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**BETWEEN STEREOTYPES AND REALITY:
ROMANIANS' IMAGE IN THE ACCOUNTS OF THE FOREIGN
TRAVELERS (1710-1810). RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

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Abstract: After rereading the documentary sources and their interpretation in a modern manner, several new elements that bring originality to our endeavor of research stand out. In our research, we have focused on the origin and intellectual formation of the travelers that crossed the Romanian space. These two aspects are important for the scientific value of the information in the documentary sources made by the voyagers. Also, the directions of entry of the travelers to the Romanian space were identified and their destination was established, for capturing the state of mind of the voyagers in relation with the places they entered through to the Romanian Principalities. The reconstitution of the travel route was done from the border to the capitals of the Principalities, taking into account the so-called witnesses of the borders between the West and East. Another direction of analysis focused on the types of documentary sources that the foreign travelers had left. All these interpretations can form models of analysis of the travel reports in the Romanian space and what we have called the symbolism of the border.

Key words: foreign travelers, Romanian Principalities, Romanians' image, methodology of research, 1710-1810.

1. Introduction

The explanation for the problems related to the reflection of Romanians' image in relation to "the others", and the ones related to the self-introspection that we make to ourselves almost weekly at nation level, must be searched for much deeper, as it lies in the Romanians' structure, within our genes, and it shows us that we are a nation on its way to fulfillment, maturity, which however haven't been fully accomplished yet. As historians, we are often tempted to look in the past for explanations to present realities. Sometimes we find them, other times we don't. With regard to the manner in which Romanians and the realities of the space inhabited by them were reflected and described, we believe that certain things happening in the present are related to our past and can be better understood if we get to know them in depth.

Ever since the end of the 17th century, increasingly more people have been interested to know the spaces located at the periphery of the civilized world, where economic, cultural and human transfers took place. The awareness of certain western groups with regard to the space in the eastern part of the continent had already occurred, and the interest increased gradually, along with the passing of time. "Now" – wrote Paul Hazard – "The Italians regained their taste for traveling; and the French were restless like quicksilver". "The German we're referring to", Paul Hazard added, "didn't hold back at all: he was climbing the mountains all the way to the mountain ridges, was following the river courses from their source all the way to the mouth [...] was visiting the churches, the monasteries, the abbeys, the public squares, the city halls, the aqueducts, the fortresses, the arsenals, and taking notes. [...] For the English, the trip was completing their education; the young nobles having freshly graduated from Oxford and Cambridge, full of guineas and accompanied by a wise preceptor, were crossing the strait and beginning their big tour" (Hazard, 1973, 5). The historians, the art historians and the specialists in the Anglo-Saxon literature associated the period between 1680 and 1780 with the golden years of the big tour (Gilles Bertrand 2010, 243; Verdon 2007, 385). A big number of writings or of preserved objects plead for the importance of this ritual, through which young men from the big families go for three years on the big roads of Europe, in the company of a preceptor or together with other people in their service (Hazard, 1973, 5)..

The Romanian Principalities, as well as the states in their vicinity, got once again the attention of the great European powers, as the territories occupied by Turks were liberated by the armies of the Habsburg empire (Felezeu 1996, 107-119; Prodan 1984, 134; Bernath 1994, 87.). We are witnessing a redrawing and reshaping of Europe through the inclusion within the borders of the Austrian state of the provinces that had previously pertained to Hungary. Slowly, Europe gets back, after several

centuries, territories that, through the origin of the inhabitants, through language and tradition, belonged in this space. The problem raised is whether the inhabitants of these territories still felt attached to the culture and civilization of Western Europe, after a period of Ottoman domination. To answer this question, we will resort to the external documentary sources, to the recordings made by the foreign travelers about the Romanian Principalities. In this work, we are interested to see how the Romanian world in the three principalities was perceived, through the eyes and mind of the foreign travelers. While the central part of Hungary, transformed in pashalik, and the autonomous Principality of Transylvania, created in 1540, were reattached to the Christian world, the other two Romanian states will experience, in the 18th century and in the first two decades of the next one, an intensification of the Ottoman domination, and, implicitly, a phenomenon of enforcing of the oriental way of life. After failed attempts to occupy Țara Românească and Moldavia, located along the border that delimited the Habsburg Empire from the Ottoman Empire, Austria managed to impose itself on the Principality of Transylvania, and after 1774, the north of Bucovina. The Romanian provinces located on the other side of the Carpathian Mountains, namely Țara Românească and Moldavia, remain under the effective domination of the Sublime Porte, while Dobrogea, the pashaliks and the rayas surrounding like a belt the Romanian Principalities were incorporated in the Ottoman Empire (Cernovodeanu, Edroiu, Bălan, 13-30; Boicu 2001, 327; Cioban 1998, 204).

Significant changes occur at the beginning of the 18th century also in the political relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman Empire. Firstly, at the lead of the two countries, the sultans impose foreign rulers that are accompanied by their familiars, the latter being put in the most important positions. After the definitive removal of the local rulers, the Sublime Porte named at the lead of the Principalities people coming generally from the Greek, Levantine world. The supreme dignity in the states could be obtained by buying the throne. In turn, the new king, in order to get back the sums of money to pay the debts he had taken on, tried to sell the functions in the superior administration of the country. These were the political-social realities in the Romanian space, located at the confluence of the interests of the great powers in the epoch. Obviously, in this new political reality, the influence of the West in Țara Românească and Moldavia will reach its climax, especially in the final part of this era. The presence of the foreign kings, generally Greek, who were joined by a great number of foreign servants in the Ottoman Empire, named in political, administrative and church functions, educated and formed in a world with oriental-like mentalities, strongly influenced the realities in the two countries.

In the current work, we are investigating the accounts of the foreign travelers about the Romanian Principalities right in the period of

maximum dominance of the Ottoman Empire. In a broad sense, Transylvania was located at that moment under the domination of the Habsburg Empire and was subjected to a reformist experiment that targeted the modernization of the province which had, in the long run, positive consequences for the Romanians as well. Investigating the realities, the way they are described by the foreign travelers, in the three provinces, two under the domination of the Sublime Porte, and the third one under the authority of Austria, it's normal for the entries of the foreigners to signal the major differences that existed between Țara Românească and Moldavia, on the one hand, and Transylvania, on the other hand. The first two, being under the domination of the Sublime Porte, recorded a regression in the political, economic and administrative life, while in Transylvania, through the reformist politics promoted by imperials, the existing gap from the Western world was reduced. The gap among the three Romanian provinces was seen by the foreign travelers as significant due to the pro-oriental, pro-ottoman message and attitude of the elites of the extra-Carpathian principalities, due to their formation, education and origin. The travelers' remarks about the fact that the two principalities would be Ottoman provinces are exaggerated and not in accordance with the political-juridical reality of the epoch. However, stronger than the political-juridical realities regarding the status of the two principalities are the impressions of the travelers, who, almost every time they left Transylvania and entered Țara Românească or Moldavia, affirmed that they found themselves in the Ottoman Empire. With this remark, we can put in discussion both the quality of the information that represents the documentary base of the work, and the truthfulness of the data recorded and disseminated through works, articles and books to the public opinion in Western Europe.

2. Research Objectives and Methodology

We strive, in general sense, to capture the manner in which the realities in the Romanian space are reflected in the accounts of the foreign travelers that crossed the Romanian Principalities (Mitu 2013, 93-98). In the current research, we try to identify and analyze, in a first stage, the realities that are in direct connection with the border defined as a space that delimits the states (Brie, Horga, 2014, 202-216; Constantinescu, 2008, 349; Muchembled 2001, 1-8). Generally, the first impression about the country that the traveler enters is crucial in the shaping of his image of that country. This is why we are interested in identifying the mood of the voyageurs, from their first contacts with the realities of the country they were entering. On a first level of research, following the methodological suggestions of Michael Metzeltin (Metzeltin 2008, 23-39), we wish to identify, define and comment those things captured by the foreign

travelers that can represent references, indicators and witnesses that define the border. On the second level of investigation, we aim to identify the things that announce the travelers that he is approaching the border between states or that he is moving away from the border. In this stage of our research, we try to extend the investigation in the space of the cultural and civilizational borders. This thing means leaving behind the territory of the political-juridical and geographical borders and entering the inside of the Romanian Principalities, making contact with the means of transport, the accommodation places and the quality of the roads in the journey toward the capitals of the three provinces. In Sibiu, Jassy and Bucharest, we will pay attention to the ceremony at the courts of the princes and to the influences that came from the Orient, via the Phanariots, and from the West, manifested in clothing, political ceremonies, behavior and attitudes of the elite in the principalities.

Before processing and analyzing the information in the memoirs, journals, reports and correspondence of the foreign travelers, we are bound to mention our research methodology, our methodology of work. In a first level of research, we intend to identify the travelers that crossed the Romanian space and left us documentary records. Under the notion of travelers, we consider both the ones who had the Romanian Principalities as their destination, and the ones that simply transited the Romanian space, but left us records about the Romanian world. Three other problems, connected with one another, and that we want to clarify from the perspective of the research methodology are: establishing the formation of the traveler, the reasons of the trip and the direction of entry into the Romanian Principalities. The intellectual formation of the traveler is important for the quality of the documentary source because the educated traveler can make thorough, diverse, and, very important, critical observations about the realities in the Principalities. Also, their professional training offers the traveler the possibility to obtain information, at least theoretical, from the published works and get informed as well as possible from the political elite in the Principalities.

The reasons for the trip are also important for the quality of the collected information. A traveler hurrying to get to the destination has less time and interest to describe the places he crosses and the people he meets. In turn, the travelers who come on political and economic missions will create much more documented memoirs. The big problem for the historian is to determine the degree of objectivity of the records, knowing the fact that the accounts of the representatives of various states in the Romanian Principalities contain a great degree of subjectivity. The Romanian Principalities were transited especially by voyageurs that represented their states and not by freelancers, who are not conditioned by various rigors to tell the truth, unlike the first ones, who owe their function to the state that sent them on the mission.

We also consider the direction from which the travelers enter the Romanian space and from which part of Europe they are traveling to be important for our investigation, in order to understand the attitude that they develop when crossing the border. The direction of entry and the place the travelers come from open another research theme, namely that of the relation between center and periphery, between the civilized space, where there are law and institutions that enforce order, and the uncivilized one, where the arbitrary and the corruption are the main coordinates. Some of the attitudes that we encounter among the foreign travelers, who come from western Europe, we understand easier if we judge them by the relation center/periphery. For instance, with certain impressions will a traveler pass from Transylvania to Țara Românească, and other states of mind will we identify in the accounts of the one that leaves Moldavia or Țara Românească and enters Maramureș, Bucovina and Banat. In this relation between the three provinces, Transylvania represents the center, and Țara Românească and Moldavia are the peripheries. In turn, Transylvania, compared to Austria, is herself a periphery. The determination of the center is key for finding out where the periphery lies, and the center in a certain geographical-cultural space can become periphery in relation with another space. The count of Ségur, passing from Prussia to Poland, in the winter between the years 1784-1785, was aware of the fact that he was crossing an important border. He was feeling like he “had completely left Europe”, and moreover, like he “had traveled ten centuries behind” (Wolff 2000, 21).

At a distance of a few decades, the marquis of Custine, who was in Russia, wrote the following as a conclusion of his visit: “You must have lived in this restless wasteland, in this prison without respite, that is called Russia, to be able to properly feel to the fullest how freedom you enjoy in the other countries in Europe is, regardless of their form of governance. If you encounter dissatisfied people in France, use my method, and tell them: Go to Russia. It is a useful trip for any foreigner; whoever sees this country properly will be pleased to be able to live anywhere else. In both travel accounts we find an idea, ubiquitous among the majority of the travelers, namely that they found themselves either at the edge of Europe, inside or outside the eastern border, or in another geographical space, or on another continent that had little in common with Europe” (Custine 2007, 337).

The historian, in order to reconstruct the past of the human communities, critically interprets the information in the documentary sources and places them in a certain order, depending on the work methods used (Neumann, Heinen 2010, 527). . In the case of these types of sources, as well as in others, what often interferes is the subjective factor, superficiality, hurry, lack of knowledge, that make some of the conveyed information in the accounts of the foreign travelers to be untrue, to lack any conformity with the reality of the epoch (Cristea 2005, 13-26).

After the travelers enter the Romanian Principalities, they live new experiences and events that they feel the need to record. After crossing the political frontiers from the Romanian Principalities, the voyageurs enter in contact with other types of borders, namely with the ones of civilization and with mental frontiers (Ioan Horga, Sorin Şipoş 2006, 5-6). The latter are sometimes stronger and harder to overcome than political-administrative borders, because they originate from stereotypes, from already shaped images about people and countries, that are transmitted down through generations. The traveler coming from the West arrives in the Romanian spaces located at the border with the Orient having already formed opinions.

The most general representation born within the Western culture regarding an alterity that is at the same time radical, directly neighboring and profound bears the exotic name of Orient (Mitu, Mitu, 2014, 29; Andraş, 2003, 447). It is destined par excellence „to offer the main identity landmark of contrast for westerners, [...] and in this strictly topographic distinction, not the geography is important, but rather the axiology. The westerners are not essentially characterized by their more western location, but by a set of values and attitudes specific to those who inhabit this part of the Earth and that eventually ensures their supremacy. The West thus identifies itself with the good, with normality and superiority, while the Orient was determined to be the reverse of these ideas“ (Mitu, Mitu, 2014, 29). According to historian Sorin Mitu, in reality, the West is nothing more than a collection of heterogeneous realities and hybrid identities (homogenized only in the imaginary), is subjected to changes, is mentally represented and socially constructed, according to some ideological goals, with the decisive contribution of the political and intellectual elites (Mitu, Mitu, 2014, 29). Neither the Orient, nor the Romanian Principalities, implicitly, can be associated only with negative representations and truths. Starting from the documentary reality that the representation of the Orient and implicitly of the Romanian Principalities is predominantly negative, and of the West, only positive, we must find means of control and of checking the information recorded by the foreign travelers (Holban, 1968, XI-XII; Cristea, 13-26; Cernovodeanu, 2004, 7-40).

What should the historian do in this situation? How should he read the documentary sources in order to reach the truth? We agree with the suggestion of work made by Paul Cernovodeanu, according to whom “the researchers must use all the confessions of the travelers with all the appropriate responsibility. In case the critical observations of the peregrines were not objective, but distorted reality by being libelous, one must take a stand to explain the attitude of those authors and to tackle their erroneous assessments; this also applies to the undeserved praise for certain things that are flawed, or to the gratuitous eulogy made to certain

kings or political governors” (Cernovodeanu, 2004, 7-40; Grancea, 2002, 340p).

From the travel journals we must determine, in a first stage, the values that the foreigners refer to when they issue judgements about the Romanian world.

For reaching this goal it's necessary for us to identify the foreign travelers that crossed the Romanian Principalities, to mention their intellectual formation, the reasons for the trip and their place of entry into the country. These elements are important for understanding and analyzing in a broader context the considerations made by the foreign voyageurs about the Romanian world.

From the period of time analyzed, namely the one between the years 1710-1810, travel accounts were identified from a number of 171 travelers that crossed the Romanian space. If we consider their nationality as a comparison element, we get the following situation: 30 of the travelers are French, 18 English, 20 are German, 15 Austrians, 15 Polish, 14 Italian, 12 Russian, 8 Greek, 5 Hungarian, 4 Swedish, 3 Scottish, 2 Danish, 2 Turkish, 2 Spanish, 2 Armenian, 2 Transylvanian Saxons, 2 Belgian, 1 Jewish, 1 Croatian, 1 Swiss, 1 Georgian, 1 Dutch, 1 Irish, 1 Ukrainian, 1 Lithuanian, 1 Czech, and 2 are of uncertain origin: Greek or Levantine, Hungarian or Austrian. Although the origin of those who crossed the Romanian space is not always relevant, we remark the presence at the top of the list of the travelers of French origin. France still represented the main power of Europe at the turn between the 18th and 19th centuries. The French were followed by the Germans, English and Austrians, important powers with major interests in the West. We also have 14 Italian travelers, but these are present especially out of commercial and religious interests. There are also 12 Russian travelers, but their number is not very relevant, since Russia had other directions too through which its representatives could reach Istanbul.

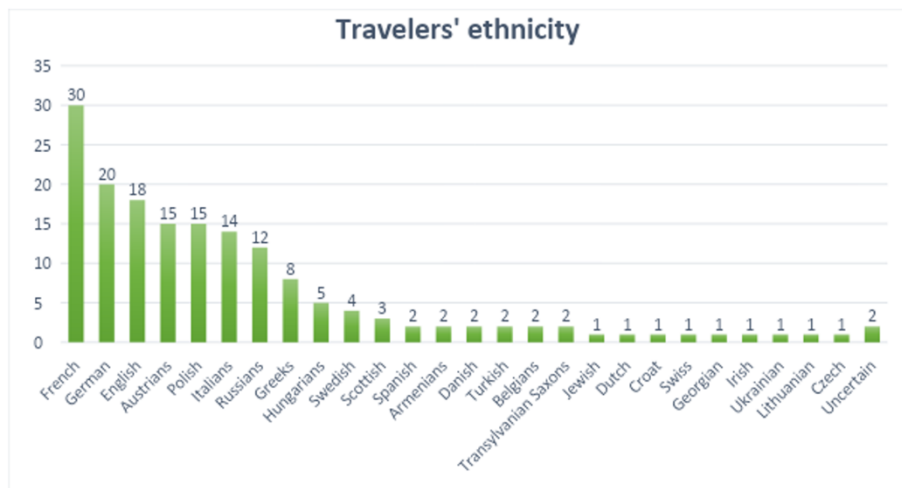


Image 1. Travelers' ethnicity

In our research, we also aim to determine the professions of the voyageurs that crossed the Romanian space. From our analysis, the following situation resulted: 54 of the travelers are senior clerks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely: consuls, commissioners for trade affairs, diplomats, and 53 of the voyageurs are officers or people related to the army; 24 are clergymen, and 22 have liberal professions (8 doctors, 3 archaeologists, 1 explorer, 2 geologists, 1 professor, 1 statistician, 1 theater director, 1 orientalist, 1 curator, 1 painter, 1 academician, 1 merchant). We also have a tsar, an archduke, and the professions of 6 of the travelers are unknown. The vast majority of the travelers have higher education. If we make an analysis of the traveler based on their mission, we find that most are civil and military representatives of the great powers, namely 107. Only 22 of the travelers have liberal professions and are stimulated by scientific and professional curiosities. This shows us that the travelers' motivations for making the trip were related to the states that sent them and to the interests of the latter. The interests of the great powers in the era come first, in the detriment of the scientific and personal ones. The main routes of professional formation were still within the western part of Europe (Bertrand 2010, 243). The political interests of the great powers toward this part of Europe, especially the ones of the Tsarist Empire and the Habsburg Empire, were related to Turkey, which was in a crisis.

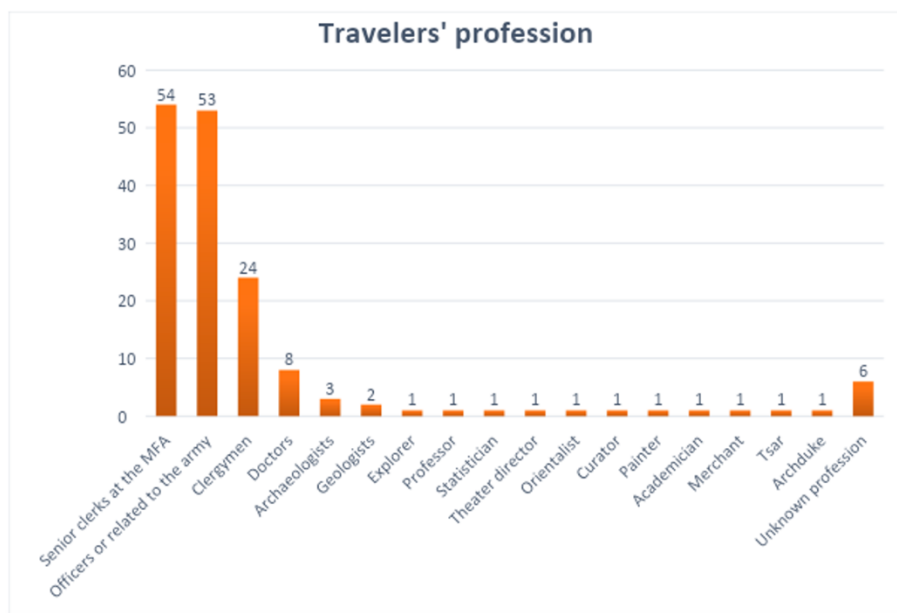


Image 2. Traveler's profession

Regarding the place where they started their trip and the direction of entry in the Romanian Principalities, we have a number of 93 voyageurs

that come from Western and Northern Europe and 66 travelers coming from the Ottoman Empire and the Tsarist Empire. The result we have somehow reflects the relations among the great powers and their interests for the Romanian space in the researched period. Most of the voyageurs come from Northern and Western Europe. This relation also reflects the interest of the states of Western Europe and Central Europe for the Romanian Space (Oțetea 1980, 69-176; Eliade, 176-198; Nouzille 1999, 3-36). But for us the direction of entry into the Romanian Principalities is also important. The travelers' accounts and their state of mind when crossing the border will be influenced by this aspect as well.

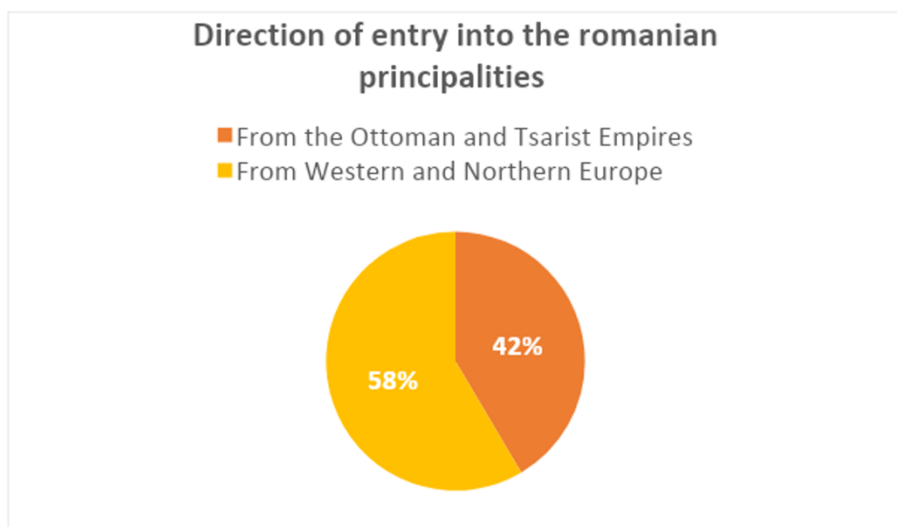


Image 3. Direction of entry into the Romanian Principalities

In relation with determining the direction of entry of the voyageurs into the Romanian Principalities, we also take into account the identifying of the number of travelers and the sketching of the travel routes, for the investigated time frame. The quantitative analysis done on the basis of the travel accounts revealed the following situation: only through the Principality of Moldavia passed 61 voyageurs; on the route between Moldavia and Wallachia – 22 travelers; on the route between Wallachia and Transylvania – 17 travelers; through Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia – 9 travelers. Only in Wallachia we identified – 10 travelers; on the direction Partium and Transylvania – 8 travelers; through Partium, Transylvania and Wallachia – 6 travelers, only in Partium – 5 travelers, through Transylvania and Moldavia – 4 travelers, through Partium, Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia – 2 travelers, through Transylvania – 1 traveler, and through Partium, Transylvania and Moldavia – 4 travelers. From Moldavia we have, in the studied time frame, several

travel accounts, due to the numerous military conflicts that took place here. The presence here of king Carol the 12th and of tsar Peter the Great, the first taking refuge in Bender and Varnița, and the second one finding himself at the lead of the Russian armies in Moldavia, is one of the explanations for the big number of accounts. Also, important for a comparative analysis among the three principalities is the fact that we have numerous travelers that crossed them and left us information.

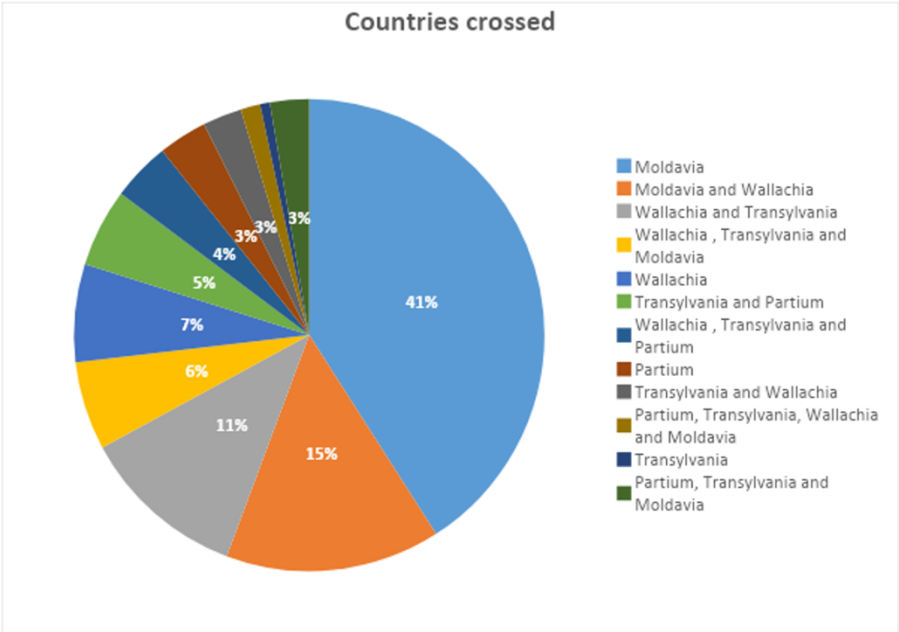


Image 4. Countries crossed

It must be mentioned that, out of the 171 travelers about whom we have information so far, 89 of them only transited the Romanian space, and 81 had the Romanian Principalities as their destination. It's important to specify that, because the accounts of those who only transited our space are, at least theoretically, subjective and superficial, due to the short time spent in the Romanian Principalities. On the other hand, the records of the representatives of the great powers that resided in the Romanian Principalities for a longer period of time should have more substance and be objective in relation to the first travel notes. It's true that the analysis of the documentary sources demonstrated us that the above thesis didn't check out in all the cases.

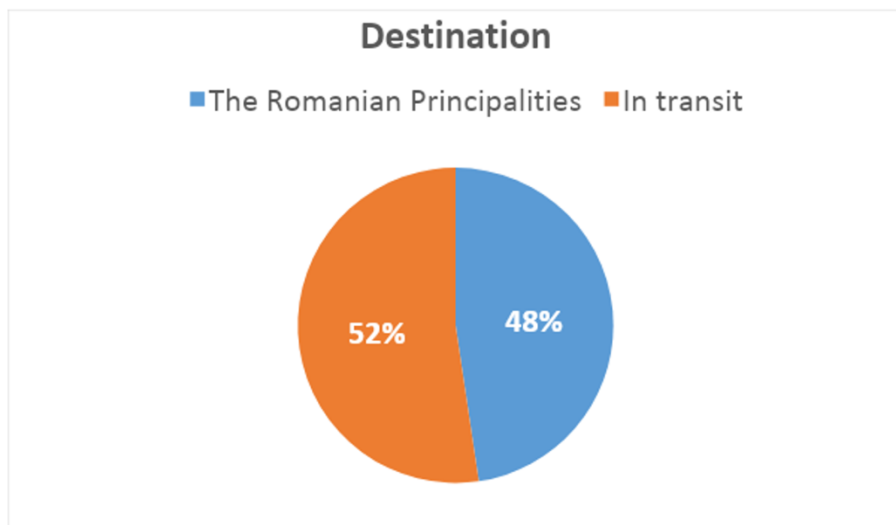


Image 5. Destination

The current research chronologically subscribes to the years 1710-1810, in which we also identify and analyze the impressions of the foreign voyageurs about the three centers of power: Jassy, Sibiu and Bucharest. After they enter the three Principalities, the travelers head toward the three centers of power, where they stay or which they only transit. Our investigation focuses as well on the records of the foreign voyageurs about the ceremony at the royal court in Moldavia and Wallachia and Sibiu, where the governor of Transylvania had his residence, in order to capture the influences of the Oriental world, manifested in the protocol at the court, in the official discussions, but also in various meetings with the members of the political elite of the country. We will surprisingly find that many of the elements of the Western world entered the Romanian Principalities too, aspect gladly observed by some of the travelers, although sometimes they were completed by rituals and practices that originated from the Ottoman Empire (Grancea 2002, 340p.).

An important aspect in the research methodology is the one regarding the typology of the documentary sources that were preserved from the foreign travelers (Cernovodeanu, 1974, 737). After the processing of the information concerning the types of documents kept, the following situation resulted: 123 reports/journals; 33 stories/descriptions, and from 19 of the travelers we have letters that were sent to their recipients. Depending on the types of documentary sources, we also have certain information recorded by the travelers. Also, for two travelers, two types of accounts were kept, namely reports and letters.

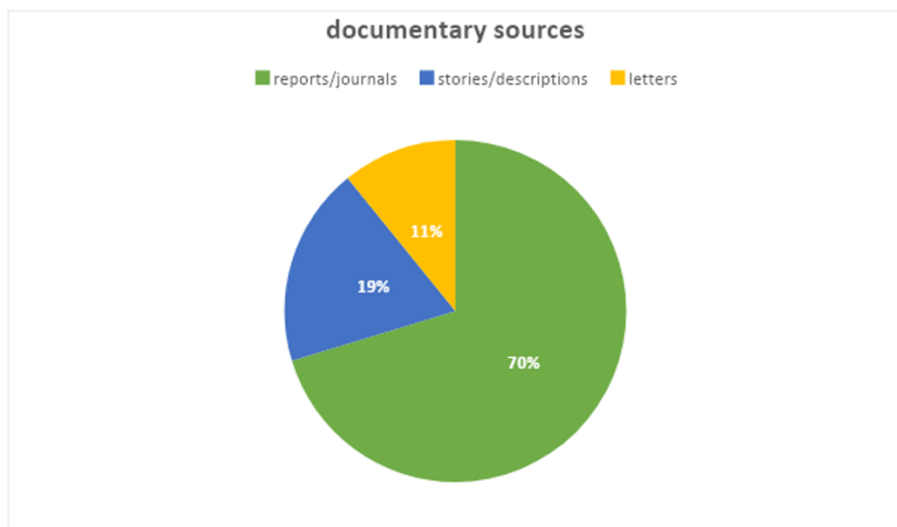


Image 6. Documentary sources

The most important aspect is the one related to the critical analysis of the information in the kept sources. The representatives of the states that write down in their journals the entries that describe the experiences lived in the Romanian space also contain information about the crossing of the borders between states. The mere crossing of a country cannot offer a complete and truthful information about it, and the majority of the travelers either transit the Principalities or remain here little and don't have enough time to correctly inform themselves on the organization of the country. This is why it's good for us to take the information provided by the travelers prudently, to subject them to critical analysis and to try to compare them with other types of information too.

The travel journals and reports describe the feelings and the states of mind of the voyageurs in the special moments, such as the crossing of the border from a country to another, but especially the ceremony at the royal court. The traveler will form a point of view about the political leader and about the country in relation with the audience. The protocol at the royal court, the attitude of the prince and the results of the discussions had with the representatives of the great powers will influence a lot their opinion on the country, and implicitly on the political regime. In order to remove the subjective aspects, we will question the accounts of the foreign travelers according to a certain system of interpretation, namely the receiving of the envoy from the king's representatives, the ceremony at the royal court, the audience at the kings, the customs at the court as well as the results achieved by the travelers.

Only few of the peregrines in the Romanian space that managed to obtain a meeting with the princes of the Romanian Principalities left us information about their audience at the king and described the ceremony at the court. Such a privilege was enjoyed first of all by the representatives

of the great powers who were on a mission in Constantinople and the ones that finished their mission in the capital of the empire, as well as by the representatives of the states, accredited in Jassy and Bucharest. People that were voyaging for personal purposes were also received sometimes, at the intervention of some ambassadors in Constantinople. The official audiences or the private meetings with the Phanariot sovereigns were doubled by travel facilities. However, enough information was kept from the travelers' part, that allows us to form a complex image about the influences of the Orient and the West in the capitals of the Romanian Principalities. We prefer to aim at identifying the characters that stopped by at the royal court, at analyzing the descriptions by concentrating on the influences that came from the Orient, prevalent, and from the West, incipient and still shy. Also, let's allow the text of the representatives of the great powers to speak, because the image of the royal court in the time of the Phanariots reveals itself much more easily to the reader in this way. We will focus our analysis on identifying those things, gestures, attitudes and behaviors specific to the Orient or the West, present at the royal court. We took into account both the qualitative dimension of the influences in the principalities and the quantitative one, the frequency with which the influences and elements specific to the Orient and the West can be found at the royal courts. The presentation of the confessions will be made chronologically, starting from the year 1710 until 1810, to be able to capture the phenomenon of orientalization of Moldavia and Wallachia, after the instauration of the Phanariot reigns. The westernization, or the entering of the western influences into the Principalities is noticeable at the beginning of the Phanariot reigns, due to the fact that they found themselves, in the time of the local kings, in permanent contact with the European states. The presence of these contacts and influences we will find from the end of the 18th century, due to the cultural mediators coming from the West and to the contact with the great Christian powers in the vicinity of the Romanian Principalities, the Habsburg Empire and the Tsarist Empire, and we will discuss the causes of this phenomenon at the right moment.

3. Conclusions

After the rereading of the documentary sources and their interpretation in a modern manner, several new elements that bring originality to our research endeavor stand out. In our scientific approach, we concentrated on the origin and intellectual formation of the travelers that crossed the Romanian space. These two aspects are important for the scientific value of the information in the documentary sources elaborated by the voyageurs. The directions of entry of the travelers into the Romanian space were also identified and their destination was

determined, in order to capture the state of mind of the voyageurs in relation to the place through which they entered the Romanian Principalities. The reconstituting of the travel route was done from the border toward the capitals of the Principalities, taking into account the so-called witnesses of the frontiers between West and Orient. Another direction of analysis focused on the types of documentary sources that the foreign voyageurs left for us to find. All these interpretations can become models of analysis of the travel reports in the Romanian space and of what we called the *symbolism of the border*.

Note: The analysis was mainly realized on the basis of the following documentary sources: *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. VIII. Volume edited by Maria Holban (editor-in-chief), Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 1983; *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. IX. Volume edited by Maria Holban (editor-in-chief), Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, Editura Academiei Române, Bucharest, 1997; Petre P. Panaitescu, *Călători poloni în Țările Române*, Bucharest, 1930; Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria românilor prin călători*. Volume edited, introductory study and notes by Adrian Anghelescu, Bucharest, 1981; *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. X, part I, volume edited by Maria Holban, Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (editor-in-chief), Editura Academiei Române, Bucharest, 2000; *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. X, part II, volume edited by Maria Holban, Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (editor-in-chief), Editura Academiei Române, Bucharest, 2001; *Călători străini despre Țările Române*. New series, vol. I (1801-1821), volume edited by Georgeta Filitti, Beatrice Marinescu, Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner, Maria Stroia (volume secretary). Editor-in-chief Paul Cernovodeanu, Editura Academiei Române, Bucharest, 2004; *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, Supplement II, Ștefan Andreescu (editor-in-chief), Editura Academiei Române, Bucharest, 2016; Ioan Horga, Sorin Șipoș, *De la „Mica la Marea Europă” Mărturii franceze de la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea și începutul secolului al XIX-lea despre frontiera răsăriteană a Europei. Studii și documente. De la „Petite” à la „Grande Europe” Témoignages français de la fin du XVIII^e et du début du XIX^e siècle sur la frontière orientale de l'Europe. Études et documents*. Test translation. Traduction des textes: Delia-Maria Radu, Editura Universității din Oradea, Oradea, 2006.

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