

SORIN SIPOȘ
FOREIGN TRAVELERS IN THE ROMANIAN LANDS AND THE
SYMBOLISM OF THE BORDERS (1710-1810)

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Abstract: In the present study, we are generally looking at the way in which the realities of the Romanian space were captured through travel reports drawn up by foreigners who crossed the Romanian Countries. Foreign travelers crossing the Romanian Principalities come mostly from Western and Northern Europe. Also, their presence in Romanian space is due to the political, military and economic duties received from the states that sent them. When approaching the Romanian Countries, the voyagers note a few things, namely: the militarized border, the customs, the quarantine and the army, the customs officials and the passport. A border with so many elements of identification does not exist between the Romanian Countries and the Ottoman Empire. From this perspective, the Romanian Lands appeared to the vast majority of foreigners as part of the Ottoman Empire. Also, travelers are optimistic about the transition to Transylvania and with suspicion and mistrust of the crossing to Moldavia and Wallachia.

Key words: the foreign travelers, Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, 1710-1810, roads, customs, quarantine, East, West.

1. Introduction

In the present study, we are generally looking at the way in which the realities of the Romanian space were captured through travel reports drawn up by foreigners who crossed the Romanian Countries (Mitu 2013, 93-98). The interest of our research is to identify and analyze records directly related to the boundary defined as a space that delimits states (Brie 2014; Categorie 2014, 202-216; Constantinescu 2008; Muchembled 2001, 1-8). The study aims to present the Romanian realities from the northern Danube, as they were seen by foreign travelers, so that today's reader can understand how they see the provinces on the north of the river. It is very important to note that, in general, the first impression of the country in which the passenger enters is decisive in shaping the traveler's image of the places and people he meets. That is why we are interested in identifying the voyagers' mood since the first contacts with the realities of the country they entered. We want, at a first level of research, following the methodological suggestions of Michael Metzeltin (Metzeltin 2008, 23-39), to identify, define and comment on those things remarked by the foreign travelers, things that can become landmarks, indicators and witnesses defining the frontier. In the second level of the investigation, we seek to identify the things that tell the traveler that he or she is approaching the border between states or departing from the border, depending on the route they follow. In the third level of the investigation, we note the impact on travelers crossing from one country to another, for example from Transylvania to Wallachia, Moldavia to Transylvania, Ottoman Empire to the Romanian Lands, etc. It is a very important aspect in the accounts of those who have crossed the Romanian space, because the descriptions are more than mere observations, they talk about the feelings and impressions of the travelers according to the country they leave and the country they enter. What the voyager sees and experiences when he crosses the border will influence his opinion of the country he has just entered.

If we pay attention to what's happening right in front of our eyes, we can notice that the public opinion in Romania is equally sensitive to such subjects, even after, from a political point of view, the country entered the European Union, and even though, from a military point of view, we are part of NATO. The problems regarding the reflection of the Romanians' image in relation to the others and regarding the self-introspection we undergo almost weekly as a nation proves that this continuous analysis through the eyes of others and self-analysis doesn't find its cause in the fact that we are a people that hasn't made history, that we've been at the crossroad of the big powers' interests, that we are located between the Western and Eastern worlds etc. The cause of these worries must be

searched more profoundly, it can be found right in the structure of the Romanians, in our genes, and it shows us that we are a nation on its way to fulfillment, to becoming mature, but these things have not been fully achieved yet.

2. The origin and profession of the travelers

From the analyzed period, there have been identified accounts of 146 passengers who have crossed the Romanian space. Although the origin of those who crossed the Romanian space is not always relevant, we note the presence of the French travelers at the top of the list. France was still the main power of Europe at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The French are followed by English, Austrians and Germans, important powers and with major interests in the East. There are also nine Russian travelers, but their number is not very relevant, because Russia has other directions through which its representatives could reach Istanbul.

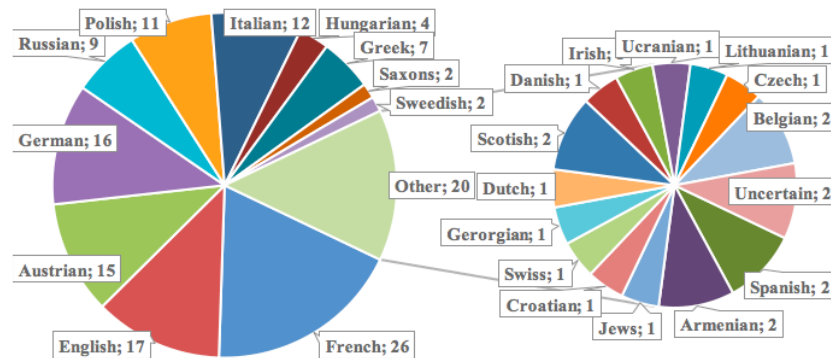


Image 1. Travellers' ethnicity

As for the professions, the following order is shown: 44 are senior officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: consuls, commerce commissioners, diplomats, 41 of them officers or in close relation with the army, 23 clerics, 18 have liberal professions (6 doctors, 3 archaeologists, 1 explorer, 1 geologist, 1 professor, 1 statistician, 1 theater director, 1 orientalist, 1 curator, 1 painter, 1 academician) and 1 archduke. For 10 of them we do not know their profession.

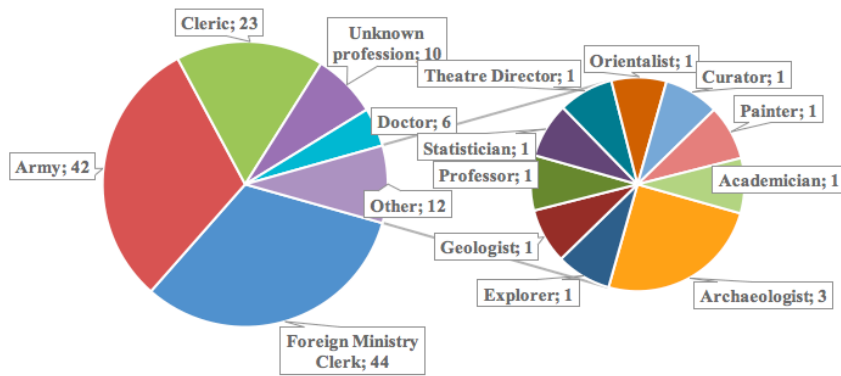


Image 2. Travellers' profession

As can be seen, the vast majority of travelers are highly trained. The structure of the occupations of the travelers leads us to the next assertion, namely that the presence in the Romanian space or only its crossing was carried out by civilian and military representatives of the great powers, respectively 72 passengers. Only 18 of the travelers have liberal professions and are animated only by scientific and professional curiosities. This shows that the reasons for travel were related to the states that sent them and their interests. As a consequence, political and economic interests prevail at the expense of scientific knowledge and personal knowledge. The major training routes were still in the western part of Europe (Bertrand 2010, 247). Instead, political interests are related to Turkey and Russia, on the eastern border of Europe, between the West and the East.

Regarding the place where they started their journey, the direction where they entered the Romanian Lands, 76 passengers entered the Romanian Countries coming from Western and Northern Europe, 56 from the Ottoman Empire and from the Tsarist Empire. The result reflects the ratio of forces and interest for the Romanian space at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Although we are dealing with an equal ratio of Western travelers with those arriving from the East and South, however, the majority are those coming from Western Europe. The report may also be a mark of the interest of the Western European and Central European countries for the Romanian space (Oțetea 1980, 69-176; Georgescu 1970; Eliade 2000, 176-198; Nouzille 1999, 3-36).

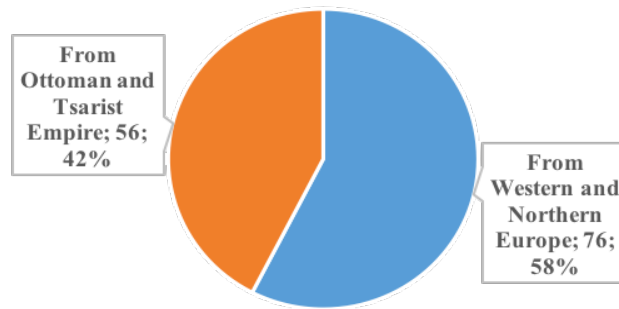


Image 3. Direction of entry to Romanian Principalities

It should be noted that out of the 146 passengers, about which we have information up to now, 76 of them have traveled through Romanian space, and 70 have been destined for the Romanian Countries. It is important to make this point, because the accounts of those who have just transited our space are, at least theoretically, subjective and superficial. The accounts of the representatives of the great powers that have resided in the Romanian Lands for a longer period of time, should have more substance and should be more objective compared to the previous ones.

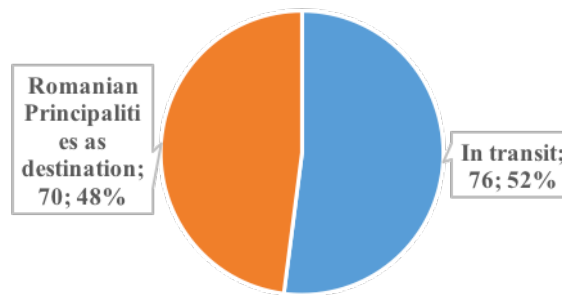


Image 4. Destination

3. Witnesses of the border. Places, images, mood

Travelers, on their way to their destination, cross the frontiers between smaller states and empires in different stages of development, with different political frontiers and systems. As seen in the analyzed time frame, the majority of travelers' voyage was from the West of Europe. The representatives of the great powers coming from the West traversed Austria, Hungary and further on either the Transylvanian or the Banat routes to Wallachia. An entry, for example from the Ottoman Empire in

Wallachia, does not bring travelers significant changes in their perception. The differences between the South and the North of the Danube are not major. They exist, but they do not perceive it every time. Instead, after crossing Wallachia, the voyagers enjoy their proximity to the Banat, Transylvania and Bukovina border. The border is a space that divides countries, and its crossing produces peasants' various feelings depending on where they leave and the country they enter.

For Eduard Daniel Clarke, the true border of the Ottoman Empire is more to the north, on the Carpathians. The traveler, on his way to his homeland, crosses Wallachia and enters the Great Principality of Transylvania. The proximity of Transylvania gives the English traveler moods, emotions he will record in his travel notes. The proximity of the border is marked by a few elements, which we have called the "witnesses" of the border, and which we find recorded by other authors. Thus, the guard posts, where were the sentinels on both sides of the border, the imperial coat of arms and the quarantine were some of the elements that marked the border. Along with these elements we can identify others that can be integrated into the category of elements that symbolically mark the transition from one world to another: "The sight of the imperial emblem, painted on a tabletop, set on the side of a mountain, dominating this torrent, gave us the good news that after we had crossed a small bridge that was standing before us, we would have left the Ottoman Empire. On the Transylvanian side of the same torrent another peasant standing in front of another shack was also posted there as a sentinel" (Călători 2004, 67).

The first signs that announce that you are approaching the border, in the English official's report, are a torrent, as well as a locality, Căineni, which is the last owned by the ruler of Wallachia. As soon as the traveler approaches the border, there are other elements, namely: the sentinel, in this case a peasant, as well as the hut, located on the side of the road, all indicating the proximity to the border of the Principality. The English official does not hide the joy of leaving Wallachia and entering the Habsburg Empire. The Imperial coat of arms makes him feel safe, look optimistically on the journey, obviously in opposition to the experiences in Wallachia.

Josef Mikoscka, in 1782, coming from Poland on the way from Cămești to Hotin and then on to Moldavia, noticed the following things about the border: "We headed to the kethüda (the kethüda of the Moldavian prince beside the pasha); I thought we would have to write a request to get the passport, but here it is done differently. So I noticed that here rather it does your job right away than to write. Mr. Giuliani reported that I was Polish, that we were going to Constantinople and that we were asking for a passport. They did not even ask what? Or for what? The secretary immediately received the order to write me one. Not a quarter of an hour has passed and I have received it" (Călători 2000, 625).

Even if the entrance to Moldavia is made from the north and here, as on the whole eastern border of the country, the Turks occupied all the cities and organized rayas. Consequently, Josef Mikoscka, in order to enter Moldavia, must cross the city of Hotin, Turkish raya, from where, with the help of the interpreter, he takes steps to obtain his passport. In other words, the main entrance from the north to Moldavia was occupied by the Turks. The traveler notices another type of attitude towards strangers, much more relaxed compared to other states of the time, fewer questions addressed to the traveler, which also shows a certain lack of interest of a state with an apparatus of indolent and corrupt officials. The passport requested by the representative of the Moldavian ruler is issued very quickly, without bureaucracy and without written record of the traveler's details.

This confusing situation makes some travelers, like Elisabeth Craven, feel joyous when they leave Wallachia and enter a province under the authority of the Viennese Court. "I can not say how glad I saw on a pillar the Imperial Eagle and feel myself under imperial protection, although I never traveled so well escorted and flattered as in Wallachia." (Călători 2000, 726). In both accounts, reference is made to a certain symbolism marking the frontier, in the first case the militarized border, the customs, it is true that the Moldavian one is not built out, certain forms of hospitality specific to the Ottoman world, laziness, indolence, verbal orders, but also tobacco and coffee as hospitality, and in the second case the Imperial Eagle that tells the traveler that he has entered Transylvania and that he can feel safe.

Instead, Domenico Sestini has a whole different experience when he comes in contact with the Austrian bureaucracy on his arrival in Transylvania, unlike Josef Mikoscka, at the entrance to Moldavia. "When I arrived at the lazaret, it was dusk, it rained and no one appeared to show us the place of our purgatory [...]. Finally, a guard arrived to open us and began to babble in Latin, set up a barracks for us towards the capital of Transylvania. [...] After lunch, we were fumigated altogether and everywhere with stronger essences and our money was passed through vinegar and after this operation, we were admitted to the usual formalities. At this point, the director came in with a large protocol in his hand and forced us all to make a general confession that was not ending, because each of us had to lose at least half an hour until he (the director) asked all the questions, received all the answers and wrote in his great book; Indeed, after this formality, it seemed to me that I had endured another quarantine, one of the longest, that is, a 40-day long quarantine." (Călători 2000, 354).

Professor Robert Stockdale, along with two other English professors, made a study trip to the Ottoman Empire in 1794. Arriving in Sibiu, he finds that he still has to travel a few more weeks to reach Constantinople. Along with this finding, he also notes that Sibiu "is the last place under the

emperor's rule. Tomorrow we enter the territory dominated by Turkey.” (Călători 2001, 1243). The same professor, in a postscript addressed to his father, makes the following remark: “This morning I drank a cup of English tea, but unfortunately it was the last one. I'm afraid we will not have it from now on and, until this trip, I did not realize the value of tea ...” (Călători 2001, 1243). Traveler Robert Stockdale crosses geographical and political borders to which mental borders add themselves. The relationships between him and the others are also analyzed according to tastes, eating and culinary habits.

Christine Reinhard is also marked by crossing the border; the sight of the Imperial coat of arms gives him another state. This is because her journey, unlike that of Eduard Daniel Clarke, is in the opposite direction. She comes from Hamburg, where her husband, Charles Reinhard, was accredited to the Hanseatic cities and Lower Saxony, and accompanies him in his new mission, as resident and general commissioner for trade relations in the Romanian Principalities (Călători 2004, 239). Although difficult, the route from Transylvania made her to stoically bear all the difficulties encountered. The great unknown proves to be the passage to Wallachia. “Departure from Sibiu” - wrote Christine Reinhard - “is made early in the morning on a beautiful weather and we arrive quickly at Turnu Roşu, where the representative of the prince Ipsilanti and some of the escort of honor came to meet us. I was looking at the tower and the gorge that dominated it while the Wallachian emissaries sent my husband's greetings to the prince. This building, preserved and painted in red,” wrote the traveler “offers nothing interesting, yet for me it was of great significance and was the barrier that separated me from everything I loved.” (Călători 2004, 283). Christine Reinhard feels that on a beautiful day in the summer of 1806 is headed for another world, the Turnu Roşu building, symbolically separating a world she knew of another, unknown, and which seemed to be far away of its expectations. The building has nothing spectacular, but for our journey is of great importance, it is the sign that marks the known from unknown, the uncertainty from safety.

Vince Batthyány also, a Hungarian noble, aulic counselor, has similar experiences. His two trips from 1801 and 1805 are from the Habsburg Empire to Wallachia and Moldavia. On the way back from his second trip, Vince Batthyány notes some impressions of the border between Moldavia and the Habsburg Empire. “It was dusk when we crossed the Prut,” - wrote the aulic consul - “who in this part forms our border, and so far it was already night. However, the border officials quickly and politely finished with us. We had to spend the night in the bad pub, for uninvited guests occupied the room the quarantine inspector had kept ready for us.” (Călători 2004, 107-108). Besides the border concept, marked in this case by the Prut, and the border officials, the traveler also discusses the place of accommodation for travelers, which are surprised by the night near the

border. The author experiences himself the difference between accommodation in the quarantine room and the one in the pub near the border.

William Wittman, a military doctor who, on his way from Constantinople to England, crosses Wallachia, Moldavia, Bucovina, Galicia and Silesia, reaching on a beginning stage of his journey Vienna (Călători 2004, 129), remarks the following when going from Moldavia to Bucovina: “From Dorohoi I left after a short stop to Herța and then to the post office near Cernăuți, where the director of the quarantine lives. Here is the quarantine, where passports and luggage are inspected before foreigners enter the <German Empire>“ (Călători 2004, 136). This time, in addition to the features that mark the border, already known, namely the quarantine and the post office near Cernăuți, there are two new things, namely: the passport and the check of the luggage.

Adam Neale, a military doctor of Scottish origin, who crossed Moldavia in 1805 (Călători 2004, 172), makes the following statement: “The territory of Moldavia begins at Țureni, a hamlet of few houses, in which are both Austrian and Moldavian post offices, and Greek and Austrian commissioners for controlling and signing the passports” (Călători 2004, 173). In this account, the boundary between Austria and Moldavia is along a village - Țureni, where both Austrian and Moldavian post offices operate, and there are also Greek and Austrian officials who check and sign the passports. The novelty in this case is given by the delimitation of the border between two states through a locality and the information given by the author that the passports are signed, stamped as evidence that the border has been crossed. The passport, signature and stamp of the passport were identifying elements in the new country, within the border. In turn, Joseph Rohrer, a statistician who visited Bucovina and Moldavia in 1802, in a bigger trip comprising Galicia, Silesia and Moravia, on the way back from Moldavia to Bucovina (Călători 2004, 152), notes the following: “Last night I slept on the sofa of a Moldavian boyar, who was kind enough to put his arnaut, a man armed with pistols and a Turkish yatagan, of a terrible appearance, but, as it seems, with a good heart, to prepare my pillows and bring me a blanket. How strange it would seem to me today to find in the inn where we were popping for the first time an ordinary wooden bed on which a straw bag was spread” (Călători 2004, 153).

In this case, although there is no explicit talk about the border, there are a number of elements that we will include in the second group of indicators that define and mark the border. The story of the Austrian traveler would enter the second category of the elements that mark the border of Moldavia, the boyar house, the sofa, the arnaut, and on the other side of the border, in the empire, the inn, the wooden bed, the straw bag.

English Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, left on 25 November 1801 from Istanbul to London, crosses Dobrogea, Wallachia, Transylvania and Banat (Călători 2004, 199). The record of crossing the border from Wallachia to Transylvania is made only in one sentence: “Saturday,

December 5th. At 12 o'clock I arrived at Curtea de Argeş. The four stations between Curtea de Argeş and Turnu Roşu are the most dangerous where I traveled throughout my life - the first and the last being less bad" (Călători 2004, 125; Bucur 2008, 47-56). For the traveler the border is marked by the four stations, between the localities Curtea de Argeş and Turnu Roşu. The crossing of the border is made under the difficulty of crossing the Carpathian Mountains, and the two postal stations on the Carpathians are considered to be the most difficult places they have passed.

The differences between Transylvania and Wallachia are evident for the French Louis Allier de Hauteroche, printer, and later the vice consul, and a numismatic passionate. On his way back from Constantinople to his native country, in 1806, crosses Wallachia and Transylvania (Călători 2004, 190). He follows, like most travelers, the road to Wallachia and Transylvania. He left the following impressions when crossing the Danube, a river that separated the Ottoman Empire from Wallachia: "[...] on October the 9th in the afternoon we arrived at Giurgiu scaffolding, after walking along the city and crossing the Danube on a sailboat that also had oars." [...] "Land at a big village called Giurgiu and you are in the lands of the Wallachians. We were received by an officer of the prince who offered us bed and boarding, which we accepted; then, at 8 o'clock in the evening, I went to Bucharest [...]"[...] (Călători 2004, 193). The French traveler crosses two frontiers, first, delimiting the Ottoman Empire from Wallachia along the Danube, which Louis Allier de Hauteroche crosses on a sailboat with oars. In this case, the border was delimited by water, and its crossing was done by boat. Crossing the border between Wallachia and Transylvania, the second border, the traveler writes the following: "The transition to Transylvania is more spectacular: From Pripor to Titeşti, we made the road on horseback, and from Titeşti to Căineni the same. That's where we ate. [...]. We left again on horseback, like Mr. Parandier, who did not care that he crosses the most dangerous places in the Carpathian Mountains. [...]. Arriving in quarantine, I waited more than an hour for the arrival of the carriages and luggage. [...]. After an hour we reached Turnu Roşu. This is the first German military post." (Călători 2004, 196). In this case also, the same indicators, marks of the border, appear. Quarantine, customs, customs officer, German military posts. Căineni on one side of the border, and in Transylvania, Turnu Roşu are other places that mark the border. The author introduces an element in the delimitation of the border between the two states, namely a certain comfort and greater security afforded by a light meal, the pleasant appearance of the host and the satisfying beds.

The feeling that a political border is crossed is much more pregnant when crossing from Wallachia and Moldavia into the Habsburg Empire than from the Ottoman Empire into the two countries. The presence of soldiers, border guards and customs officers, organized quarantine, checking passports and merchandise increases this sense of transition from

one country to another, from a Western civilization to an oriental one. The existence of the militarized border, crossing points, quarantine between the Habsburg Empire and the Romanian Countries emphasizes the feeling of separation, a border between the Empire and the Romanian Countries. However, this does not happen when the Danube is passed, which makes travelers believe that entering the Romanian Lands they enter the Ottoman Empire. Quarantine also has the role of protecting the country from the possible plagues coming from the Ottoman Empire.

4. Inland borders. The borders beyond “borders”

After crossing the political border, the traveler enters the country and usually follows the road to capitals: Bucharest, Iaşi, Sibiu, comes in contact with a number of elements that define the country. In other words, the first impression that the traveler has made at the border can remain or change after he has entered the country. Here the voyager remarked a number of things that we called the evidence of “*borders beyond borders*”. In this segment are those aspects that define the country and the people in terms of political, geographic, socio-cultural and civilization.

Alexandre d’Hauterive in 1785 on his journey from Constantinople to the new king of Moldavia Alexandru Mavrocordat Firias, found, shortly after crossing the Danube to Silistra in Wallachia, the following aspects that capture the differences between the Balkans and the north of the Danube, namely: “We find again the forests, the stones, the bridges, the mountains and the bread. Since crossing the Danube, we have found buildings with floors, roofs and windows that I have begun to find myself home.” (Călători 2004, 686). After crossing the border with the Porte Alexandre d’Hauterive, notes a series of geographic, economic, architectural and gastronomic aspects that make him notice the differences in what he found in the south of the Danube and make him remember his home. In other words, the forests, the bridges, the mountains, the bread, the buildings with floors, roofs and windows are elements of civilization that make Wallachia closer to their native places.

Johann Lehmann (Christopher Seipp), theater director, who crossed Transylvania many times, gave us the following description when crossing Transylvania. “From Coşeviţa we go uphill. Up there is a cross that shows the border with Transylvania [coming from Banat n.n.]. You warm your heart even in the cold of winter when you look at the land around this cross. I was in Tirol and Harz and Switzerland; I always had my eyes and my heart open. I never felt what I felt next to this cross. Nature here is great, wonderful, strong, varied, of a delightful beauty; there I saw a terrible beauty. There my eyes were looking at the cross, wandering around in tears. I do not trust my feelings, beginning with the first word.

Whenever I made my way, I stayed in the same place and every time I felt great (Călători 2004, 571-572). For some, crossing the border has a major psychological impact. In this case, Johann Lehmann (Christopher Seipp) is permeated by a strong religious sentiment towards the magnificence and beauty of nature that is admired by a cross that dominates the border area. All the other things are part of the intense moods that our traveler has.

After crossing the border, the traveler is exposed to other things that obviously mark the fact that he has passed into another country. We define them as the elements in the immediate vicinity of the border; they are very suggestive of border marking, of the differences that exist between the country he leaves and the country he enters. In this category are the people in the immediate vicinity of the border, the places of accommodation, the roads, the earth, etc. It is everything that enters the immediate visual range of the traveler after crossing the border.

Moving from one province to another, from one country to another, compels the traveler to mental and landscape changes, but also compels him to respect the very rigorous legislation of the Habsburg Empire. Daniel Clarke, after crossing the high, mountainous area between Wallachia and Transylvania, a pass that creates emotions but also delight, is bound to undergo detailed checks. First, he was the lazaret, the quarantine, where people and luggage were checked. Daniel Clarke's explanation is as follows: "Because our luggage had to be searched at the barracks, two hours after the Căineni, we left there at night and slept in the director's house" (Călători 2004, 68). The family of the lazaret director was German, but the very important and suggestive aspect was that the house was clean as well as the entire German world in the southern parts of Transylvania. Most foreign travelers passing through Transylvania were influenced by the ethnic and confessional structure of the Principality. The first contact of the French, German, Austrian, and Spanish travelers was with the regions inhabited by Western Saxons. After their experience in the Ottoman Empire, in the Orient, they found here at least a small part, either from their native countries or, generally speaking, from the West. Consequently, sometimes the enthusiasm of their writings on the crossing in Transylvania was also slightly accentuated by these factors. The next day, the traveler arrives at the Turnul Roşu, where the luggage was once again checked by the customs officer (Călători 2004, 69)..

The same feeling of joy is found in the records of Lady Elisabeth Craven on a journey in 1786 from Constantinople through Bulgaria, Wallachia and Transylvania, which describes in a few words the feeling that she felt when she approached Transylvania. "A few hours later I was at the border with the emperor's country, that is, at the border, still on the bank of the river, which I traced at the foot of these charming mountains, of course meant for purposes other than the sheltering of oppressed or the fugitive murderers. I can not say how I was glad to see an Imperial Eagle

on a pillar and to feel myself under imperial protection, although I never traveled so well escorted and flattered as in the Romanian country” (Călători 2000, 726). The difficulties of the road make Lady Elisabeth Craven enjoy the proximity of the Transylvanian border, announced by the imperial coat of arms that gives her a sense of security.

For Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck at “The border of Transylvania ... the land appears generally cultivated” (Călători 2004, 125). The difference between Transylvania and Wallachia is given by the order, the agricultural works, unlike the recently left country. Daniel Clarke remarked in the same way: “After we left Băița, I met again open places and I descended from the mountains to the fabulous lands of Transylvania. Everything here had a new look: huge wheat fields swarming, cheerful and smiling peasants, strong cattle, numerous villages, nothing to resemble the land that I had left” (Călători 2004, 69). In the new country he finds tranquility, prosperity, numerous villages, content people, in other words, things that bring him closer to the normality of the civilized world, in opposition to the realities of Wallachia, recently left.

In turn, John Sibthorp, a university professor who accompanied the British ambassador to the Porte, Sir Robert Liston, made the following remark on the crossing of the border between Transylvania and Wallachia: “Passing past the lazaret, I entered the Turkish domains and spent the night in a small village, Căineni, made up of some miserable shack” (Călători 2001, 1206). Generally, travelers who left Transylvania and entered Moldavia or Wallachia were dissatisfied with what they were encountering across the border.

The differences between Transylvania and Wallachia are also evident for Louis Allier de Hauteroche: “I saw in the fields works, plows, workers, furrows and many peasants are coming and going. The contrast with the country I had traveled proved to me that I was no longer in Turkey” (Călători 2001, 69). In this case also, the crowd of inhabitants, the agricultural works, the tools are signs that he entered another world. He crosses a political border, but at the same time a civilization. The field works, the crowd of inhabitants imply order, stability, prosperity.

Foreign travelers also make notes and considerations about the clothing, dwellings, mentalities, religion and the political system in the Romanian Principalities.

5. Conclusions

Foreign travelers crossing the Romanian Principalities come mostly from Western and Northern Europe. Also, their presence in Romanian space is due to the political, military and economic duties received from the states that sent them. When approaching the Romanian Countries, the voyagers note a few things, namely: the militarized border, the customs,

the quarantine and the army, the customs officials and the passport. A border with so many elements of identification does not exist between the Romanian Countries and the Ottoman Empire. From this perspective, the Romanian Lands appeared to the vast majority of foreigners as part of the Ottoman Empire. Also, travelers are optimistic about the transition to Transylvania and with suspicion and mistrust of the crossing to Moldavia and Wallachia. Beyond the existence of real causes, we must notice a certain subjectivity among the foreign representatives, glad that they arrive, for example, in Transylvania, a province closer to the realities of their native places, and a certain desire to exaggerate the realities existing in the South and to the East of the Carpathians, perceived as part of the Ottoman Empire. We also notice the existence of mental borders of the foreign travelers, which originate in the realities and historical sediments accumulated through centuries overlapped by personal experiences.

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