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Network analyses of foreign travelers through Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania between 1831-1840

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Abstract: Foreign travelers backgrounds alongside journey routes followed into Romanian Lands between 1831-1840 were placed into a database and mapped into different geographical, social or chronological visualizations in a unique approach for Romanian historiography. Making use of Nodegoat, a platform that allows researchers to compile large databases and to analyze these data, relying on network-type connections, I created various easy-readable and modellable graphs which shows differences and similarities between travelers. Less effort is now needed for complex analysis which could have taken weeks or months back then, because all of these were made by the platform within few clicks with the help of various filters. Building profiles and comparing them, analyses traveler's studies according to professions and seeking for their motivation behind journey and travel path followed are just some of the analyses made by this project. Even though it comprehend only 46 travelers from a decade this project have a great potential in near future by integrating all of the volumes coordinated by Paul Cernovodeanu into a single database.

Keywords: foreign travelers, network analyses, geographical visualizations, social visualisations, Nodegoat

1. Introduction

Each person has a different view of the human beings they interacted with, of the events they took part in or about the places they traveled to during their life. Whether these perspectives remain hidden in the depths of the memory or they are shared on various occasions, they form nevertheless one's unique perception of the world. Thus, for a historian aiming to reconstruct a "world of the past", the impressions

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of those persons about the contemporary life are most valuable, and variety only increases their significance. Moreover, if they are the product of individuals coming from abroad and that are less accustomed with the realities they write about, they will usually outline a new perspective, different in a multitude of ways from the one provided by locals and local sources.

Such people are generically called by historians "travelers", a term whose meaning can be vague and all-encompassing. One of the Romanian scholars who has dedicated her whole life to studying "travelers", Maria Holban, defines the traveler as being a person who passed through or stayed on foreign territories and left written testimonies from their journey². Another Romanian historian, Victor Papacostea, highlights the valuable information provided by the travelers, arguing that often "their stories are really interesting" due to the accuracy with which they describe the historical background, as well as to their critical perspective on the visited society³. Even though some of them were in a rush while writing their memoirs, while taking a break from their journey, quite a few of them managed to conduct rigorous analyses of the Romanian society and their depiction of the local political, economic and social realities became increasingly detailed over time⁴.

The writings of foreign travelers thus provide an insightful perspective on the early-modern and modern Romanian society. Such primary sources are most valuable for the historians trying to recreate the day-to-day life atmosphere of the time, but also for those keen on studying the image of the otherness. In regard to the latter, Sorin Mitu points out that scholars often dealt with the way in which a historical reality is perceived by "somebody else" in the political or cultural relations between different people. He also highlights that the study of travelers' and foreign observers' testimonies about local realities represented a type of imagological approach cultivated avant la lettre by historians⁵. These types of sources shed light on the darkest and most inaccessible corners of the society, where historians could hardly reach without the help of those who traveled through or even settled down in foreign lands. Coming into contact with the natives and having a different cultural or educational background, foreign travelers are the fiercest critics of the space they pass through. The contrasts are noticed immediately and the long travel experience they gained helps them to spot both the positive things and the shortcomings of the regions and societies they eyewitness. Therefore, Sorin Mitu also highlights that historians of the small nations tend to pay more attention to foreign accounts narrating about their own historical reality, testimonies that weight heavily in all sources of Romanian history⁶.

Consequently, there is a tradition among Romanian historians, dating back to the 19th century, to search, find and translate testimonies of foreign travelers. Historians of the Romantic period (e.g., Nicolae Bălcescu in *Magazin istoric pentru*

² Paul Cernovodeanu (coord.), *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea,* serie nouă, vol. III, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2004, p. 7.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

⁴ *Ibidem.* vol. III. p. 8.

⁵ Sorin Mitu, *Transilvania mea. Istorii, mentalități, identități.,* Polirom, Iași, 2006, p. 62.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 64.

Dacia, Alexandru Papiu-Ilarian in *Tezaurul de monumente istorice pentru români* or Timotei Cipariu in *Arhiv pentru filologie și istorie*) all tried to restore the charm of the Romanian space as viewed by otherness. Later on, Nicolae lorga initiated a systematic work in this field, resulting in the first collection of such narrative sources, entitled *Istoria românilor prin călători* (History of The Romanians through Foreign Travelers). This approach was pursued and institutionalized throughout the second half of the 20th century, resulting in a collection of ten volumes covering the period prior to 1800⁷, followed by nine volumes covering a large part of the 19th century⁸.

2. Nodegoat. A different approach on data

This brief foray into what foreign travelers represent for the Romanian lands and how one can encounter their writings was necessary for understanding the reasons of my approach. I wanted to underline from the very beginning the increased interest of Romanian historical writings for testimonies written by foreign travelers and the fact that their opinions were very important to the local scholars. Moreover, this effort was spanned on many decades and it consisted in collecting, translating, annotating and publishing the information gathered over time by dedicated teams of researchers. Other decades had to pass before historians became truly concerned with analyzing these sources, by means of comparing the biographies and social background of the travelers, studying their travel routes, finding patterns and stereotypes in their writings, as well as highlighting their preconceptions regarding the space they were visiting. Although much has been written and is still being written on this topic, most of the papers do not go beyond a traditional approach which still favors the narrative against structured perspectives. However, with the development of Digital Humanities, the traveling impressions of the pilgrims can be easily placed in another paradigm.

Therefore, I have developed a project aiming to approach from a different point of view the biographies and testimonies of those who travelled through the Romanian territories, by making use of Nodegoat⁹, a platform that allows researchers to compile large databases and to analyze these data, relying on network-type temporal and spatial graphs. Tracking such databases in a diachronic manner, together with the associated filters, offers a clear and flexible perspective on the data and makes Nodegoat useful especially for large-scale research, because of the interactive way of controlling and modeling the data entries, which saves time and effort in building a prosopographical dataset, but also due to the complex analyses allowed by the digital platform.

3. Project objectives

There is a valid question growing in the historian's mind: "Why is such a project important?" Firstly, this type of approach upon this topic is unique in Romania. Until now, historians wrote about the foreign travelers' writings exclusively in a traditional way, without trying to involve technology in the analytical process. Thereby, one can

⁷ Paul Cernovodeanu (coord.), *op.cit.*, vol. I, pp. 5-6.

⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. I-IX, 2004-2015.

⁹ https://nodegoat.net/about, last time opened on 31.10.2020.

make use of digital tools in order to gain a completely fresh perspective on these data, and furthermore, such a perspective can be made available publicly to a wider spectrum of researchers by means of the above-mentioned platform. Secondly, the scientific results and the historical knowledge resulting from this fresh perspective could actually constitute a leap forward for the Romanian historical writing on the topic. By mapping the routes of a large group of travelers into a single geographical graph covering several decades, and building on the adjacent data (e.g., comparing the travelers' background with their expressed views on local realities), one can place under scrutiny the findings resulted from traditional approaches and most probably complement the respective conclusions.

The objective of the project, and subsequently the aim of this paper, was to map, by means of Nodegoat, a series of variables related to the biographies of the foreign travelers and test the analytical possibilities emerging from such an approach. Among the former we have included information on the geographical space of origin, where they studied, the frequency of short and long-term trips and theirs purpose and duration, the route but also places that made travelers divert from the original itinerary. In addition to the geographical analyses, we also envision social and chronological ones that complete the image of the biography and of the places visited by each traveler.

4. Sources and methodology

The main sources used by the project are the travel memoirs of the foreigners visiting the Romanian space in the 1830s, to be found in the third volume of the above mentioned collection¹⁰. The choice of not starting with the older writings, from early 1800s, has to do mainly with the author's experience in dealing with this timespan, as well as the desire to focus on the period following the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) which ended most of the Ottoman political influence in the Romanian space and also opened the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia to the European commerce. The volume includes notes translated from different languages (the majority of them from English, French and German, but there are also translations from Russian or Italian) belonging to 46 foreign travelers whose testimonies date from between 1831 and 1840. The texts differ in size, from extensive analyses of the Romanian society of that time, covering dozens of pages, to small notes describing the visited places or regular meetings. Such variations depended on the purpose of the author's journey, respectively his availability and inclination towards taking notes. They cover a variety of topics, from culture, economy or politics to day-to-day life, drawing a vivid picture of the Romanian lands as seen by through the lenses of the otherness.

Each traveler benefits from a biographical note provided by the editors of the volume, which includes references to the route and the most important places they went through during their journeys. The biographies are however unequal in size and details, depending on the availability of other secondary sources. Despite such shortcomings, the information provided is usually enough as to allow the building of geographical, social and chronological networks to fulfill the aim of the current

¹⁰ Paul Cernovodeanu, op.cit., vol. III.

research. Where necessary, online sources, including Wikipedia, have been used for filling in biographical data, vital information and in some cases pictures of the travelers. Even so, biographical data could not be gathered for all research subjects. Some of them, such as the Russian hieromonk Partenie or the mineralogist D. Lovi remain half-anonymous, consequently I tried as much as possible to draw up the initial categories by adapting to this situation.

Therefore, the structure of the database is the following: name, date and place of birth, date and place of death, noble status, first field of study and place of study, second field of study and place of study, profession, purpose of the trip, whether or not he undertook multiple trips, the regions / provinces visited, a picture of the traveler and finally the travel itinerary.

Regarding the travel itinerary, I chose to list the main cities or boroughs / market towns described in the traveler's notes and to register them in the accurate chronological order of the visits. However, this was often difficult. Although the travelers noted, with no exception, the year of the trip, most of the time they did not mark the day, and sometimes not even the month of certain events. Due to the lack of these data, which made it difficult to visualize the route, I had to introduce some fictional dates (most of the time a fictional day and less often a fictional month) in order to be able to generate the network visualisation. Lacking a timestamp, Nodegoat could not display a reliable diachronic geographical representation, which would have been instead only a chaotic clew of nodes deforming the historical reality. Another situation involving the mandatory inclusion of fictional timestamp, this time, actually timespans, concerned the period and location of the studies, for the same reasons. Unfortunately, Nodegoat does not currently include an option to flag fictional data, hence it has to be kept track of independently. In order for the user to have a better image of Europe between 1830 and 1840, I have introduced a historical map on the background of the geographical representation. Drawn by Adrien Hubert, it depicts Europe in 1830, thus adding accuracy to the project¹¹.

5. Data graphics

a. The geographical visualization (the place of birth and the place of studies)

It should be underlined from the start that Nodegoat includes two categories of information. The first category is called Object, in which all the data is non-mappable. It may also be called "the human one", because one can easily build biographies for a person which will not be shown in the geographical representation. In the second category, called Sub-Object, one can introduce spatial data (e.g., cities, towns, boroughs) and can map them in strong connection with temporal data (e.g., date of birth, date of death, other event date, etc.). Consequently, if one needs to project on a map certain information about a traveler (e.g., where he completed his studies and how long did, they take), this will have to be introduced in the Sub-Object category.

¹¹https://davidrumsey.georeferencer.com/maps/acd31471-ea16-5992-843f-07ad1b5d9ceb/, last time opened 30.10.2020.

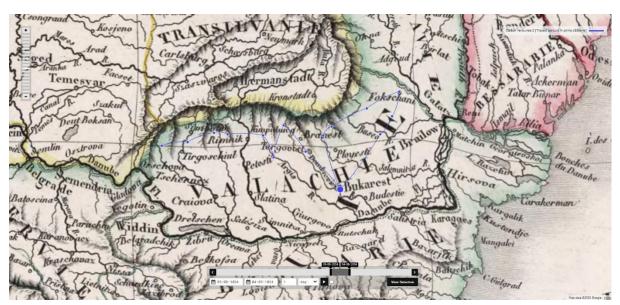


Fig. 1. Geographical overview of D. Lovi's journey

Figure 1 provides a geographical display of all data that can be visualized in this type of graphs. The visible links between certain points / nodes represent the connections between the various types of data entered on the platform. Each node represents a specific city where an action took place. A node has different dimensions, depending on how many times the respective place is mentioned in the database, or within the data sample subjected to analyses. For example, the itinerary of the mineralogist D. Love features places such as Buzău, Focșani or Râmnicu Sărat (smaller blue dots, because they are mentioned only once), but also București, (larger blue dot) where Lovi went twice during his journey. Also, the edges between the nodes indicate a sequence of actions based on temporary data. For example, D. Lovi was in București on the 5th of August 1834 and then he traveled to Buzău a day later. On the map, this travel stage is highlighted by a link (an edge) between the two cities indicating a continuity of the respective traveler's actions.

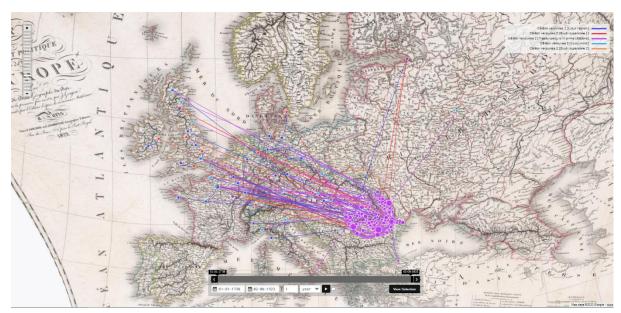


Fig. 2. Geographical overview of all relations

Nodegoat can also display multiple relations simultaneously (**Fig. 2**). The geographical visualization has a caption and different working tools. The categories displayed on the map are detailed in the upper right corner and projected on the map by means of distinct colors. They can be select or deselected according to the user's needs. The categories covered by the current case study are: place of birth (dark blue), place of first higher education stage (red), place of second higher education stage (orange), place of death (light blue), respectively the traveled route (purple). In addition, the timeline at the bottom of the map allows the user to customize the chronological period under research, but also to identify more easily particular subjects of interest. Moreover, by means of the timeline bar, one can develop interactive animations, which allow a diachronic visualization of the routes traveled and the frequency of foreign visitors through the Romanian space.



Fig. 3. Geographical overview of the travelers' birthplaces

In order to better understand the travelers' perspectives about the Romanian space, it is necessary to see where they come from (**Fig. 3**). Unsurprisingly, most of the travelers were born somewhere in Central or Western Europe. Eleven of them were born in the French area, nine of them in the British Isles and six of them in the Germanspeaking area. Other two were born in Transylvania, respectively in Italy, and one in Russia. Specifically, we know the exact place of birth for 31 out of the 46 travelers entered in the database, to which several cases in which only the larger space of origin that is known should be added (e.g., Nathaniel Burton¹² from Britain and hermon Partenie¹³ from Russia). These latter instances pose a problem, because Nodegoat only works with exact locations, therefore they do not appear in previous statistics or on the map. It must also be underlined that knowledge about the place of birth does not necessarily imply knowledge about the place from where these travelers started their

¹²*Ibidem*, vol. III, p. 580.

¹³*Ibidem*, p. 684.

trip towards the Romanian space. In this sense, the example of Vincent Otto Nolte is relevant. Born in Livorno, he was considered an American by Daniela Buṣã¹⁴ especially because of the long time he spent across the Atlantic, from where he then had to return to Europe for business reasons¹⁵. The gathered data shows that, during the 1830s, most of the travelers which visited the Romanian space and left written notes on their trips, which were identified and recovered by historians, came from Central and Western Europe. This, of course, says very little about the bulk of the travelers, which left no written testimonies of their interaction with the Romanian Principalities.

The place of birth can also be the place where some of the future travelers completed their studies. Some enrolled in a university study program in their hometown, while others did not attend university at all. Thus, a brief analysis from the point of view of their higher education shows that 21 out of the 46 travelers were college graduates, of which six also undertook a second field of studies. As for the location of the higher education institutions, they were situated either in the hometown of the future travelers (as it is the case of the clerics Robert Mc Cheyne and Andrew A. Bonar, who studied theology in Edinburgh), or just a few hundred miles away (as it is the case of Eugene Stanislas Bellanger, a native of Tours, but a law student in Paris). A few of them, however, chose to attend studies far away from home (sometimes even more than 500 km away). Denis Auguste Marie Raffet was born in Paris, but he went to study far away, somewhere in Switzerland (the exact university is unknown). Among the latter one also finds the famous Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke. He was originally from Parchim (nowadays in Mecklenburg region of Germany) and went for military studies in Copenhagen. Of all of those who pursued a form of higher education in a distant place, Miklós Barabás traveled the longest distance: almost 1000 km separated his home village in Transylvania from Vienna, where he was studying Arts (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Geographical overview of travelers' birthplaces and places of study.

¹⁴*Ibidem*, p. 9.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 856.

As previous paragraph shows, long distance travelling was not suitable for everybody, especially when the main education centers were far and often poor connected with larger parts of the countries. Lack of fast transport alternatives, expensive and high travel times were also a drawback for potential students to attend universities hundreds of miles away. Hence, it can be seen that we are still witnessing in the European daily life, even in Central and Western Europe, what Eric Hobsbawm called the time of a "wagon speed". Although the transport system, especially the postal system, reached a remarkable development somewhere between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (the amount of time required to transport a letter was reduced from days to hours), the transport of passengers did not benefit from the same advancements. With the exception of couriers who traveled long distances at short intervals of time, for most of the world, the speed of the teamster who walked nearby his horse or his donkey ruled land transport¹⁶.

Moreover, travelers are divided between several study fields covering some of the main higher education specializations of the time: five studied law, four studied theology, four studied medicine, four studied military sciences, two studied arts, and another two natural sciences. Of these 21 higher education graduates, six opted for a "complementary" specialization by pursuing a second faculty: philosophy (Adolf Schmid, practicing law and Franz Joseph Adolph Schneidawind, physician), letters (Saint Marc Girandin, who had originally studied law and Charles B. Elliot who had originally studied theology) or geography (Ami Boue, who initially specialized in natural sciences). Another one, Karl Otto, studied law at two faculties in Germany: Halle and Göttingen (Fig. 5).

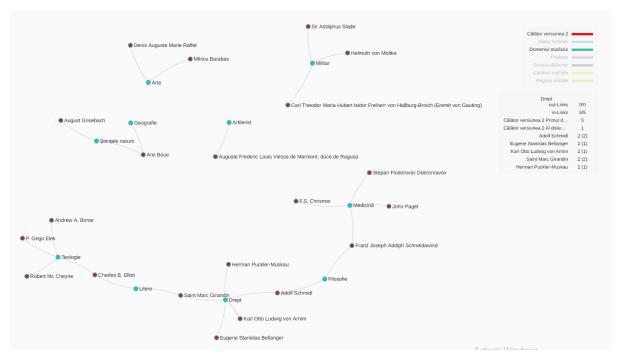


Fig. 5. Social network of travelers' fields of study

¹⁶ Eric Hobsbawm, Era Revoluției, Cartier: Codex 2000, București, 2000, pp. 18-19.

b. Social visualization (professions according to studies, social status and purpose of the trip)

If information about studies was only available for less than half of our subjects, profession was identified for most of them (41), although the diversity of occupational titles is even higher than in the case of studies. Several professions cover groups of 5-6 persons: six were writers and publicists, respectively military; five were priests, or diplomats, or politicians. Other professions, shared by 1-2 travelers, include: merchant, geologist, painter, philosopher, pharmacist, sailor, doctor, military doctor, mineralogist, botanist or teacher. Heterogeneity best describes the travelers' professions, although it should be noted that the first main groups account for two thirds of the travelers.

Given the above, a legitimate question emerges: how relevant are studies in choosing a profession, i.e., did foreign travelers pursued a profession related to the field of their formal education? From among the 21 travelers with known courses of studies, the profession is also mentioned for a number of 20, Charles B. Elliot remaining the only one without a clearly identified profession. Out of these 20 travelers, 16 had occupations complementary to their field of study (e.g., theology priest, military sciences - army officer, medicine - physician, law - politicians and diplomats, letters – teacher, natural sciences and geography – geologist, geographer or botanist, arts – painters). Some exceptions did occur: John Paget studied medicine but became a farmer; Herman Puckler-Muskau studied law but became a military; Adolph Schmidl studied law and philosophy, but became a geographer; Eugene Stanislas Bellanger studied law, but he presents himself as a publicist. Therefore, 80% of the mentioned travelers naturally developed a profession deriving from their field of study, with a minority of 20% pursuing a different professional path. In terms of social coverage, most of the travelers were members of the Central and Western European middle class, with noblemen forming less than one fifth of the sample: three barons, three counts, a duke and a marguise.

There is also the question of the reasons driving these travelers towards the Romanian space. Their purposes are diverse, from the most common one, referred to as "exploration" (perceived also as a life experience), to more professional ones (e.g., geological research activities, mineralogy, etc.), or just transit to or from Constantinople. For the 43 travelers whose journeys' official aims and reasons have been identified the figures are as follows: 13 were "exploring", eight were in transit to the Orient/Constantinople, five were present in this space for professional reasons, another five for research reasons, four for missionary activities, another four in transit from the Orient/Constantinople, three of them undertook diplomatic initiative, and one was here because a military conflict was taking place (**Fig. 6**)

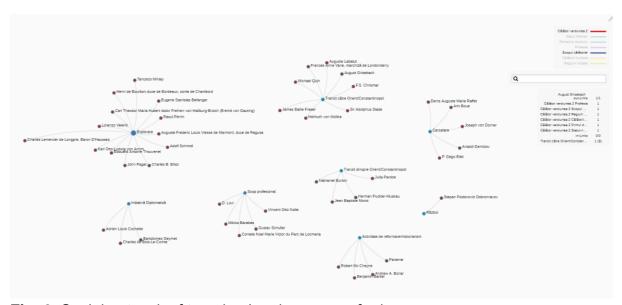


Fig. 6. Social network of travelers' main reasons for journey

The purpose of the trip often determines how much time the travelers have spent in this area, but it also influences the focus of their observations. Some of them seem to have developed a better understanding of the day-to-day life in Romanian lands and provided rigorous analyses of the society in these parts of Europe. For example, we have Eugene Stanislas Bellanger's and Adolf Schmidl's desire to explore lesser-known regions in Central and Western Europe. Both of them have inborn writing skills and their extensive and interesting texts on everyday realities visited are a valuable source for historians. Also, France's desire to establish factors of influence in the area brought for a few years the diplomat Adrien Louis Cochelet in the position of General Consul of France in the Danube Principalities. The professional goal pushes Miklós Barabás to wander through the Romanian space in search of portrait-loving clients. And the Russo-Turkish war of 1828-1829 brought Stepan Fiodorovich Dobronravov into Romania, and later he became the head of all the temporary hospitals set up in north of the Danube by the Russian administration until its withdrawal in 1834.

Others have written their journals in the rush of the journey that often forces them to make quick judgments about the geographical and social landscape they pass through. For example, Julia Pardoe, a British writer, records her impressions about Mihail Sturdza, whom she briefly meets in Galaţi, after she came back from Constantinople by boat on the Danube. The German physician F.S. Chrismar stops on his way to Constantinople for several days in some cities in the Banat, Transylvania, but also in Wallachia, writing impressions on the respective places before embarking, in Galaţi, on a ship to Constantinople. There were also those like Helmuth von Moltke – who stopped for a short time in Bucharest – who are trying to make the most of the limited time they spend here and provide a detailed as possible depiction of the visited environment.

c. Geographical and chronological visualization (travel routes and visited region)

The road network of the Romanian Principalities was at the time in a rather poor state of development. Several main itineraries were established and were intensely used by all the travelers. Those who came from Transylvania in order to reach the capital of Wallachia had three possible major routes. The first one started in Sibiu, continued towards Turnul Rosu and Râmnicu Vâlcea, then Pitesti and finally Bucharest. The second one started in Braşov, went through the Rucăr pass towards Câmpulung, Târgovişte and Bucharest. Finally, the third route starting also in Braşov, continued through the Prahova valley towards Ploiesti, then reaching Bucharest. From there, those who wished to pursue their journey towards Constantinople crossed the Danube into Bulgaria, either at Giurgiu and Rusciuk, or at Călărasi and Silistra. From Moldavia, travelers went South to Wallachia on the route Iași - Roman - Bacău -Focșani or if they wanted to reach the Black Sea they went towards Fălciu and Galați. Those who came by water followed the route Orsova – Giurgiu – Brăila – Galați. From that point onward, the journey either continued on one of the arms of the Danube (towards the Black Sea and the Orient), either went north by land towards the capital of Moldavia¹⁷. In general, those who were only in transit used mostly the main roads of the regions. Others, who had more time, reasons or just a desire to know more, also used side roads.

The choice of routes thus generates patterns in the travelers' impressions. The depiction of common routes provides many details which can be used by the researcher in order to identify changes over a period of time, especially within the main travel hubs. The latter attract the bulk of the traveler's attention and written testimonies. In the Austria Monarchy, Timisoara, alongside Lugoj, Sibiu and Brasov were important transit places for those who aimed at reaching the Principalities. Cluj was not only the provincial capital, but also an important hub, gathering travelers from all lands. However, geographical location was sometimes more important than size or economic development. It comes as no surprise that Orsova, a small and poor border town, yet strategically positioned on the Danube, at the border between the Habsburg Monarchy and Wallachia, became a landmark in the writings of many visitors who wanted to discover Wallachia or Moldavia and reached these regions by boat. Down river, Calafat, Giurgiu, Galati and Brăila took over the entire transit of passengers on the Danube and with it a fair share of mentions in the travelers' logs. The town of Focsani represents a reference place on the land route between lasi and Bucharest – the capitals of the two Romanian Principalities. In quantitative terms, Galati, the main hub of transit between Danube and the Black Sea is mentioned by 19 of the 46 travelers, Orşova and Brăila by 15, Giurgiu by 13, Sibiu by 10 and Timişoara by nine.

¹⁷Paul Cernovodeanu (coord.), op.cit., vol. I, pp. 15-16.

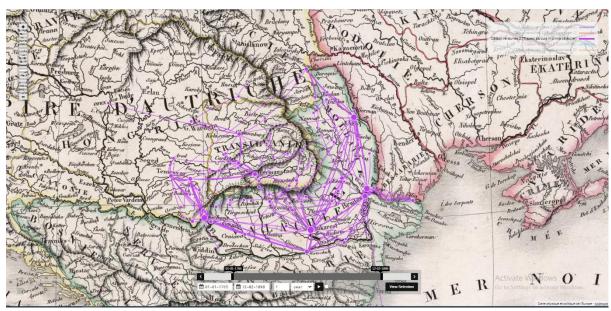


Fig 7. Geographical overview off all routes and stops

The map showing the travelers' mobility is more than eloquent in this regard (**Fig.** 7). The most frequently mentioned places are by far the ones nearby the Danube, alongside with those located on the main land routes towards laşi or Bucharest. It is also obvious that these two capital cities attract most of the travelers passing through the respective country. More precisely, 47% of the foreign travelers mention Bucharest at least once (22 out of 46) among the visited places, while laşi is mentioned by 43% (20 out of 46). If those visiting only Transylvania are excluded from the initial figures, percentages raise further: 64% of the travelers present in one form or another in Wallachia visited Bucharest, and 95% of those who decided to explore Moldavia went to see laṣi.

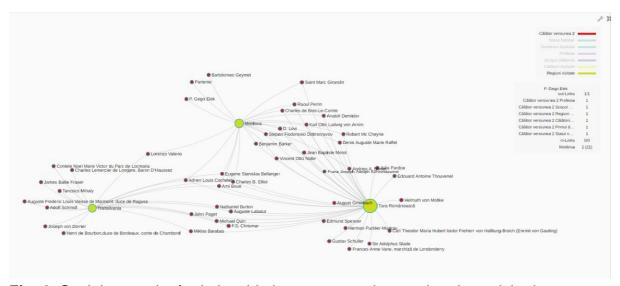


Fig. 8. Social network of relationship between travelers and regions visited

It should also be kept in mind that not all travelers visited the entire Romanian space, many of them journeying through only one of its three large regions: Wallachia, Transylvania or Moldavia (**Fig. 8**). Eight travelers visited only Transylvania, 11

journeyed only through Wallachia and another three have only seen Moldavia. Moreover, only four of them (Ami Boue, Eugene Stanislas Bellager, Charles B. Elliot, and Adrien Louis Cochelet) passed through all three regions. The map also highlights an interesting feature, namely that only five foreign travelers continued from Transylvania into Moldavia and other ten into Wallachia, while those visiting both of the Danube Principalities amounted to 17.

Such dry and seemingly irrelevant data actually highlights the travelers' preferences for different itineraries, most probably on the background of their relevance in fulfilling the purpose of the trip. On the one hand Transylvania attracts the fewest travelers (19), while on the other hand those visiting the province manifest a tendency not to cross the Carpathians and pursue their journey into Wallachia or Moldavia. This probably has to do with the different political situation of Transylvania (part of the Habsburg Monarchy) as compared to the other two regions (autonomous under Ottoman suzerainty). Moldavia is mentioned by 21 visitors and Wallachia by 34 of them. Therefore, there is a much larger foreign presence in the Danube Principalities, as large numbers of ordinary travelers go between the two regions. One reason may be that the path to get there was easier (including traveling by water, on the Danube), not being blocked by a significant geographical barrier. Another reason may have to do with the travelers' aim being the Levant, which does not necessarily imply going through Transylvania, as the fastest route would have been on Danube and further on the Black Sea.

As for the rest of the cities, market towns or villages, there are a number of travelers who, out of necessity or out of their own desire, deviate from the main routes and choose to visit places like Alba Iulia, Sighişoara, Bistriţa, Bacău, Târgu Jiu, Suceava or Botoşani – localities mentioned by no more than a few travelers, if not only by one. D. Lovi explored the foothills of the Subcarpathians, John Paget passed through many Transylvanian villages, Partenie went through many Moldavian localities and monasteries and Adolf Schmidl discovered every single corner of Transylvania. However, most of the travelers kept straight to the main road, to the Danube transit points or the capital cities. Few of them ventured further within the visited territory and numerous places, harder to reach or less crowded, have been left out of their itineraries, or just not mentioned in the travel logs.

Geographical and social projections in Nodegoat can be complemented by time stamps and intervals, allowing the user to compare different chronological periods in terms of dynamics of the researched topic (in this case, number and itinerary of foreign travelers). Increases and decreases in the frequency of trips obviously have to do with historical reasons. For example, at most five travelers leaving memoirs are registered before 1834, when the political situation was not yet very stable in the two Danube Principalities, still under Russian military rule. Franz Joseph Adolph Schneidawind embarked on a journey in Central and South-Eastern Europe, passing through the Romanian space somewhere between 1824-1832. Stepan Fyodorovich Dobronravov went there alongside the Russian administration following the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829. Miklós Barabás crossed the Carpathians in search of a place to practice his profession. F.S.Rosen Chrismar passed through here in 1833 on the occasion of

a trip to Constantinople, and Ami Boue probably started his research trips somewhere in 1833 and completed them in 1840, but without knowing exactly when he passed through this space. Therefore, apart from those five mentioned above, who undertake trips before 1834, the rest of the travelers come to the Romanian space after 1834. However, we should underline again that the primary source used for this research paper is not exhaustive. Testimonies discovered, preserved or published are subject to hazard of history. So, we could see a trend that the majority of travelers were after 1834 in Romanian Principalities, but this rule is strong biased by lack of sources talking about pre-1834 period. (**Fig. 9**).

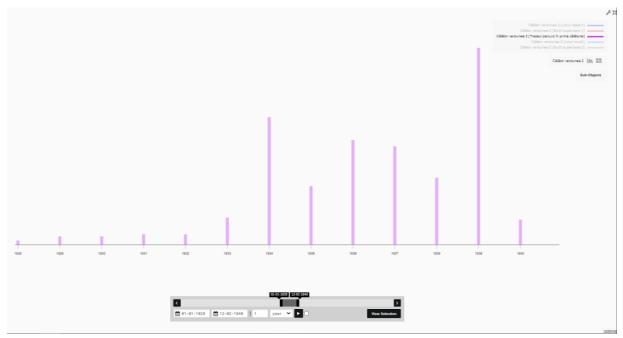


Fig. 9. Yearly display of the number of places mentioned by travelers

However, in light of **the second criterion**, the situation changes a little, shading light on the relativity of the previously discussed data. Each traveler has a certain style of recording testimonies. Some just try to capture a brief picture about the regions they pass through, as is the case of the publisher Raoul Perrin. He entitles his section dedicated to the Principalities: "General view on Wallachia and Moldavia 1839" 18. That is why, in Perrin's notes, there are only two places mentioned: laşi and Bucharest, although he must have passed through others, at least along the main roads. The opposite situation involves, Gustav Schuller, who came to Wallachia to study the effects of the earthquake from 11/23 January 1838 in the counties of Buzau, lalomiţa and Prahova. He rigorously recorded all the villages and places he passed through (possibly even some he did not visit personally), some of which remain unidentifiable today. Thus, as in the case of other travelers, although he mentions a high number of visited places, only the most important ones have been selected and inputted in Nodegoat. Selection also came as a consequence of the platform not allowing the

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. III, p. 748.

registration of more localities through which the travelers passed in the same day. Consequently, only seven important localities have been selected from this traveler's itinerary, from among the dozens mentioned in the source. The case of Adolf Schmidl is equally eloquent in this regard, as he noted every locality that came in his way, in order to draw up a comprehensive travel guide within the Habsburg Monarchy.

Those three cases underline that no matter how many travelers were in Principalities in one year, the mentions of localities through they went may vary a lot. As **Figure 10** shows, from 1834 and 1836 we got testimonies from an equal number of travelers (10), but places worth mentioned were slightly different 61 to 50. Prior 1834, both number or travelers and travel mentions were low, 1833 was a peak with 4 travelers and 13 mentions. From 1834 onward the increase of travelers generates a higher mention of places, but with high fluctuations between years. Although in 1839 were the most travelers and mentions 1840 have only four travelers and 12 mentions strengthening the whole relativity of travelers and their way of writing.

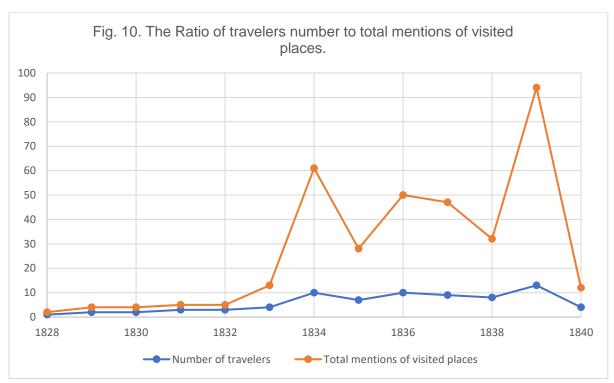


Fig. 10. The ratio of travelers and total mentions of visited places

6. Conclusions

Transposing narrative information into structured data and further on into geographical visualizations is most helpful for historians, and in particular for students who find themselves in the process of getting acquainted with both the realities of the time and the research methodology required in order to analyze them. In this regard, Nodegoat represents a useful and user-friendly tool. This type of visualization, projecting the text onto a map, together with a variety of details whose composition can be modified according to the requirements of the research, allows a much thorough understanding of the data and at the same time it helps identify possible new

research tracks, harder to spot in the original narrative. Comparison between different research sub-topics (e.g., between different foreign travelers in our case) is also aided by the modelling possibilities deriving from the use of a database. Whether geographical, social or chronological, visualization rendered through Nodegoat is particularly useful when used on large data sets. The three types of data visualization are not distinct, but complement each other in order to render as accurately as possible a vanished world.

The present paper was based on a limited sample of travelers, its aims being first and foremost exploratory in regard to the employment of Nodegoat in the research of this particular topic. This makes general historical conclusions harder to draw, but even so, a series of conclusive remarks should be made, based on the aforementioned complementarity of the projected data, which allows the sketching of a profile of the foreign traveler in the Romanian space in the 1830s that left travel notes. Most of the originated from Central or Western Europe, and their great majority (82%) came from bourgeois, or at least non-noble, families. At least half of them had a university degree, which placed them on the mid-upper social strata, a position also underlined by their professional background (politician, writer, military, priest – these four professions accounting for cca. 60% of the travelers). Among the most frequent reasons for traveling through Transylvania or through one of the Danube Principalities, one can identify exploration, research, and diplomatic activities (accounting for cca. 70% of the travelers). Thus, quite a few of them were not only passing through, but also discovering and getting to know more about these lands, on which however, most of them (80%) never returned for a second visit.