the cereals market, and Galați on wood and general cargoes. Furthermore, Brăila had the supremacy for the export tonnage, while Galați that of the imports. (Buse, 1976, p. 66)

Even if for many centuries Brăila had status of Turkish “vilayet”, scoring gaps in its development comparing with other cities, it succeeded not only to recover the differences in development, but also to become a real “pole” of development on the level of the principalities, it became a favorite zone, from a under-privileged one.

¹ Professor, PhD, “Danubius” University of Galati, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd, Galati 800654, Romania, Tel.: +40.372.361.102, fax: +40.372.361.290, E-mail: fdpuscaci@yahoo.com.

² Assistant Professor, PhD, “Danubius” University of Galati, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd, Galati 800654, Romania, Tel.: +40.372.361.102, fax: +40.372.361.290, Corresponding author: rosemarie.puscaci@univ-danubius.ro.

³ Assistant Professor, PhD in progress, “Lumina” University of Bucharest, Romania, Address: Șos. Colentina no. 64b, Sector 2, Bucharest, Romania, Tel.: +4 021.240.30.22, Fax: +4 021.240.30.33, E-mail: mirela.mihalache@lumina.org.

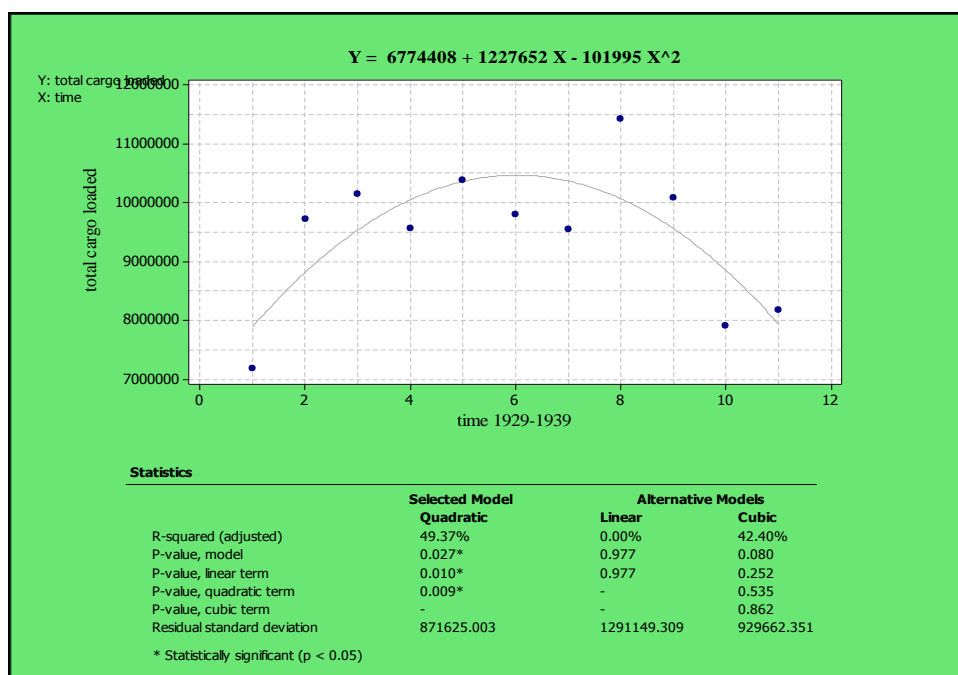
⁴ Professor, PhD, “Lumina” University of București, Romania. Address: Șos. Colentina no. 64b, Sector 2, Bucharest, Romania, Tel.: +4 021.240.30.22, Fax: +4 021.240.30.33, E-mail: vpuscaci@yahoo.com.

In this context of the development on the commercial market, due to the fluvial trade, a number of countries, especially Austro-Hungarian saw affected their interests in this geographic area. The regime of free-ports was expelled in 1883, from internal and external considerations. Despite of the future attempts of coming back to this favorable regime, this status was no more applied. (Jinga, 1975)

The end of the 19th century is linked to the construction works for the ports, a program which began in 1883, by Gh. Duca – an engineer which brought his contribution together with engineer Anghel Saligny, for getting to an end in the year 1891. It is due to mention that for the building up of the granaries in port, Anghel Saligny used the steel concrete for the first time in the world.

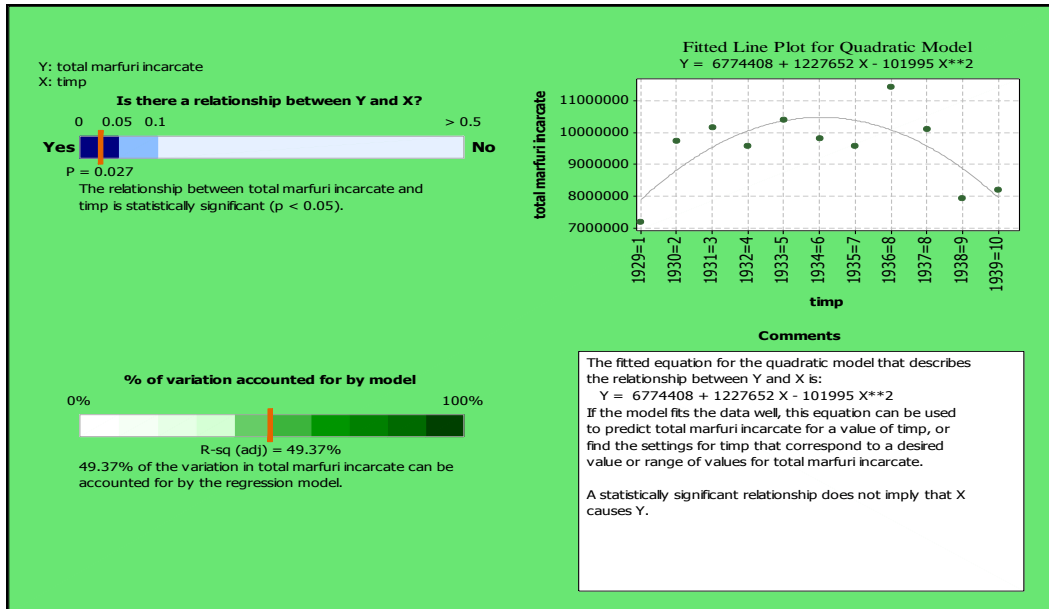
The beginning of the 20th century was budged by both of the consequences of the First World War, and also by the changes in the ratio internal consume–traded goods on the outside, as consequence of the achieving of the millenary desideratum of the Big Romania. Furthermore, as result of the industrialization sustained by the economists of that time, among which we mention Mihail Manoilescu, this tendency was also scored in the port activity, that is they began to be also traded manufactured products in the Romanian maritime and fluvial ports.

The cargoes traffic shipped in the maritime and river ports during 1929-1939 period developed as it can be seen in the graph no. 1. As it is presented, the traffic of shipped cargo scored an oscillatory tendency, taking also into account the market conditions of that period, scored initially by the economic crisis, and finally the instability generated by the great world conflagration which were foreshadowed. The dependency between the tonnage traded in the maritime and river ports of Romania and the time factor can be shaped by a second degree curve of the form: Total cargoes shipped = 6774408 + 1227652 * time - 101995 *time ^ 2 (1)



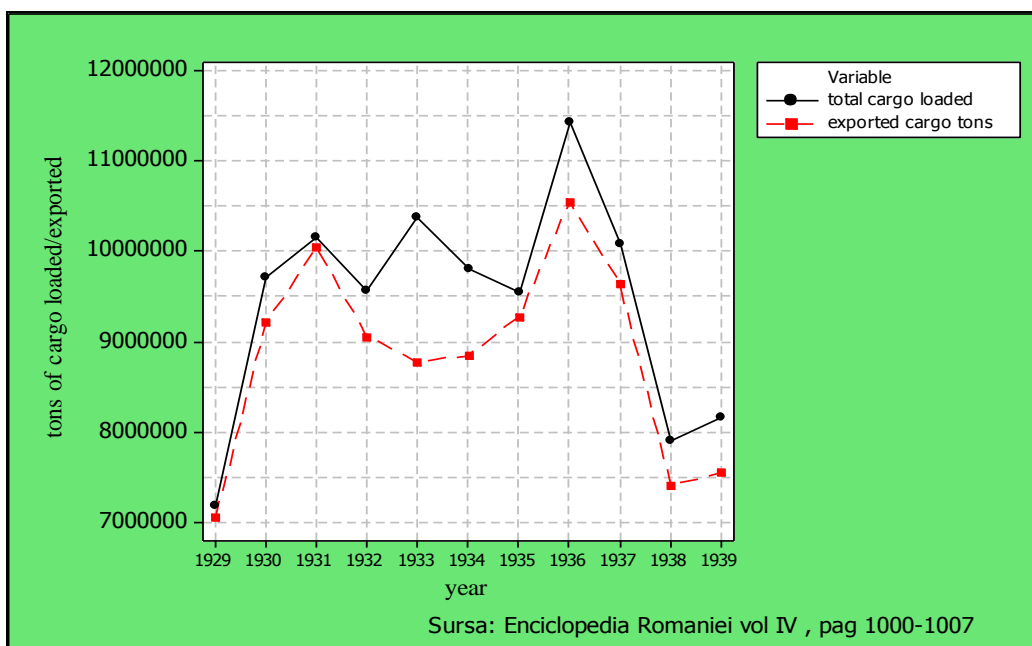
Graph 1. Regression between shipped tonnage in the maritime and fluvial Romanian ports and time

The graph no. 2, by the offered information, validates the model, that is the dependency of the square form between the shipped tonnage in the maritime and fluvial Romanian ports and the time factor, and also demonstrates that about 50% of the variation of cargo could be sustained by the chosen model.



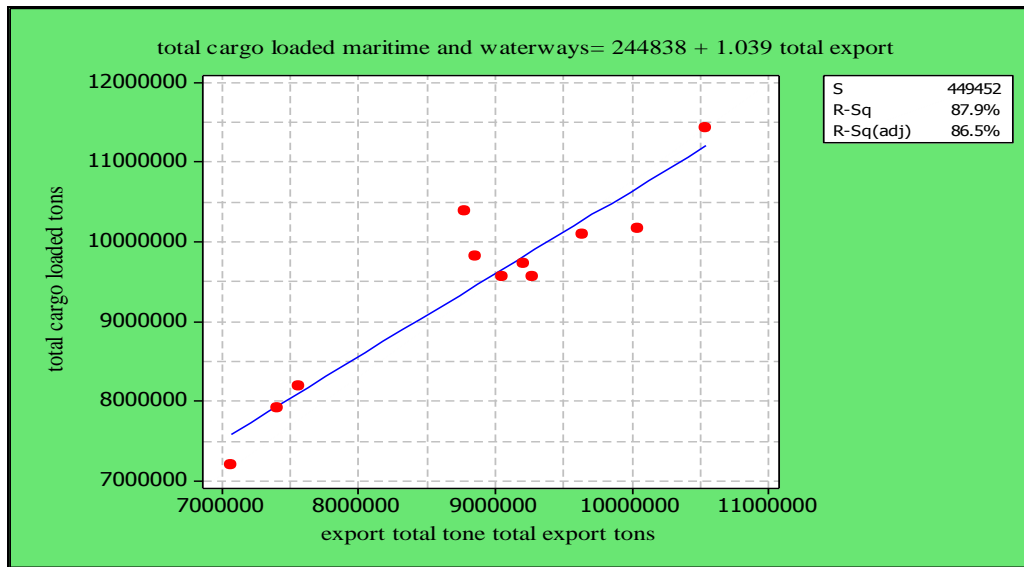
Graph 2. Statistics of regression between shipped tonnage in the maritime and fluvial Romanian ports and time

The evolution is influenced in a great measure of the scored tendency of the dynamic in the Romanian exports. The differences between the port traffic and the exports expresses the use of another transport modes on one side, and the fact that the Romanian ports attract by their position both transit cargo and also include the internal cargo transports, on the other side.



Graph 3. Loaded freight traffic by sea and river ports and exports in 1929-1939

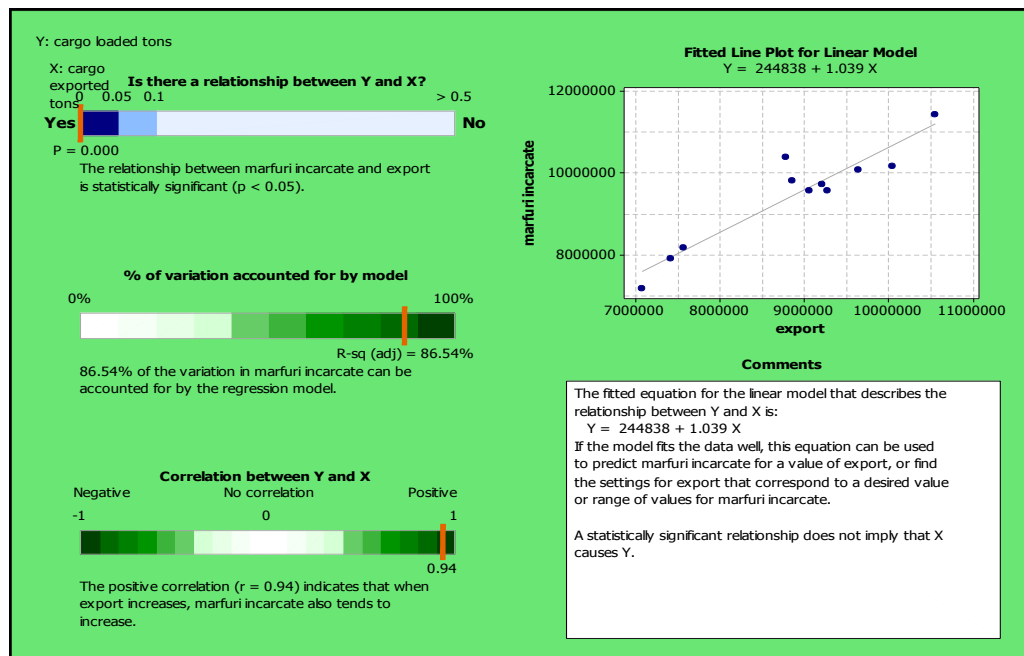
This dependency between the traffic of the shipped cargoes in the Romanian ports and the exports of the country is analyzed on the basis of a linear regression, as per graph no. 4:



Graph 4. Dependence between the evolution of shipped tonnage and exports in 1929-1939

The regression equation is total shipped cargoes = 244838 + 1.04 export

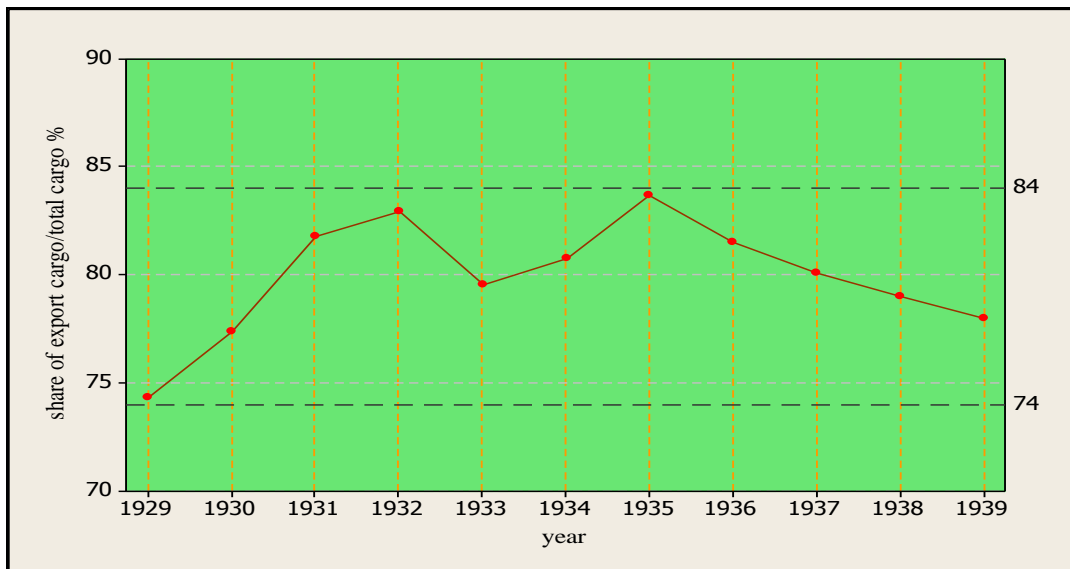
The regression expresses the fact that a rise with a tone of the cargoes export, the shipped tonnage in the maritime and fluvial Romanian ports growths with 1,039 tones and also the very high value of the correlation coefficient of 0,94 demonstrate that when the exports growth, the same tendency is scored also in the shipped tonnage on Romanian ports.



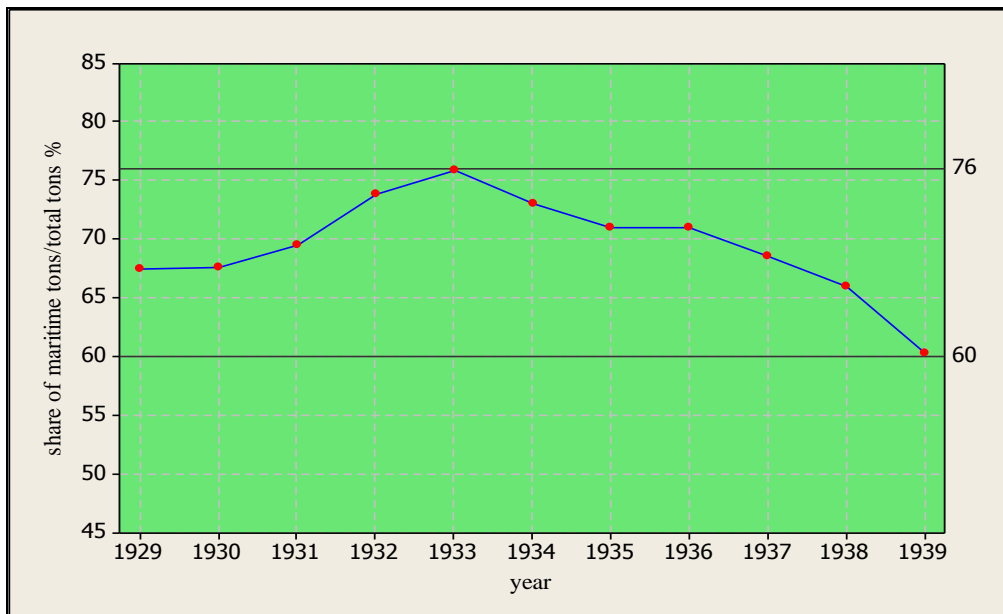
Graph 5. Regression between shipped goods and exports

In the years 1929-1939 the Romanian maritime and fluvial ports are characterized by the fact that the shipping activities scored a very big weight in the structure of the total tonnage, and the variation interval is pretty narrow, that is between 74 and 84%, as they can notice in the graph no. 6. This concentration is due to the structure of the goods carried on the Romanian ports, as well as the disequilibrium scored in the commercial balance in which the physical terms are about 10 times more than the export flows, comparing with those of import flows.

Another phenomenon of focusing the port traffic is expressed by the major weight carried on in the Romanian maritime ports reported to the tonnage carried on in all ports, as it shows the graph no.7 was between 60 and 76%. The explanation is the smaller dimension of the fluvial ships, comparing with that of the maritime ones, on one side, and the fact that maritime ships were used in the exports of cargoes on bigger distances and also bigger dimensions on the other part.

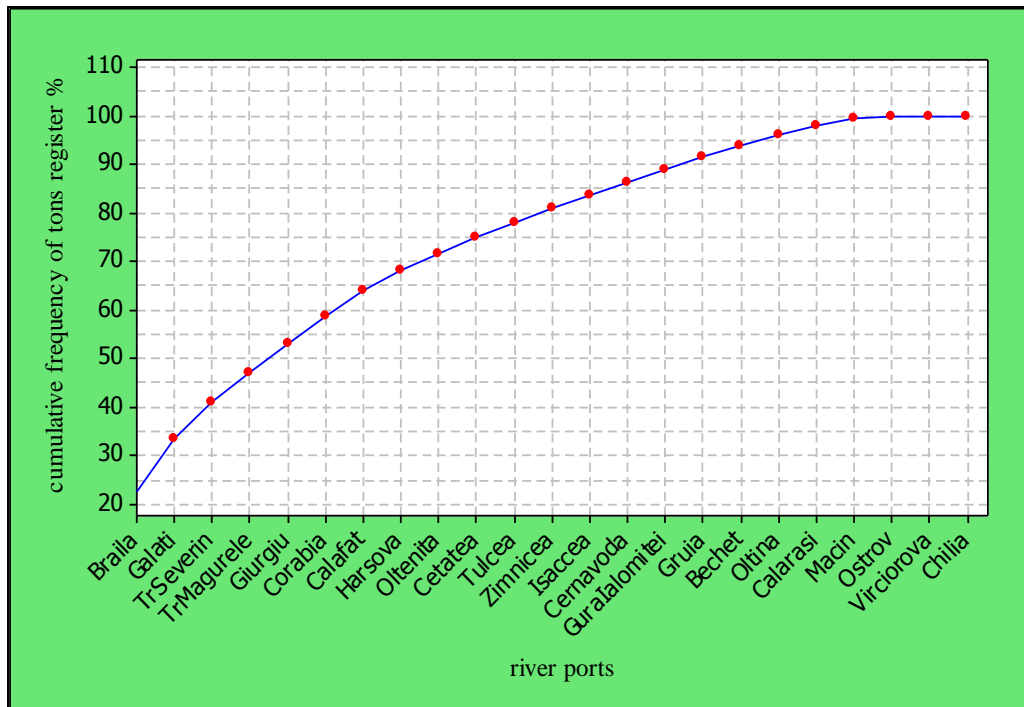


Graph 6. Share of export cargo vs total cargo

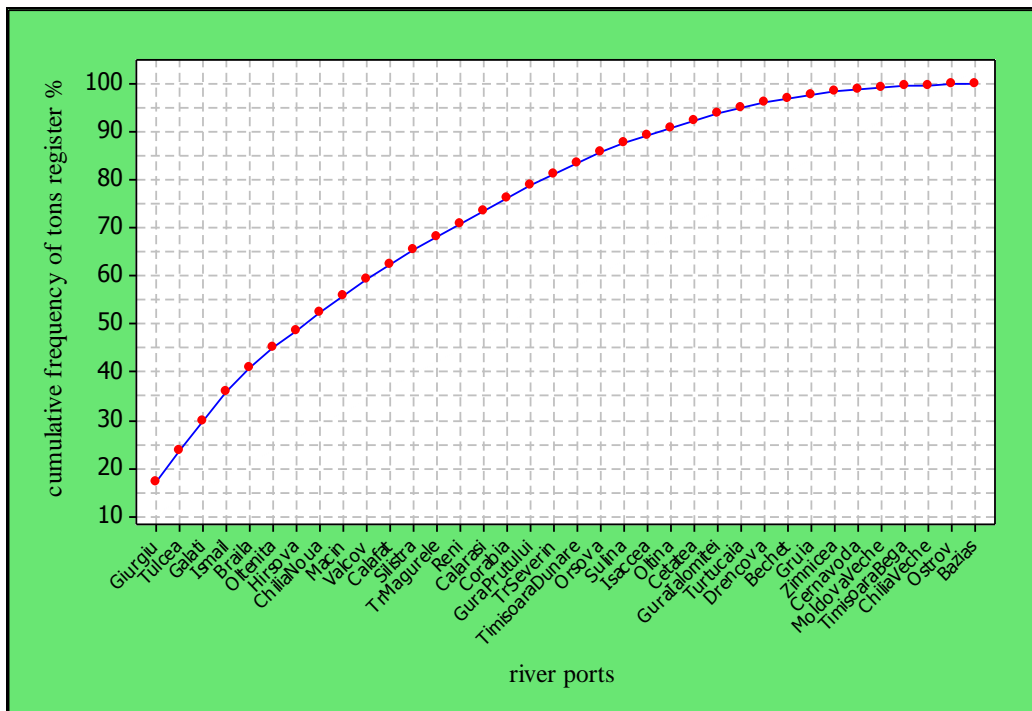


Graph 7. Share tonnage loaded through seaports from tonnage carried by all ports

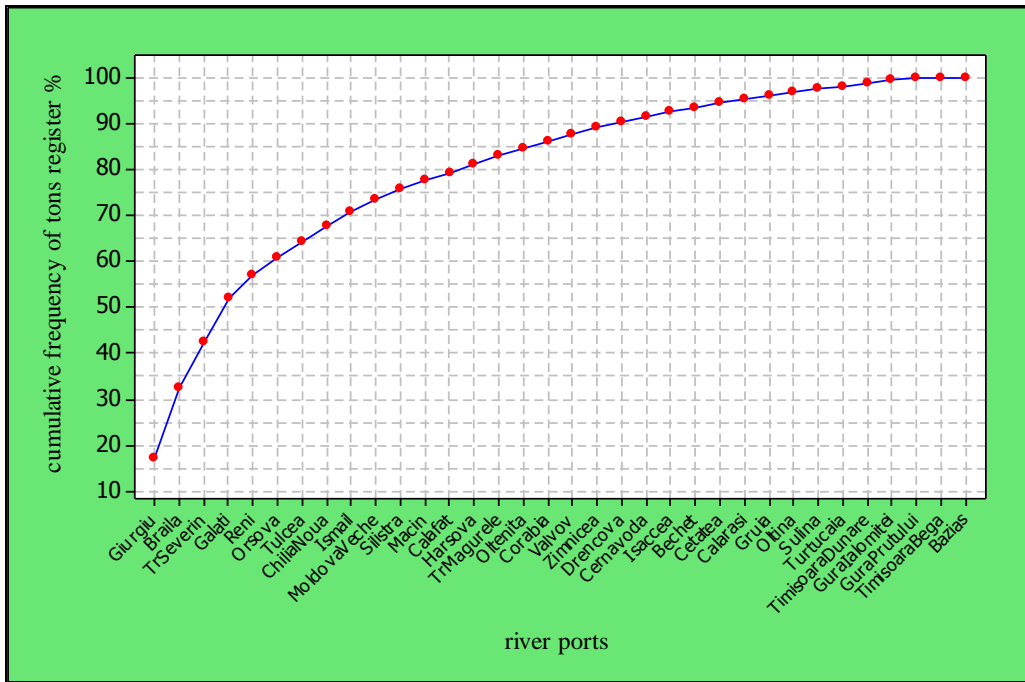
The graphics 8-11 reveal a series of notable modifications in the hierarchy and the level of concentration of the Romanian fluvial traffic. As one can notice, the two traditional ports Braila and Galati are losing their supremacy in fluvial traffic expressed by the tons register of the ships. This tendency is due to the fact that Giurgiu port was that which served the capital town of the country, and also as it could be seen, the oil products brought forward the traffic with cereals in which were specialized Brăila and Galați ports.



Graph 8. Concentration of Romanian river ports in 1910

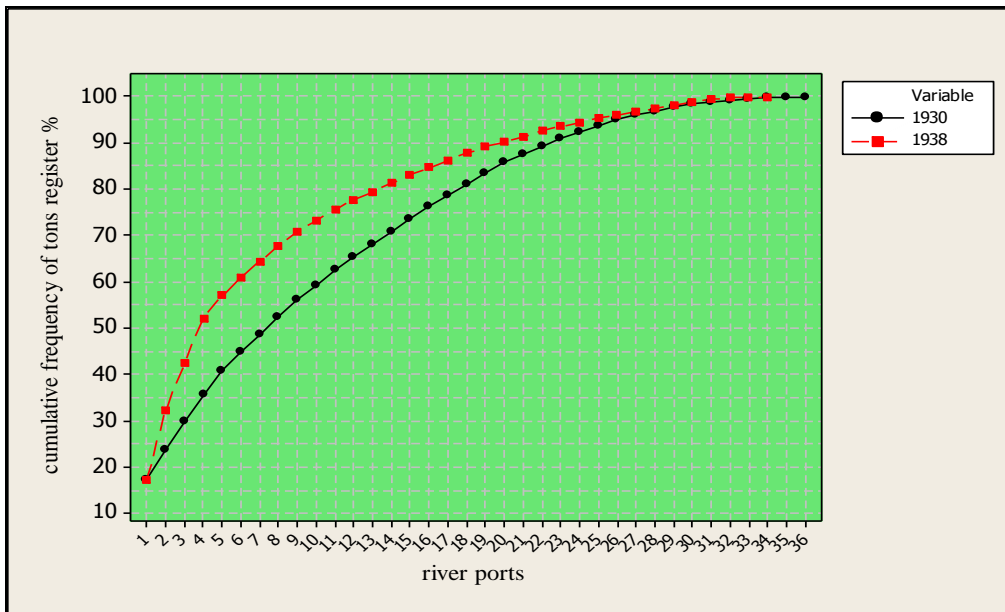


Graph 9. Concentration of Romanian river ports in 1930



Graph 10. Concentration of Romanian river ports in 1938

The graph no. 11 entitles us to assert that at the level of the Danube ports is emphasizing the phenomenon of focusing the register tonnage afferent to the fluvial ships.



Graph 11. Concentration of Romanian river ports in 1930 and 1938

2. Conclusions

It results from our intercession that the ports in Romania represented real poles of economic and social development if we refer at the porto-franco regime owned by Brăila and Galați ports in the 19th century. As result of the transformations interceded in the structure of the foreign trade of Romania in the inter-war period, first of all by trading the oil products, the two ports scored a decrease of their weight and of losing the supremacy in behalf of Giurgiu port.

Another reason is that mentioned above that it is that deserving the capital of the country. If in the above we have referring only at the fluvial traffic, we have to analyse the Romanian maritime traffic in another next approach. As axiomatic title one could assert that in this plan, the traditional ports Brăila and Galați score structural decreases in the competition with Constanța port.

3. References

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