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REVISTA REVISTELOR ISTORICE

DIGITIZING THE WALLACHIAN CENSUS FORMS OF 1838. THE FIRST POPULATION SAMPLES OF THE DEM-IST DATABASE*

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In Romania, when it comes to historical demography, the divide that separates historiographies is well known. The school of Cluj, studying Transylvania, is rightfully credited as being at the forefront of research, connected to international historiographies and working with databases on several specific topics: marriage, childhood, biographies, nuclear family, households. In 2017, Babeș-Bolyai University (Centre for Population Studies) launched the Historical Population Database of Transylvania, the outcome of a project directed by Ioan Bolovan, and developed with the help of the University of Tromsø (Norwegian Historical Data Centre) and other European partners. It is based on harmonized data extracted from civil state records (spanning from 1850 to 1910), making it the first database of its kind in Romania[1].

On the other hand, for the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, and pre-1918 Romania, the situation can only be described as slowly recovering after a long decline. Fields and topics specific to historical demography are, in fact, non-existent. One frequently used excuse for absent progress is the lack of sources. This surely applies for certain centuries, like the middle ages. However, it does not justify the scarcity of publications on the 18th and 19th centuries, that do indeed benefit from the preservation of sources: civil state records, population lists, census aggregates. Some (like the Wallachian 1838 and the Moldavian 1859 census forms) can even be distinguished among the most detailed 19th century population lists of South-Eastern Europe, and can, without doubt, be used to improve the current state of art.

Digitizing these sources is essential on not just a general level of facilitating access to material otherwise available through archives or libraries. Digital access alone can indeed make a huge difference, like during the health emergency period in which this paper was written (spring of 2020). Nevertheless, digital format is what makes complex analysis possible, and, with it, results that can put in motion new historiographic paradigms. Creating databases is not just a matter of updating

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[1] http://hpdt.ro:4080/, accessed on June 1st 2020.

publishing formats in the internet and digital era, it is a matter of updating research methods and growing new knowledge. In historical demography, and even in the broader fields of humanities, such statements are self-evident truths and can seem rather useless to point out. But for the historiography of the Romanian principalities, they still outline a current need and a mostly unexplored path.

With these thoughts in mind, work started in 2019 on the Dem-Ist database, set to be hosted by the "Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History of the Romanian Academy. It is a database designed for Wallachian and Moldavian demographic sources of various kind, that, by these means, will hopefully be opened up to new research methods. Initially, this paper was meant as a short introduction to the database, followed by an extensive explanation of how one of its initial population sample is prepared. However, targeting certain audiences called for broadening the scope of the presentation. Addressing international (English speaking) researchers should be accompanied by at least a general view of historical sources, their similarities and differences to those from other spaces. Meanwhile, promoting this database to Romanian historians means arguing for the concept of a database altogether. So, this paper was eventually purposed beyond just signaling the release of a population sample. It is about introducing Wallachian and Moldavian demographic sources to the broader academic landscape and introducing Romanian historians to new instruments of research. Both tasks are challenging and would require a far larger space for a detailed presentation. It is why the following paragraphs and sections do not claim exhaustivity on the presented topics, and why some aspects were inevitably simplified.

Before starting, I would like to offer my gratitude to the persons who helped inspire the idea behind the database. I am especially thankful to Siegfried Gruber, who guided me through previous work and who offered advice on various aspects related to historical demography. Researchers based in Cluj offered inspiration and motivation through their work on the HPDT, published results, and conference presentations: Ioan Bolovan, Luminița Dumănescu, Elena-Crinela Holom, Vlad Popovici, Angela Lumezeanu. Not the least, I thank Oana Sorescu-Iudean for the same reasons, as well as for direct advice.

WALLACHIA, MOLDAVIA AND PRE-1914 ROMANIA: AN OVERLOOK OF POPULATION LISTS

The two principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia existed since the 14th century, occupying a small territory in South-Eastern Europe that bordered the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube, and other natural landmarks. After a short period of independence, they fell under Ottoman suzerainty and remained so for centuries. The 18th century saw a reduction of their autonomy as they became a battleground between the Ottoman, Tsarist, and Habsburg Empires. After the

1828–1829 Russian-Turkish war, Russia was recognized as a formal protector, exercising strong influence in internal affairs and *de facto* control during the occupation of 1829–1834. As one of the outcomes of the Crimean war, collective protection from several European nations (including Russia) was established. Under their auspices, the two countries united in 1859 as Romania. The new country gained independence in 1878, after participating in the Russian-Turkish war.

Throughout their history, the territory of these countries shifted. After entering the Ottoman sphere of influence, Wallachia had to cede several points along the Danube, while Moldavia's losses were more significant. Southern and parts of Eastern Bessarabia were annexed in several sages (15th–16th centuries), followed by lands in the North (beginning of the 18th century). Later, in 1775, the Habsburg Empire annexed a swath of its North-West (organized as the Dutchy of Bucovina); and in 1810 the rest of Bessarabia was incorporated into Russia. Wars and geopolitics also made possible small territorial gains. To consolidate its sphere of influence and its military position along the Danube, Russia sought to remove Ottoman enclaves on the river's left bank. Thus, in 1829 Wallachia was compensated with its medieval possessions previously ceased by the Ottoman Empire. In a pushback to Russian advance towards the Balkans and Constantinople, European powers agreed to compensate Moldavia with a part of Southern Bessarabia, after the Crimean War. Romania then lost this ground in 1878, when Dobrogea was offered in exchange by Russia, linking the country to the Black Sea. The newly acquired province was extended in 1913, following the Romanian victory in the Second Balkan War (Map 1).

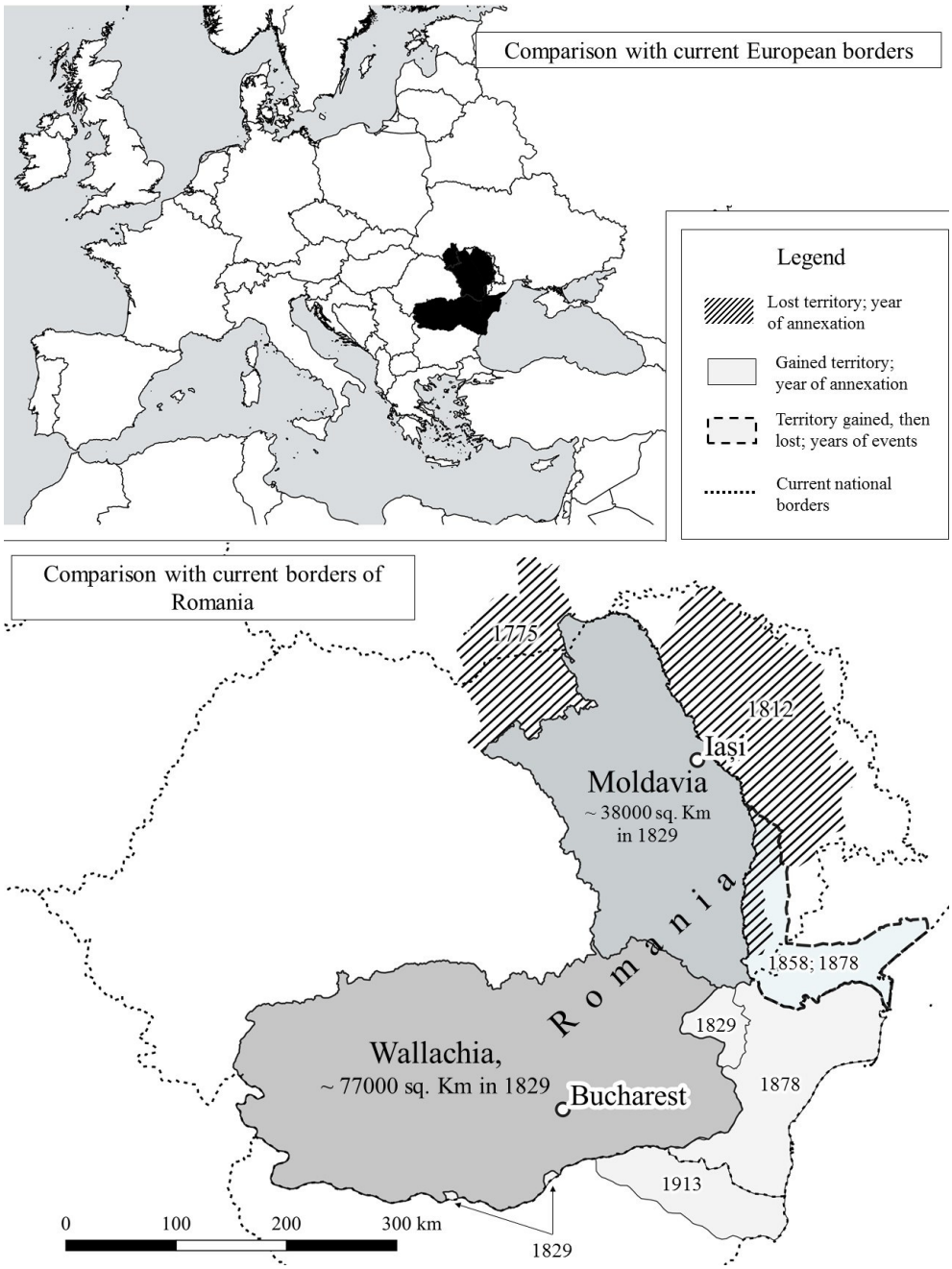
Regardless of what contours their territory took, historians agree the principalities were underpopulated when compared to Central and Western Europe. In 1859, a territory of approx. 125,000 square km, was home to some four million inhabitants (32 people per sq. km). The population was mostly rural (over 80% living in villages) and composed of a majority of ethnic Romanians, Orthodox Christians, who shared these lands with Roma, Jews, Greeks, and Southern Slavs.

Compared to Central or Western Europe, the evolution of historical population lists bear certain similarities, some easy to anticipate. For example, over time, they got richer in information, performed at more regular intervals and to a greater extent for statistical purposes, rather than for purely financial reasons. There are, however, certain specificities.

First, they appear relatively late. Practically, it is not until the second half of the 18th century that even basic population lists become frequent.

Second, the Orthodox Church played a far weaker role than that of the Catholic and Protestant churches. Keeping *Status Animarum* books was an unknown practice in medieval times, and even after 1800, when the Church did start keeping track of parishioners and life course events, it was usually under the orders and guidelines of the laic or military authorities.

Map 1. The territories of Wallachia, Moldavia and Romania, 1775–1914



Thirdly, we can note the strong influence of foreign powers in performing censuses or establishing administrative routines that oversaw statistical knowledge. In Romanian historiography, Austrian or Russian military governments are known for attempts of measuring population, land and resources, through cartography and general censuses. When military officers themselves did not perform these operations, the local administrations (both civil and ecclesiastic) were tasked with their completion. Moreover, institutional reforms that helped develop official statistics were also supervised directly by foreign rule. It was following such experiences that the Wallachian and Moldavian authorities started keeping regular and more detailed population records.

I will expand on these points below, referring to three main phases in which population lists were developed, covering only the timespan between the late 18th century and 1914.

18th century: the age of fiscal records. These were the primary type of population lists and counts made in this century, used to organize finances by local administration, or to survey human resources in general, by military governments. The latter lead several important undertakings with preserved material to this day: the „conscription", during the temporary Austrian occupation of Lesser Wallachia (Oltenia – 1718–1739[2]); the Russian censuses of 1772–1773 and 1774[3]. Regardless of the name (*catagrafii*, *catastișe*[4]), they consisted of a nominal listing of individuals by fiscal category. Thus, non-fiscalized persons (wives, children) were omitted. After 1800 they become more frequent and, in different formats, were kept until after 1900. Sometimes they were accompanied by information on wealth (land, livestock – Table 4).

1810–1830: first major steps beyond fiscality. Some episodes during the 18th century had already seen the first attempts to record not just taxpayers. Houses were counted several times, by Russians in 1771, by Austrians, along with livestock, in 1788[5]. But it was during the Russian-Turkish war of 1806–1812 that saw the first count of the entire population. It was not a single event, but two separate and overlapping efforts, of different authors and in different formats. The

[2] Șerban Papacostea, *Oltenia sub stăpânire austriacă (1718–1739)*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 1971.

[3] Lucian-Valeriu Lefter, Silviu Văcaru (editat de), *Catagrafiile Vistieriei Moldovei (1820–1845)*, I, Iași, Casa Editorială Demiurg Plus, 2013, p. VIII; for source presentation see also Ion Ionașcu, *Evoluția populației din Vrancea între anii 1774–1829 după date statistice inedite*, in *Din istoria statisticii românești*, București, Direcția Generală de Statistică, 1969, p. 413–434.

[4] The same term could be used for more than one type of sources: *catagrafie* could mean a general census, a head list, a numeric census (per settlement or districts) or census aggregates (per different administrative levels). This variety is also replicated in scientific publication, often without clarifying the source's characteristics. For this reason, this paper avoids the use of historical terms, as to not cause confussion, and, instead, uses standardized terms that better reflect the nature of the historical information contained in these sources.

[5] A statistical survey per village was attached to the 1788 map of Western Moldavia, published in Romanian by Ion Donat, Șerban Papacostea, *Ținuturile dintre Carpați și Siret într-o descriere austriacă de la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Brăila, Editura Istros – Muzeul Brăilei „Carol I", 2015.

Church recorded the clergy nominally, along with the members of their nuclear family. The rest of the population was divided by settlement, by parish, by ethnicity, and lastly by gender and life stage (adults or children)[6]. Apart from this operation, the two capitals were also surveyed, this time by Russian military officers, again in different manners. In Bucharest, all members of the household were listed by name, occupation, status inside the household, nationality[7]. To my knowledge, it was the first time that a population that size was listed nominally[8]. In Iași, however, in 1808, only household heads had their names written down; their co-residents were only counted[9].

Not only the principalities witnessed the first country-wide count of the whole population, including women and children, but the 1810 census was also the first significant statistical work performed by the Orthodox Church. In Moldavia, the Church got further involved, with the introduction of civil state books, since the 1800s[10]. However, the formalities did not seem to have gained the desired ground, implemented in various degrees from one diocese to another. A lesser-known episode took place in Wallachia, where vital records first began being compiled by laic authorities, at the end of the 1820s. As the result of yet another initiative by Russian commanders, each head of subdistrict – *zapciu* – was responsible for registering the names of those born, married in his jurisdiction. However, the project had unsatisfactory results[11], so a new system was developed, passing the responsibility to the clergy (see below).

[6] For information on the opperations and aggregates see Constantin N. Tomescu, *Biserica din Principatele Române la 1800–1812: mărturii şi documente*, Bucureşti, Partener, 2010; For source edition see: Alexandru Lăpădatu, *Catagrafia bisericilor bucureştene la 1810*, Bucureşti, in „Biserica Ortodoxă Română", 5, XXXI, 1907, p. 597–604; 6, XXXI, 1907, p. 688–696; 7, XXXI, 1907, p. 805–813; 8, XXXI, 1907, p. 960–964; 9, XXXI, 1907, p. 1063–1072; Mihai Popescu, *Catagrafia eparhiei Ungro-Vlahiei în anul 1810*, in „Biserica Ortodoxă Română", 5, XXXVIII, 1914, p. 493–504; 6, XXXVIII, 1914, p. 594–611; 8, XXXVIII, 1914, p. 841–850; 9, XXXVIII, 1914, p. 966–972; A. Popescu-Runcu, *Catagrafia judeţului Dâmboviţa la anul 1810*, Târgovişte, Viitorul, 1936; Dorinel Necşulescu, Adrian Lucian Scărlătescu, *Catagrafia bisericilor şi preoţilor din judeţul Ialomiţa la anul 1810*, Buzău, Editgraph, 2018.

[7] For information on the operations and aggregates, see: Paul Cernovodeanu, Irina Gavrilă, Ion Panait, *Catagrafia oraşului Bucureşti din anii 1810–1811*, in „Revista Istorică", 7–8, 1990, p. 705–724.

[8] Previously only the small Catholic comunities were recorded in this manner. For Moldavia, were Catholic population and sources were more numerous, see Anton Coşa, *Izvoare inedite privind catolicii din Moldova: Status animarum*, in „Arhiva Genealogică", V (X) 1–2, 1998, p. 155–160 and 3–4, p. 199–258; *Comunităţi catolice din Moldova: Cleja*, in „Carpica", 29, 2000, p. 121–138. See also: Radu Cucuteanu, Valentin Piftor, *Contribuţii demografice asupra populaţiei catolice din Moldova. Un status animarum de la sfârşitul secolului al XVIII-lea*, in „Analele Ştiinţifice ale Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza" din Iaşi", Istorie, 54–55, 2008–2009, p. 81–96. For Wallachia see Alexandru Ciocîltan, *The Saxon Community in Câmpulung/Langenau (Wallachia) According to a status animarum from 1646* in „Études Balkaniques", 53, 2017, p. 394–414.

[9] A copy in Romanian exists at Iași District Archives (Fond Manuscrise, 1634).

[10] Gheorghe Ungureanu, *Actele de stare civilă în Moldova pînă la regulamentul Organic*, in „Revista Arhivelor" 1, 1958, p. 82–92.

[11] See correspondence in the National Archives of Romania, fond Administrative Vechi (1828–1831), file 3741/1829; see preserved records in the same fond.

1831–1914: the age of official statistics. Another paradigm change occurred during the 1828–1829 Russian-Turkish war and during the occupation that followed. The two principalities again found themselves directly controlled by Russia, which this time sought structural reforms. Under supervision from St. Petersburg, as well as from generals appointed as executive power over the countries (Feodor Piotrovich Pahlen, Piotr Feodorovich Jeltuhin, Pavel Dmitrievich Kiselef), the first constitutional laws were drafted, amended and approved by legislatures in 1831 (Wallachia) and 1832 (Moldavia). The *Organic Regulations*, as they were called, introduced and/or organized branches of government under different departments.

By far the most important was the Department of Interior. Its responsibilities ranged from public order and safety, to health, education, economy, communication, environment, urban planning. It exercised its authority directly through its chain of command, or collaborating with various specialized offices, not to mention other departments (Justice and Finances). The department was divided into three branches, or sections (*secții*), with the third branch (*Secția III*) charged with compiling "statistics", coordinating the proceedings of vital records alongside the Church, as well as aggregating their results[12]. In the age, the word statistics could refer to the science and to general work with numbers that now got more popular in administration. In the words of one of Bucharest's city council members:

> "The science of statistics being of the utmost necessity to the public employee who is touched by the sense of duty towards the service that he is charged with by the government, as one who would use this science in all of his work…"[13]

During this period, *statistics* could also refer to administrative operations that were not directly used practically. They served either in planning future reforms, in cross-checking existing records, or simply to provide an ordered knowledge of a territory or community. In this regard, as also pointed out by Ion Donat[14], statistics contrasted with fiscal censuses, which were used in financial operations or financial planning (to keep checks and balances, to forecast revenues and organize the seven-years fiscal periods, to introduce new taxes). Another nuance can be expressed following the formula prescribed in the Organic Regulation for the

[12] See the *Organic Regulations,* art. 151 in Wallachia and 139 in Moldavia, Paul Negulescu, George Alexianu, *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei*, Vol. I, București, Intreprinderile „Eminescu" S.A., 1944. Other responsibilities of Section III included: in Moldavia compiling environmental surveys, developing ways to improve agriculture and administrative territorial division; in Wallachia: the administration of roads, postal service and compiling environmental surveys.

[13] „Știința statistici<i> fiind de întâia trebuință prentru tot amploieatu public care va fi pătruns de datoria slujbei cu care este însărcinat de către Stăpânire, ca unu ce această știință urmează a-i sluji de compas la toate lucrările sale…" in Bogan Mateescu, *Recensământul și administrația publică în Țara Românească. Studiu de caz și documente de arhivă despre recensământul general al Țării Românești inițiat în 1837*, Cluj, Academia Română – Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2015, p. 210.

[14] Ion Donat, Ion Pătroiu, Dinică Ciubotea, *Catagrafia obştească a Ţării Româneşti din 1831*, Craiova, Helios, 2000, p. VI–VII.

Departments Section III: *statistica ţării* – the country's statistic. This term could mean one out of two things, or both. Firstly, the notion of collecting quantifiable information, as described above. Secondly, it could refer to a single event that recorded a vast array of topics, from people to economy, environment, and roads. Such an endeavor differs from the general concept of a census, which applied mostly to single topics. Why the exceptional and global meaning? Why record everything all at once? It could stem from the lack of specialized institutions that, if prompted, could provide the government with needed information. For example, a cadaster system would offer on the number and size of properties. A department of infrastructure could inform on the state of roads and bridges, and so on. Since Wallachia was only then attempting to build such institutional bodies, since statistical knowledge was in its infancy, it was understandable why a wholesome image of the country had to be reconstructed in a single effort. In the same fashion, Austrian and Russian militaries would conduct or order general surveys, given the lack of available records (this manner itself could have been a source of inspiration for Wallachian and Moldavian *statistics*).

Whatever the nuances and cultural transfers, the institutional arrangement introduced in 1831/1832 meant nothing less than the birth of official statistics in the two principalities. Compiling statistics was then recognized as an activity carried out by a permanent official organization, destined not only for financial assessment, but also for better understanding of the land and people, and better governing in general. The medium- and long-term consequence of this novelty was that the occupying military powers lost their monopoly on non-fiscal census taking. Even though many operations were still inevitably inspired by foreign administrative practices, local authorities could seize initiatives, draw their timetables, instructions and forms, and in some cases, even publish the results. This is how the vast majority of statistics were compiled after the implementation of the Organic Regulation, with Romanian becoming the universal working language.

All throughout the 1830s, 40s, and 50s, Section III, regularly used local institutions to gather an enormous amount of information, especially on agriculture, imports, exports, as well as environment[15]. The resulting archival material, even that preserved until this day, is impressive and far exceeds that of previous decades. In Moldavia, these efforts served to write a large scale statistical study of the country, first of its size and complexity, authored by the Moldavian noble and official Nicolae Suțu. Published in Romanian in 1852, it bore the title *Notiții Statistice asupra Moldaviei* (Buciumul Român, Iași). In Wallachia, a significant step forward took place three years after the Russian retreat. In late 1837, as the Department of Interior ordered country's first-ever general modern census: an enumeration of people, estates, villages, buildings, and others (see below the section dedicated to the census).

[15] For example, several censuses of forests and rivers were conducted during these decades.

In addition to the activity of Section III, local institutions began incorporating lists and numbers into their work. After 1831, record keeping became a routine at all administrative levels, each Department conducting its own sets of regular or irregular surveys. Obligations imposed on the population were not only quantified but also accounted individually. Military conscription, road duty, civil border guard duty, contributions to reserve stocks (Table 5), and others, most functioned by writing down the requirements of each person subjected to them. Fiscal censuses continued as usual, but at regular intervals: 1831/1832, 1837/1838, 1844/1845, 1851, 1857. Moreover, procedures often involved duplicate documents, as well as aggregated reports, which further increased the amount of historical sources created and preserved. To make things even more complicated, military occupations continued to stimulate information gathering. I will only point three less known sources, made under Russian occupation. Two of them were numerical censuses, designed to cover as much information as possible, per settlement. The first was made in 1829–1830[16], the second in 1851[17], but I am not sure if they each covered both principalities. Both covered, per village, aspects such as total population count (per gender), houses, agricultural wealth, and different facilities. A third operation is probably unique in Romanian history: in 1849, the Russian general governing Wallachia ordered a record of all men and all houses. In the district of Ialomița the order was followed by compiling nominal lists (Table 8 – given that this source is unresearched, I cannot say for sure that the same format was followed in all districts.).

Returning to a broader time frame, the decades that followed 1831 can be grouped into two phases. The first was already discussed above, marked by the activity Section III. The second followed another institutional improvement that began with the union of the principalities. In 1859, during a period when the governments functioned separately, two statistical offices were created[18]. Romanian historiography tended to overrate the event. Given the fact that it coincided with the birth of Romania, given the rejection of Russian influence (and, by proxy, the rejection of Russian inspired reforms) – both by the elites at the time and later by historians – the founding of the two statistical offices is often celebrated as the starting point for Romanian official statistics. In fact, they represented an upgrade, in which this branch became more individualized than previously (separated from other organizations). The offices still functioned as a division within the Department of Interior, but not as a regular division. Instead,

[16] For Moldavia see preserved material in the fonds of former prefectures (Isprăvnicate) preserved at Iași District Archives. For Neamț District: fond Isprăvnicia Neamț (1828–1856), tr. 634, op. 696, 116/1829, 141/1830.

[17] A study on the survey for district Dolj (Wallachia) was published by Paul-Emanoil Barbu, *Imaginea județului Dolj într-o statistică din 1851*, in „Arhivele Olteniei", 31, 2017, p. 61–84. For other districts preserved material is yet unknown.

[18] For a presentation of this event and published doscuments related to it see Manea Mănescu, *Centum decem anni statisticae Romaniae*, in *Din istoria statisticii românești*, București, Direcția Generală de Statistică, 1969, p. 7–35.

they had their own director and tended to statistics only, not to other branches of the government as well (like *Section III*). In Wallachia, the office also published its work, in a journal called *Analele Statistice și Economice*, which later covered the whole of Romania, although it had a short existence (1860–1869)[19]. Another improvement consisted of a territorial body of employees that these offices were equipped with. A *raportor* (in Wallachia) and *revizor* (in Moldavia) was assigned to each district, in charge of mediating between the central office and the regular administration. Their obligations reflect that the manner of obtaining information did not fundamentally change in 1859. Ground-level tasks were still assigned to local representatives or elected officials, who answered to prefects. The job of the rapporteur/revisor was not to perform actual inquiries, but to help coordinate operations, transmit instructions and results. Census-taking continued as in previous decades: on population movement, agriculture output, imports and exports, prices, judicial statistics, vital statistics, and others. Quickly after their creation, the offices started work on general censuses[20]. Like the one of 1838, each census was designed to include not only population, but also land, wealth, buildings, establishments. They used multiple forms that varied from one principality to another, making them by far the most vast, complex, and meticulously planned operations up to that date, the reason why a detailed presentation here is not even remotely possible. To give the reader a perspective on the complexity of the material, in Moldavia, the forms summed up over 100 columns. It was also Moldavia that experienced a complete nominal listing. Wallachia took a step backward and recorded the name of household heads and the number of other members.

The two offices eventually merged in 1862 in what became the capital of Romania: Bucharest. Until the outbreak of the First World War, the new Statistical Office conducted three main general censuses: 1890, 1899 and 1912. On the last occasion, a regularity is established on performing this kind of operation: 10 years. Thus, Romania would have had a decennial census, if the world war would not have changed the administration's priorities (the next census took place in 1930).

Emerging ecclesiastical records took place mainly with the Organic Regulations, which reorganized vital records. In both principalities, keeping them fell under the responsibilities of parish priests, transferred in 1864 to local authorities. However, they were not the only type of demographic sources created by the Orthodox Church after 1831. Population lists also appear, but they are so poorly known and researched that I could not find much on their origin. I will only cite direct examples from State Archives. The most important finding was that of a census of all parishioners, by name, grouped by nuclear family and ordered into

[19] Vasile Lupu, *100 de ani de la apariția primei reviste statistice românești*, in *Din istoria statisticii românești*, București, Direcția Generală de Statistică, 1969, p. 483–496.

[20] Often, they are presented as one operation: *the 1859 census of Romania*. In fact, there were two separate endeavors in terms of forms, instructions, administrative chain, timelines, aggregate results (published and unpublished).

columns according to their civil state and status: married men, married women, male children (by category of parent: married, widow, widower), female children, (idem), unmarried men but passed the age of married (*holtei*), male servants, female servants, incapacitated. The preserved material known so far is from the Diocese of Argeş, dated 1863–1864 (Image 4).

Demographic sources for slaves. As stated, the principle of this presentation is not to provide a complete inventory of the types of records that appeared in this age, because they are too numerous and various. However, one category of sources deserves special attention because they were more frequent than those for the general population, at least for certain decades: lists of slaves. The Roma population in the two principalities had been enslaved since the middle ages. Slaves were usually classified by type of owner: crown slaves, slaves of the Church, and slaves of private individuals. Between 1838 and 1856, six different laws freed the people of each category. Because of their status as human property, authority over them was exercised in the spirit of acknowledging and enforcing ownership. It meant that individuals, marriages, and families had to be controlled and kept track of. For this reason, is why when records were made, they often included all members of the family, not just heads of family. To add to this, emancipation laws were themselves followed by general censuses. Both instances (slavery and emancipation) resulted in lists that provide names, close kin relation, as well as age, occupation, marital status, occupation, and other. Such lists were far more frequent than those for the entire population. For example, in Wallachia, lists that cover Church slaves were made in 1832, 1839 (see Table 9 for one example preserved material), 1843[21] and 1847[22] (at their emancipation), possibly in other years as well. By contrast, only one general census of the country's entire population was made in this period, in 1838. Slaves of private individuals were recorded in 1832[23], as well as in 1856[24], when they were freed. in Moldavia, the situation was even more one-sided. Later, ethnographic interests in the Roma

[21] Few preserved material is known from this source; for source edition see Bogdan Mateescu, *Familia în timpul robiei: o perspectivă demografică. Studiu și liste de populație din arhive*, Iași, Editura Universităţii „Al. I. Cuza", 2015, p. 171–204.

[22] The material is preserved in most part, although almost completely unresearched: The National Archives of Romania, Fond Visteria Țării Românești, 118–120/1847; duplicates can also be found in other fonds or archives. For source edition see *Ibidem*, p. 222–255.

[23] This operation recorded both private and Church slaves. However, the government did not issue precise instructions, so each census agent (subprefects and police chiefs) interpreted the orders quite differently and worked in various formats: numerical census by settlement and owner, list of heads, lists of all individuals. Therefore, there was not a uniform practice of recording. For research on this census see Spiridon Cristocea, *Ţiganii din fostul judeţ Argeş reflectaţi în catagrafia din 1832*, in „Argesis. Studii și Comunicări. Seria Istorie", 14, 2005, p. 459–468. For preserved material see the National Archives of Romania, Fond Vornicia Dinlăuntru, file 465/1832 (various archival units exist, but this is the most important one, encompassing the results sent to the government).

[24] For preserved material see Bucharest Municipal Archives, Fond Vornicia Orașului București (1831–1861), file 6/1856.

population also generated general nominal lists, like that of 1879[25]. There were, of course, other types of sources regarding slaves, similar to fiscal censuses or general counts. Given the limitations of this paper, I prioritized the mention of the most detailed ones, which are also those that received less attention from historians.

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To conclude so far, producing population records in the two principalities and later in Romania went trough several overlapping phases. Fiscal lists were the primary records that were created most early, by local authorities and military governments alike. The latter eventually conducted or stimulated general censuses and oversaw the birth official statistics after 1830. Roughly about the same time (beginning of 19th century) the Church was also stimulated into keeping records. The following categories of sources were created and are preserved to this day:

Lists of heads: by fiscal category, fiscal category and wealth, list of contributors in various obligations/duties, list of landowners, lists of land tenants, lists of former land tenants;

Headcounts (number of heads);

General counts (the number of all individuals): 1810 (Wallachia and Moldavia), 1829 (Moldavia only?), 1851 (Wallachia only?).

General lists (nominal lists of all individuals). Some covered only specific communities, like Catholic *Stati Animarum*, the Russian census of Bucharest (1810), or the censuses of slaves (in Walachia: 1832, 1839, 1847, 1856). Others, the whole country and population, in the same manner as that British censuses did after 1840 or American ones after 1850. We can refer to Wallachia – 1837, Moldavia – 1859, Romania – 1863 (Orthodox parishioners – only in some dioceses?),1890, 1899, 1912.

Mixed: lists of heads and counts of other family/household members, similar to the format of pre-1850 American censuses: 1808 Iași, 1859 Wallachia.

HISTORIOGRAPHY: THE SLOW PROGRESS FROM PAPER EDITIONS TO DIGITAL FORMAT

Despite this chain of processes being triggered relatively late on the scale of European history, the results undoubtedly make for good sources in many fields. Historians of the two principalities first addressed them through the lens of grander themes: phases of population growth or decline, the density of settlements and population, ethnic structure – if we think of works authored by Louis Roman and Radu Vergatti[26]. Secondly, they were used in studying urban or rural society as a

[25] Julieta Rotaru, *Aspects of Romani demographics in 19th century Wallachia*, in „Baltic Worlds", 2–3, XI, 2018, p. 34–50.

[26] Louis Roman, Radu Ștefan Vergatti, *Studii de demografie istorică românească*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2002.

whole (Ecaterina Negruți[27]) or economy as a whole Victor Axenciuc[28]), and, thirdly, to ask research questions on specific problems, such as the characteristics of social classes, modernity (Gheorghe and Alexandru-Florin Platon[29]) or agrarian relations (Ilie Corfus[30]). However, with the cited authors and others, historical demography of former principalities, seems to have reached a peak. This is not to say that other books or papers were not published on similar subjects, instead that the most influential researches that based at least some of their results on statistical inquiries were not continued. Knowledge often remained on an introductory level, and no new pathways were opened in using these sources. The outcome is a general lack of statistical methods in social history written today, and there is the absence of fields specific to historical demography, like longitudinal demography and family demography.

This evolution can be better understood when comparing historiographies. To give an example familiar to my research interest: household history. In the West especially, this topic cannot be imagined without concepts and statistical methods applied to population records. The classification of households and theories on their evolution, as well as the study extra-households relationship, are all based and argued using demographic frameworks. In this case, historical demography and social history overlap to such an extent that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative history can be proven as a false dichotomy. At their core, qualitative approaches need statistics, while quantitative approaches can offer not only dimension, but critical information and concepts as well. Census forms can tell us who lived with whom, but sometimes they are the only (or certainly the most important source) to tell us that. In Romanian history, they can tell us even more. The 1859 census of Moldavia is, as far as I know, the only 19th century source that states the annual income of people from all social categories, from former slaves to high officials. On the topic of agrarian relations, it is one of the few sources that offer information on both obligations, and age, marital status, family. Unfortunately, population lists were rarely used in complex analysis on any subject and some – like the very census cited above – almost entirely unused.

In the particular case of the history of slavery, the contrast between source potential and research results is far more substantial. Adjusted for population,

[27] Ecaterina Negruți, *Satul Moldovenesc în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea: contribuții demografice*, Iași, Universitatea „Al. I. Cuza", 1984; *Structura demografică a orașelor și târgurilor din Moldova (1800–1859)*, Iași, Fundația Academică „A.D. Xenopol", 1997.

[28] Victor Axenciuc, *Evoluția economică a României: cercetări statistico-istorice: 1859–1947*, vol. I–II, București, Editura Academiei Române, 1996.

[29] Gheorghe Platon, *Geneza revoluției române de la 1848. Introducere în istoria modernă a României*, Iași, Junimea, 1980; Gheorghe Platon, Alexandru-Florin Platon, *Boierimea în Moldova în secolul al XIX-lea. Context European, evoluție socială și politică (Date statistice și observații istorice)*, București, Editura Academiei Române, 1995.

[30] Ilie Corfus, *Agricultura Țării Românești în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea*, București, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1969; *Agricultura in țarile romane, 1848–1864*, București, Editura Științifică, 1982.

preserved general census forms for slaves or emancipated slaves are more numerous than those for the entire population. However, they are hardly even touched by historians of slavery, who focused only on aspects like total population and share of slaves out of the total population, for which they resorted to census aggregates and various accounts. The lists themselves were not employed to address more specific research questions or for a social history of slavery (itself a non-existent field). Even recent works on demographics[31] ignored the preserved material from the sources mentioned earlier (1832, 1839, 1843, 1847, 1856), sources that have only recently began to be cited and researched. In this sense, historiography can be characterized as being over-reliant published information (itself insufficient) and under-performing in regards to primary sources. Knowledge of slavery demographics is minimal, marked by slow progress and repetitiveness of results and conclusions. A break from this paradigm will hopefully take place along with the MAPROM project, mentioned below.

As interest in research topics faded away (or failed to appear in the first place), so did interest in publishing demographic sources. Again, this is not to say that publications do not exist. On the contrary, the published material we benefit from today is far greater than that available in the 70s and 80s. However, the rate of publication is slow, and there is no systematic approach to this process, not even to inventorying the material, with one exception. Worth noting is the strong tradition of editing old censuses that exists among historians based in Iași (University Al. Ioan Cuza and the Institute of History „A.D. Xenopol" of the Romanian Academy), preoccupied with the history of Moldavia. They include a team composed of Silviu Văcaru, Lucian-Valeriu Lefter, Mircea Ciubotaru, Marius Adumitoaei, Sorin Grigoruță. Their best-known work is the series *Catagrafiile Visteriei Moldovei*, a collection of early 19th century (1820–1845) fiscal census forms. It is structured by districts (counties), each county being covered by several censuses, each census corresponding to one publication (in one or more volumes). Since this work is ongoing, not all districts and censuses are contained within existing releases. However, these publications are especially valuable since the censuses were nominal and include information (scarce as it may be) on marital status, occupation, ethnicity, health. Moldavian census aggregates were also published, with the most important works being those of Corneliu Istrati[32] and Ioan Caproșu[33].

[31] Viorel Achim, *Considerations about the Territorial Distribution of Slaves in the Romanian Principalities,* in Jeff Fynn-Paul and Damian Alan Pargas (eds.), *Slaving Zones: Cultural Identities, Ideologies, and Institutions in the Evolution of Global Slavery*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2018, p. 70–93; Venera Achim, *Statistica ţiganilor în principatele române în perioada 1830–1860*", in „Revista Istorică. Serie Nouă", 5–6, 14, 2005, p. 97–122.

[32] Corneliu Istrati, *Condica Visteriei Moldovei din anul 1816*, Iași, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1979; *Condica Visteriei Moldovei la 1803*, Iași, Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza", 2010; *Catagrafia fiscală a Moldovei din anul 1820*, Iași, Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza", 2011.

[33] Ioan Caproşu, *Sămile Vistieriei Ţării Moldovei*, *vol. I (1763–1784)* and *II (1786–1798)*, Iași, Casa Editorială Demiurg, 2010; *vol. III – (1805–1826)*, Iași, Casa Editorială Demiurg, 2011.

Similar series do not exist for Wallachia, where initiatives were mostly scattered. If we considered the sources with the most significant amount of preserved material (like nation-wide lists of any kind), an organized effort to publish them, designed to cover the whole principality, failed to materialize within research centers of Bucharest, Craiova, Brăila and others. For the 1838 census, the most significant contributions came from local historians, each interested in some regions of the country. Spiridon Cristocea was interested with the Argeș-Muscel region, publishing the census forms for Câmpulung, Pitești and Curtea de Argeș[34]. Ion Dedu covered Prahova, with his editions for Ploiești[35]. Emanoil Barbu, Dinică Ciobotea, Gabriel Croitoru, historians well specialized with Oltenia, collaborating Mirela Comănescu, published material for Cerneți and Caracal[36]. Meanwhile, a team from Brăila – Stanca Bounegru, Alinta Vidis, Gheorghe Iavorschi, Cristian Filip – published the records for the modern-day territory of Brăila district[37]. Efforts that are isolated to individual authors or publications are what best describe Wallachia's historiography in this sense, with numerous similar examples for other sources. Ion Donat was involved in editing the aggregates of the 1831 fiscal census, together with Ion Donat, Dinică Ciubotea, and Ion Pătroiu, (cited earlier) while those of the next census (1837), by village, were published by Dumitru Marcel-Ciucă[38]. The lists themselves are mostly left forgotten in the archives.

For 19th and early 20th century Romania, the progress of editing demographic sources is almost non-existent, as historians continue to rely on statistical releases of the age (the publications of the Statistical Office and the works of statisticians such as Leonida Colescu). Efforts to go beyond official aggregates or even to use new methods to study them (like, for instance, historical geography) are extremely few, and again reduced to local history.

Remarkable in all instances (Moldavia, Wallachia, Romania), is the slow development of public databases, in contrast with where countries or research centers where such projects evolved from national projects to international collaborations. If The Norwegian Historical Data Center (NHDC[39]), The Historical Sample of the Netherlands (HSN[40]) and Canadian Families Project[41] were designed

[34] Spiridon Cristocea, Ștefan Trâmbaciu, *Câmpulungul Muscelului reflectat în catagrafia din 1838*, Pitești, Ordessos – Muzeul Județan Argeș, 2007; S. Cristocea, *Orașul Pitești în catagrafia din 1838*, Pitești, Ordessos – Muzeul Județean Argeș, 2011.

[35] Ion Dedu, *Catagrafia orașului Ploiești de la 1838*, Ploiești, Mileniul III, 2017.

[36] Paul Emanoil Barbu, Mirela Comănescu, *Catagrafia din 1838 a orașului Caracal și a satului Bold*, Craiova, Editura Alma, 2018.

[37] Stanca Bounegru, Alinta Vidis, Gheorghe Iavorschi, Cristian Filip, *Județul Brăila în catagrafia din anul 1838*, vol. I–II, Brăila, Istros – Muzeul județean Brăila, 2015,

[38] Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă, *Satele şi populaţia Ţării Româneşti, conform Catagrafiei din anul 1838*, in Dragoş Măndescu, Marius Păduraru, Ionel Dobre (editori), *Argeşul şi Ţara Românească între medieval şi modern. Studii de istorie şi arheologie. Prinos lui Spiridon Cristocea la 70 de ani*, Brăila, Pitești, Istros – Muzeul Județean Brăila, 2013, p. 451–534.

[39] https://www.rhd.uit.no/, accessed in June 2020.

[40] https://iisg.amsterdam/en/hsn, accessed in June 2020.

for Norway, the Netherlands and Canada; the North Atlantic Population Project (NAPP[42]) and MOSAIC[43] research multiple – just to give a few references, among numerous other local, national and international platforms[44]. In the case of Romania (again, excluding research on Transylvania), even if we consider paper editions and their slow progress, the results are still enough for historians to start asking a crucial question: to what extent to can we use them, and for what? Let us take the 1838. It is not hard to use its published forms for purposes related to the general population: extracting the total number of individuals by gender/town sector/occupations. Some figures are embedded in the preliminary studies that accompany these editions. But how to use them in multivariate analysis?, for instance, in obtaining the number of servants or employees, per age group, gender, and marital status. Alternatively, the share of couples living in single-family households, per husbands age group and social category. Such inquiries can only take place in two ways. Through manual search, by accounting for each case, by ramifications of categories. Obviously, this approach is very time costly and poses serious methodological barriers. It is hard for the results to be verified and for the analysis to be modified. If, for example, we want to refine our criteria further and include not only married couples but all heads of the nuclear family, and to distinguish between widows and widowers, then the whole search would have to be performed all over again. In order to avoid such complications, an alternative is to digitize the paper edition: to enter the information into a datasets, either the full edition, or in part (for example – only peasants or merchants, depending on research goals). Similar examples apply for subjects across the wider field of humanities, as all kinds of research questions can be formulated in terms of detailed and multivariate analysis.

In terms of genealogical interests, looking for a family name is not a hard task to perform using either one of the mentioned editions, if only one settlement is researched. But what if our search requires going through numerous volumes, like through the whole collection of the Moldavian fiscal censuses, village by village, name by name? Not to mention a study on onomastics, applied to first and second names as well? Then, the paper edition is simply not enough. It needs to be converted to a digital file. Moreover, given the current state of art, when unedited archival material is universally acknowledged as overwhelming, how do we envisage a continuity in publishing? The preserved 1838 census forms alone probably cover one million people; the Moldavian fiscal censuses probably contain over a million records, and many more await in less known sources.

This issue can be addressed not only lists of individuals, but to lists of villages and administrative units. In my thesis, I used such sources to reconstruct

[41] http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/cfp/, accessed in June 2020.
[42] https://www.nappdata.org/napp/, accessed in June 2020.
[43] https://censusmosaic.demog.berkeley.edu/home, accessed in June 2020.
[44] For more, see https://ehps-net.eu/, accessed in June 2020.

administrative divisions, by digitizing the editions into spreadsheets, in order to generate GIS data. While the work of the editors (transcriptions, annotations) proved crucial in accessing the historical information, the paper format was more or less a methodological barrier. It, alone, was not enough to work with the historical information; additional instruments had to be created. The same with census aggregates published in the age. Put together, the tables in the early issues of *Analele Statisice* (for 1859 and 1860), would form a table of over 500 columns for each urban settlement and each subdistrict. Using even a small part of these tables required transcribing the material into a spreadsheet. In debates regarding the research results, why not release and work directly with the datasets?

Hence, if crucial research can only be performed effectively by reconverting these editions into digital format, why not consider releasing a digital edition in the first place? Datafiles or population samples can be published, used, cited, corrected, and updated easier than most types of source editions, requiring no editorial costs, and accessible to a far larger audience. Why not rethink the way we publish these sources, given the excellent opportunity for research? My intention is not to underrate, nor to discourage the publications of statistical sources in any format. Ultimately, any sort of edition is beneficial. But it needs to be signaled out that, from a point onward on the research path, working on paper format is simply not practical.

Historians like Irina Gavrilă understood the importance of databases and promoted their use[45], while at the same time employing them on issues such as land ownership. However, public resources for historical demography have only recently started being available. In 2015, the MOSAIC database released the first publicly available sample of the 1838 Wallachian census, adding this source to a collection of datasets from other 19th century censuses from Central and Eastern Europe[46]. While this paper was written, another international project focusing on the same source was ongoing: MAPROM, aiming at digitizing and working with historical Roma population samples, mainly from Wallachia and Romania. The project joins Södertörns University and the Romanian Academy and includes David Gaunt, Ryan Dias, Julieta Rotaru, Florin Rotaru.

III. The Dem-Ist database

The Dem-Ist database was conceived as another step in introducing old Romanian population lists to digital media, by creating resources that will hopefully facilitate the use of these sources in the humanities, and, in some cases, help the creation and of fields associated with historical demography. The goal is to encourage historians of the two principalities to integrate digital formats into their

[45] Irina Gavrilă, *Metode statistice și prelucrare automată în exploatarea informației istorice*, București, Oscar Print, 2002.

[46] https://censusmosaic.demog.berkeley.edu/data/mosaic-data-files, accessed in June 2020.

framework, and to find the much-needed common ground of discussion with historiographies of Transylvania and beyond.

This undertaking was envisaged several years ago, but effective planning and work only began after funding was secured. In 2019, the project to built the database was awarded a grant by the Romanian Academy through the GAR-UM-2019 program. The project is hosted by "Nicolae Iorga Institute of History"[47] and extends until November 2021, when the database is set to launch. The project team consists of the author of this paper, as project director, and Nicolae Coman, IT specialist, both affiliated with the institute. As project director, my responsibilities covered the historical aspects: documentation, identifying and editing sources by transcribing and harmonizing them, as well as compiling documentation (presentation) of the whole process.

The project's outlines were established in such a way that it would maximize the scientific potential of the results, while facing limited resources in terms of finances and personnel. In these conditions, the design of the project meant negotiating between:

1. **Type of historical information.** The general intention was to edit sources that need digitization the most – sources that are most complex. Population lists are an obvious choice but not singular but are not exclusive. Complex census aggregates will also be covered;
2. **Technological requirements for coding**. I emphasize this aspect, especially in regards to other projects that use extensive human resources and/or special software for compiling datasets. These are needed when the process is more complicated, going beyond a simple transcription and standardization. Vital records contain information for the same individual, scattered in different archival units. One individual can be recorded in different books, depending on the circumstance: birth, marriage, death, birth/marriage/death of one's relatives, etc. Data linkage software can be used for coding these instances, as was the case for the HPDT, but such a procedure was avoided here. This is another reason for which lists of individuals were chosen, rather than lists of events.
3. **Size of the initial datasets**. Samples had to be as large as possible within the project's timeframe. The initial proposition was for the initial release to contain a population sample of some 20,000 individuals. This target was reached ahead of schedule, so at the time this paper was written, an extension is being planned.
4. **Targeted use and features.** The intention was for a wider reach as possible, with two main options considered, both specific to scientific database sin general:
   a. Online use, with search tools and data visualization tools embedded in the interface, for:

[47] http://iini.ro.

i. Simple operations. They can include name queries for genealogical research, or the extraction of general figures on settlements, administrative units, suited for local history;
ii. Medium level operations, such as bivariate analysis in social and economic topics;
iii. Complex operations, such as multivariate analysis, the kind performed in a multitude of research interests.

Given the work in progress, it is still uncertain the extent to which these operations will be possible directly online. Most likely tools for simple operations will be available, while those for more advanced data visualization will have to be integrated over time, after the current project's deadline.

b. A platform for datasets that can be downloaded by users, who can then work with these datasets as they see fit. These datasets would have to be adapted for scientific use, as to:
i. Suit frameworks applied in social, demographic and economic history;
ii. Suit both Romanian and foreign researchers interested in Romania or Eastern / South-Eastern Europe.

In order to meet this requirement, scientific compatibility must be given priority when organizing the database and the datasets. This feature has to be ensured by considering: bilingual versions of the site and publications; samples with harmonized variables that facilitate the understanding and use of historical information; standardized systems of harmonized variables that are used internationally.

Creating such datasets is within the project's capacity.

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The above-stated goals and principles lead to organizing a platform where users could either use online tools for simple operations or download datasets that are adapted as much as possible for multiple scientific use, addressed to Romanian and foreign researchers alike. The initial content is planned to consist of both population samples and census aggregates. Since the former pose most editing problems, this paper will discuss only them. I chose the 1838 Wallachian census not only because I am more familiar with it, but also because it fits the general principles of this endeavor. It is detailed in the sense that it covers the entire population, not just heads of families or certain population groups. At the same time it is rich in information, proving to be a good source in a whole array of subjects: family and household demography, kinship, household economy, economic history in general, gender studies, minority studies, study of the elites, medical history, not to mention local history and genealogy. Most demographic and economic information can be coded as to ensure compatibility with other databases and frameworks, or otherwise can be made simple to understand by non-Romanian historians. Moreover, compiling the datasets does not require data linkage in the coding process or other sophisticated software tools.

THE 1838 CENSUS OF WALLACHIA: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PRESERVED MATERIAL

The first modern Romanian population census was, in fact, not just a population census. It consisted of multiple forms and measured population, wealth, habitat, natural resources, being "the country's statistic", as presented earlier. Operations started in November 1837, directed by Section III of the Department of Interior, invoking its attributions art. 151 of the Organic Regulation[48].

The precise context of its initiation and design is still unknown. Following the administrative chain of command, one might assume that it was Iancu Manu, the chief of Section III, who planned the census or at least ordered planning, since it fell under his obligations. In the same manner, we can look towards Mihail Ghica, the chief of the Department of Interior and Iancu Manu's direct superior. It was under his supervision that the Department coordinated a number of important social and institutional reforms, which he lauded in official discourse, even using statistics to show the progress of his administration[49]. We can then point towards his brother and the prince of the country, Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica (1834–1842), himself a promoter of reforms. Lastly, one might assume the role of foreign influence. The Russian occupation had ended three years before the undertaking, but Romanian historians are in general suspicious in regards to the influence of the Russian consulate. So far, no evidence of such an intervention surfaced.

As to why the census had certain elements, there are a few clues. George Retegan underlines an 1835 initiative to record estates in an attempt to establish a cadaster system that failed because of opposition from the landed gentry (who controlled the legislature)[50]. The author observed what can be interpreted as striking similarities between the failed project and the census: both aimed at measuring the size of estates and recording various natural elements; in both cases, *statistic* was used to term the survey. We can, therefore, assume that the initiator(s) of the census could have repurposed the cadastral project, reducing it to a survey (perhaps to help with future planning or to experiment with the capacity of the administration?). Later, when filling the forms allocated to estates, some census agents addressed certain unclarities to the Department. Unable to clarify them, the latter forwarded their requests to the office responsible with education: *Eforia Școlilor*, then lead by Petrache Poenaru, another prominent figure at the time[51]. What is interesting about the correspondence between Section III and the Office of Education, is that it was straightforward, lacking an exchange of information on the census itself. This suggests that the Office was aware of the undertaking and did not need a briefing

[48] For a general presentation of the census, as well as for the headtables of its forms, see also George Retegan, *Primul recensământ modern al populație și agriculturii Țării Românești: 1838*, in *Din istoria statisticii românești*, București, Direcția Centrală de Statistică, 1969, p. 157–172.

[49] *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, VI–1, București, Imprimeria Statului, 1895, p. 693–701.

[50] George Retegan, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[51] For edited correspondence see Bogdan Mateescu, *Recensământul și administrația publică...*, p. 176, 180.

on the context. Moreover, the reply contained references to the census instructions, which do not seem to have been shared on that occasion. Based on this apparent familiarity, one might consider to include the official responsible with education – Petrache Poenaru – on the list of possible initiators and designers of the census.

The population forms, on the other hand, remain a mystery. Taken individually, each column within the form can be found in various other censuses, from Wallachia or abroad. Nevertheless, the combination in which these columns were arranged – the form itself – leaves much to ponder, as it is too different from anything close in time (great discrepancy exists between it and the first modern general census of France, which was conducted just two years earlier, in 1836). The first column, where individuals were numbered by living quarters, could have been an idea borrowed from abroad, since the local administration did not employ houses to impose fiscal obligations. The same can probably be said about Ethnicity, Age, and Disability – all previously unused by the Wallachian government (at least not in that specific format). Other columns already had a history of being used in population lists (like those covering agriculture), or referred to aspects that were all too common (like Property and Occupation). Therefore, it is hard to track them to a particular source of inspiration in the absence of definite evidence.

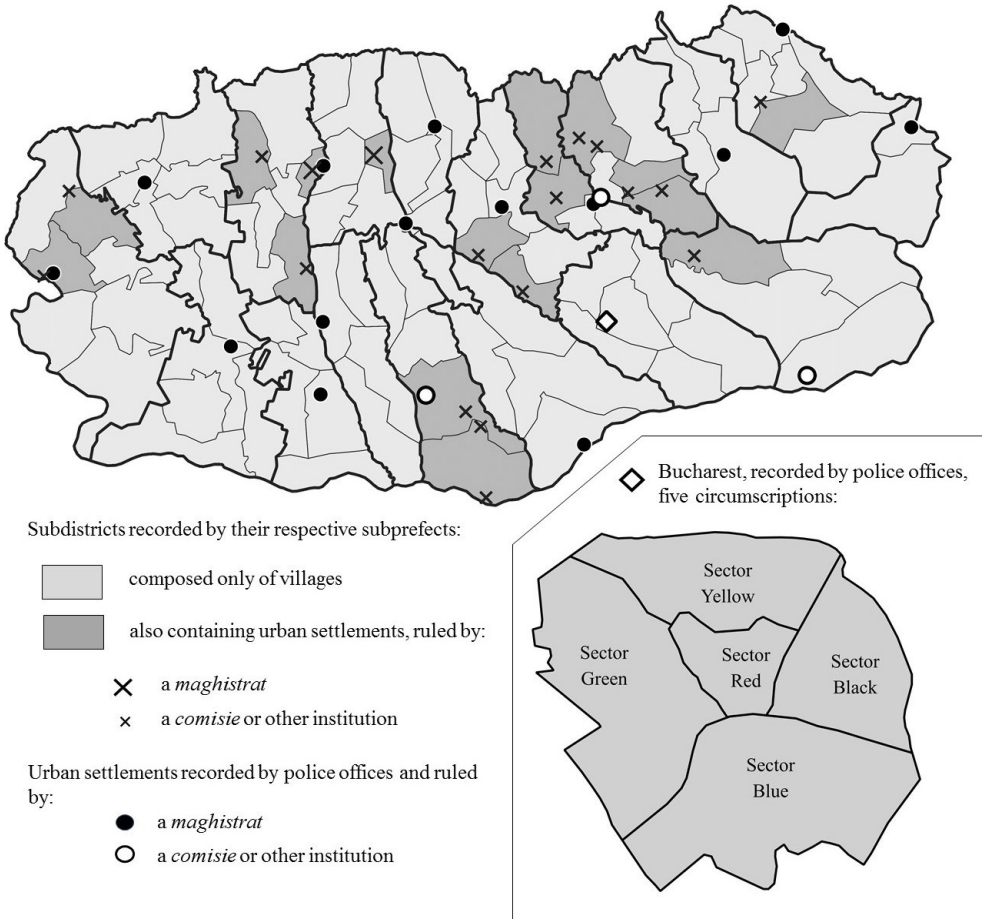
Of what we know so far, the 1838 census was built on the idea of „country statistic" but, in contrast with previous "statistics", its designers (Mihail Ghica, Iancu Manu, Petrache Poenaru?) wanted to cover as much as possible, in as much detail as possible. They introduced new concepts to those in practice, while previously failed projects were brought back to life. In a way, it represented the culmination of 1830s administrative operations, in an effort that seems destined to capitalize an all perceivable topics and to gain as much ground as possible, thus recovering from decades of statistical "blindness".

The orders to fill the forms, along with instructions and specimen forms, were passed along the Department's regular administration, which was assigned with groundwork. Two types of census circumscriptions existed, replicating ordinary jurisdictions. Firstly, townships[52] with police offices. Each police chief (*poliţai* or *poliţmaister*) had to record its jurisdiction (22 in total), while in Bucharest, this task

[52] In that age, urban settlements were often refered to as *oraşe* (towns) or *târguri* (market-towns/bourgs), with the former usually seen as more important than the latter. However, official definitions were non-existent, and official language was very fluid. Depending in the author of the official corespondene, one settlement was designated eitherway. Therefore, classifying them is not easy. For the sake of simplicity, in this paper I chose to classify them according the the type of local council that governed them, in turn varying according to the number of members. Bucharest was headed by a council (sfat orăşenesc) of seven members, including *locum tenens* members. Other municipalities had six mambers, and the council was called *maghistrat*. In all such cases the settlement was called *oraş*, was on "free land" (owned collectively by the townsfolk, not by an estate owner), and almost all were primary administratve centers, hosting different other institutions within their respective district. A thirs type of settlements were lead by a *comisie* ("commission") of two to four members. Most of them were called *târguri*, some *oraşe* but in general were seen as of secondary administrative importance. Police offices existed only in the centers that were home to prefectures, regardless of their type of council.

fell upon the police chiefs of town sectors (five *comisari*, so five jurisdictions). Secondly, in the countryside, each subprefect (*suborcârmuitor*) was tasked with his subdistrict[53]. Wallachia had 18 districts (*județe*), divided into 95 subdistricts (*plăși* in the lowlands, *plaiuri* in the highlands) – so there were 95 subprefectures (Map 5). Since 17 of them contained towns absent of police offices, these towns also fell under the care of subprefects, as the following map shows.

Map 2. The circumscriptions of the 1838 census



Different types of forms were used in Bucharest and the province, and they were not filled simultaneously, but in four phases: (1) population forms (type A in the province and B in Bucharest); (2) land, settlement and building forms (types B,

[53]The only exception was made for Craiova, a regional capital in Western Wallachia (Oltenia), the only Wallachian town supervised by a subprefect. The police chief was the authority tasked with the census.

C, D, E, F in the province and A in Bucharest); (3) a survey regarding agricultural production, and, lastly, (4) one regarding mills. The fact that forms from the last two operations were not labeled might suggest that they were not part of initial plans, and one might even consider them separate from the census, especially since the same surveys were carried out regularly (not just in 1838). However, since orders from the Department of Interior demanded them as part of the "statistic", along with the previous forms, I decided to include them in the same discussion[54].

In the first two phases, proceedings took far longer than expected by the central authorities. A possible cause for this was the obligation to produce the material in three copies: one to be kept a police/subdistrict level, one to be sent at district level (prefecture), and the third to the Department of Interior. Additionally, land measurements necessary in forms B probably delayed operations even further. So, while population record probably ended in the first half of 1838, in some cases even in 1837[55], the formal proceedings appear to have ended in 1841, when the last circumscriptions handed over copies of the material to the Government.

Given the large and unprecedented scale of the operations, it is no wonder that Section III found itself under-staffed when managing the volumes of lists it received. Requests were made to supplement the bureau with men and supplies, but, when work finally ended, the aggregate results did not reflect the complexity of the census. No evidence exists that forms type B, C, D, E and F (for the province) and A (for Bucharest) were centralized in the results presented in the Country's Assembly[56] and in those published in an official publication (*Almanahul Statului* per 1842), but figures were extracted only from the population forms, end even so, per districts (not even per towns). In the end, it appears that the Wallachian government was too optimistic regarding its plans, as well as the possibility of the local administration to follow the immense tasks place upon it.

*

Leaving these contextual discussions aside, I will briefly refer to the types of information recorded in the forms themselves and their state of preservation.

The population was recorded in two forms: type A used in the country and type B in Bucharest. The unit of recording was the individual and all individuals had to be recorded. However, different spatial units were used: in the country individuals had to be grouped by house, while in Bucharest by enclosure (yard). Both forms required similar information to be given by the respondents: name, relations to other persons living in the same household/enclosure, age, marital status, occupation, disability. In Bucharest, the type of presence also had to be recorded (basically "traveler" or "settler" –

[54] For published correspondence see Bogdan Mateescu, *Recensământul și administrația publică...*, p. 107, 109.

[55] See the case of subdistrict Câmpu-Romanati, Bogdan Mateescu, *Recensământul și administrația publică...*, p. 56–7.

[56] *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, IX–1, București, Imprimeria Statului, 1898, p. 1163–1169.

with no methodology of defining each category), also if individuals were vaccinated or not. Wealth was recorded in both cases, but only that related to livestock and agriculture. In the province, the space allocated to these issues spanned across 15 columns, on land, livestock, beehives, trees, and vineyard (Figure 7). In Bucharest, they were reduced to just six, five of which were also found in the province (horses, cows, bulls, buffalo, and pigs); and one specific to Bucharest (dogs).

Forms type B, C, D, E, F (province) referred to estates, villages, rural habitat (houses of both villagers and estate owners), mountains, hills, rivers, water sources, forests, roads, different establishments (churches, mills, taverns, abattoirs, inns). In Bucharest, the situation was much different, as form A was specialized in urban habitat (buildings, shops, facilities, streets, etc.), and the unit of recording coincided with that used in form B. Practically, each *comisar* (police sector chief) took every single enclosure and recorded its inhabitants (form B), as well as its physical characteristics, (form A).

Table 1

A description of the forms used in the 1838 census: the topics (population, urban propery, estates, environment, etc.) and general information that was recorded

Form type	Unit/object of recording	Units primarily grouped by	Information on
Population			
A – province 24 columns	Person	house	Name, relation, age, marital status, ethnicity, occupation, wealth (livestock, used land)
B – Bucharest 17 columns	Person	enclosed or demarcated property	Name, relation, age, marital status, occupation, ethnicity, disability, presence, vaccination, wealth (livestock),
Urban properties			
A – Bucharest	Property	neighborhood (*mahala*)	Street, owner, type of property, type of enclosure
	Building	enclosed or demarcated property	Type of roof, number of levels, number of rooms per level, the placement of the main façade
	Shop		Type
	Stable		Construction material, capacity (no. of horses)
	Shed		Construction material of walls, roof, capacity (no. of carriages)
	Water wells/shafts		Number
	Church		Name, denomination, Building material, no. of bells
	Part of the street facing the yard		Street name, state of pavement
	owner		name

Table 1 (continued)

Estates			
B – province 15 columns	Estate	subdistrict (plasă/plai)	Name, owner, size, neighbours, type of border
Environment and roads			
C – province 23 columns	River	estate	Name, origin, points of entry and exit, width, ris of drought, mills (including damns and artificial lakes)
	Lake		Name, location, size, vegetation, possibility of crossing
	Number of water sources		By type (regular/ mineral water)
D – province 18 columns	Mountain	estate	Name, location, orientation, presence of forests
	Hill		Idem
	Valley		Idem
	Hillcock		Idem + size
E – province 18 columns	Road	estate	Name, points of entry and exit
	Forrest		Name, location, orientation, size, types of trees, general landscape of forested area
Settlements, churches and other buildings / facilities			
F – province 16 columns	Village	estate	Name, location, state of systematization,
	Church	village	Location, construction material, no. of bells
	house owned by the estate owner		construction material, no. of rooms, of levels
	houses owned by villagers		sum of ~, by construction material / general type
	Inns		sum of ~, location on the estate
	taverns		sum of ~
	abattoirs (*zalhanale*)		
	markets (*târguri*)		
	fairs (*bâlciuri*)		
	distilleries (*poverni)*		
Various yields			
(unlabelled) 9 columns	beans	village	Quantity expressed in *ocale*[57]
	lentils		
	broad beans		
	green peas		
	flax		
	hemp seeds		
	tobacco leaves		
Mills			
(unlabelled) 4 columns	mill	estate	Name of the owner, name of water course, no. of wheels, the presence of dams

[57] 1 *oca* = 1 kg or 1 litre, depending on the type of measurement (weight or volume).

The vast majority of known preserved material from this census (excluding correspondence and centralization) consists of the duplicates of population forms handed over to the Department. They cover a surface area of approx. 59,000 (76% of total surface area). This territory includes:

- the capital Bucharest, (with some 50,000–60,000 inhabitants);
- 12 urban settlements ruled by *maghistraturi*:, Brăila, Buzău, Caracal, Câmpulung, Cerneți, Craiova, Curtea de Argeș, Focșani, Giurgiu, Pitești, Ploiești, Slatina;
- 16 urban settlements ruled by *commissions* of two or more members: Alexandria, Bucov, Călărași, Câmpina, Filipești, Găești, Mavrodin, Mizil, Potlogi, Râmnicu-Sărat, Rușii de Vede (today Roșiorii de Vede), Severin, Slănic, Urlați, Văleni, Zimnicea;
- For villages: 73 out of Wallachia's 95 subdistricts (approx. 900 000 – 1. mil. people). Material is missing from Mehedinți (all seven subdistricts), Gorj (all six subdistrict), Vâlcea (all seven subdistricts), Romanați (one subdistrict) and Ialomița (one subdistrict).

These forms were grouped in registers (books) of one or two volumes, according to the circumscriptions presented earlier (1 circumscription = 1 register). Some exceptions exist. The material for Bucov was too small to form a register, consisting only of a single page. Bucov was Wallachia's smallest town, with just 33 houses. The respective page was attached to the book of the surrounding subdistrict (Podgoria-Săcuieni). In the case of Zimnicea, a market-town in subdistrict Marginea-Teleorman, the opposite happened. Its forms are preserved in a separate book, together with those for two settlements that lack a direct identifier. Using the size and structure of the population (large size, including merchants and artisans), Mihai Chiriță inferred that one the settlements is the market-town of Rușii de Vede. The other one, according to the same researcher, could be the village of Nenciulești.

Several attempts to inventory the population forms were made. One, by Mihai Chiriță, was never published, available as a manuscript copy at the library of the "Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History[58]. My own effort was carried out as part of the MOSAIC project, published in 2013[59], and it led to adding new material to the list, although at the time of the research, not all archival units of interest could be accessed[60]. Subsequent research enabled me to fill these gaps, so, up to date, I identified population forms distributes among tree archives (Map 6):

[58] Mihai Chiriță, *Obșteasca Catagrafie – 1838 (Țara Românească). Statistică numerică.* 2003.

[59] Bogdan Mateescu, *Census like material preserved in the Romanian archives, for the former principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia and for Romania before 1914*, MOSAIC working paper 2013–1 – Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, 2013 – https://censusmosaic.demog.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/ downloads/publications/mosaicWP/mosaic-wp-2013-001.pdf, accessed in June 2020.

[60] What remains of the register for subdistrict Balta-Ialomița is in relative poor state and even when acessed (October 2014), it still could not be fully researched, so it is unclear if how many villages are missing.

- The central office of the National Archives of Romania (or Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale), fond Catagrafii, containing archival units for 8 circumscriptions;
- Ialomița District Archives, fond Prefectura Județului Ialomița, for two subdistricts (Borcea and Balta) and the town of Călărași;
- Teleorman District Archives – duplicates for one circumscription also covered in fond Catagrafii – subdistrict Șerbănești-Olt.

Other types of forms have been preserved to a far lesser extent. I could find only five subdistricts with preserved forms types B, C, D, E and F[61], and no forms type A-Bucharest. Because the lists of mills and yields took relatively little space, they were deposited directly in the correspondence file (itself split into two volumes[62]); therefore, they are preserved in most part.

DIGITIZATION OF FORMS TYPE A (PROVINCE) IN THE DEM-IST DATABASE

So far, in the broader historiographical field, 1838 census forms have been selected for publication in three main research frameworks:

1. interest in local history, usually directed towards urban settlements (like the examples given earlier);
2. interest in the country as a whole, using a representative sample: the case of the MOSAIC database;
3. interest in a particular population group, like, the MAPROM project, focusing on Romani.

Having this in mind, the next step would be to publish the material for the entire country and the entire population. This endeavor will have to take place gradually, as it requires precise long-term goals and timetables, that current resources do not allow. However, the framework of the Dem-Ist database can be considered as a first step in such a systematic approach. Instead of isolated settlements or certain population groups, I propose tackling the material by circumscriptions, one or several at a time. Therefore, the initial releases of the database will cover the entire population of some circumscriptions. Hopefully, in time, with new opportunities and working teams, with potential contributors, the publicly available samples will grow in number.

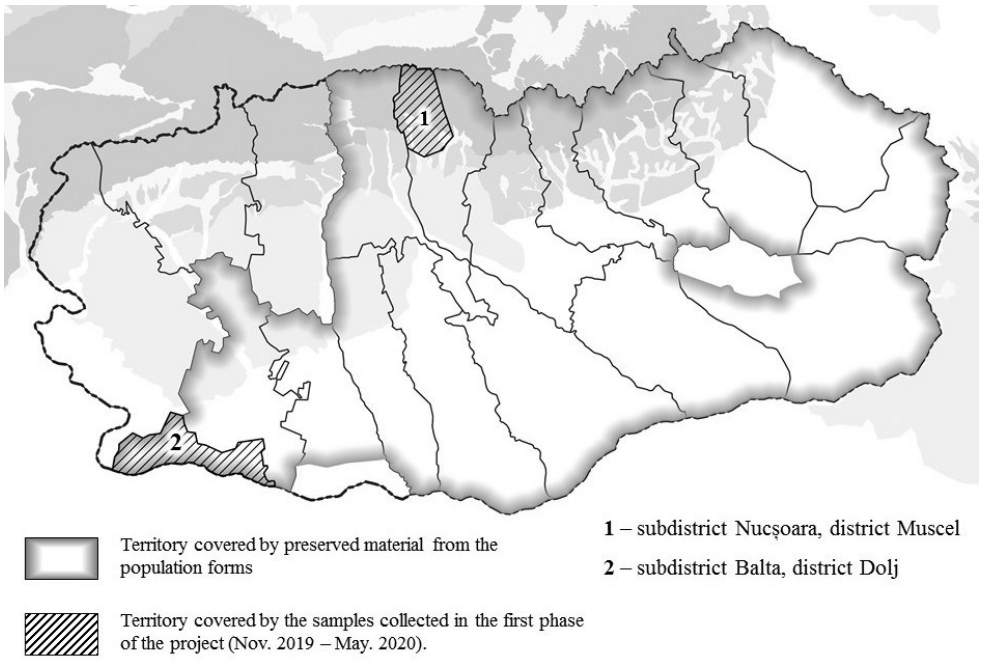
Since urban settlements have disproportionately benefited from attention from historians preoccupied with the census, work in these early stages of the

[61] Bogdan Mateescu, *Recensământul și administrația publică...*, p. 265; *Casele proprietarilor de moșii în formularele recensământului general al Țării Românești din 1838,* in Dan Dumitru Iacob, (editat de), *Avere, prestigiu şi cultură materială în surse patrimoniale: inventare de averi din secolele XVI–XIX*, Iași, Editura Universităţii „Al. I. Cuza", p. 553–601.

[62] National archives of Romania, fond Vornicia Dinlăuntru, 447/1837 and 448/1837 (both cited in older publications by their previous identifier – 6353).

database prioritized villages. Two subdistricts have been chosen, from different environments, in order to account for the country's natural diversity (in turn linked to social and economic differences): Nucșoara-Muscel, a highland subdistrict (*plai*) in Greater Wallachia (Muntenia), and Balta-Dolj (a *plasă*), in the lowlands, bordering the Danube in Lesser Wallachia (Oltenia). Their registers have already been transcribed and will be prepared as two different samples, totaling information for 22403 people, who lived in 37 villages. Since this progress was made during the project's first year, expansion to new material is currently considered.

Map 3. The territory covered by the population sample in the current state of the project.



The process of creating the population samples followed three main principles:

1. It should include all the information from the historical source, in a format as close to the original as possible;
2. The columns from the census form should be joined by columns in which the same information is standardized so that it can be used more effectively. This does not imply that the original information is omitted or modified. Both the original and the standardized columns will be present in the dataset. Another point to consider is the general scope of the database in regards to accessibility. Since it is destined for a wide range of scientific interests, the standardized (or harmonized) variables will be structured according to practices in the general field of historical demography. The

main inspiration came from the MOSAIC database, in turn based on the same practice found in NAPP or international statistics (Eurostat, United Nations) – see the guidelines authored by Siegfried Gruber[63]. Moreover, the datasets will be released in two versions: Romanian and English. Not all of the information was translated into English. The original information was kept as it is, in both versions. Only harmonized variables were duplicated by language. In turn, each version (Romanian and English) was again duplicated by format of harmonized variables. Some standardizing systems use both text labels and numerical codes. Example: in Table 2, *fiu-său* is used to refer to Dinu, as son of Ioan. In the NAPP, this term would be standardized as the text label "child". In turn, "child" corresponds to a numeric code: 0301. Both labels and codes can be used to harmonize historical information and to analyze it (depending on the methods) and the Wallachian sample will come in both formats. So, four versions of the samples will be available: Romanian – labels, Romanian – codes, English – labels, English – codes.

3. Transparency in methodology. The process of compiling the dataset is presented in a two steps documentation. This paper represents the first step and has the role of outlining the main principles: the origin of the census, the state of the preserved material, nature of the historical information, the variables within the dataset: systems of labeling and coding, the rationale behind them, general difficulties and ambiguities. Ideally, a thorough documentation should present a full list of unique harmonized labels and codes used for each variable, together with the corresponding information within the source. However, at the moment, this paper was written, the coding process was still ongoing. Moreover, because presenting correspondence tables takes plenty of editorial space, this second part of the documentation will be published solely online, along with the database. Therefore, the sections below are not destined to provide complete details on the contents of each column.

I tried to maximize the application of all of these principles, although some exceptions had to be made. In some cases, applying a strict guideline was relatively useless, while in others, there was the risk of over-processing the historical content, thus creating ambiguity, as detailed onwards. I will explain how procedures and compromises were carried out by elaborating on each step of the process.

Basic transcription

This stage took place by transcribing the information into a spreadsheet. Two main aspects can be discussed here. First is the historical writing and its conversion to present-day norms. In the age a Romanian version of the Cyrillic alphabet was

[63] Siegfried Gruber, *Mosaic data files: Documentation of harmonized variables, Version 1.9* (April 7th 2015), https://censusmosaic.demog.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/downloads/mosaic_data_files_harmonized_variables_version_1.9.pdf, accessed in June 2020.

used. Its set of letters could vary from one author to another, as did calligraphy, accents, and punctuation, which were quite diverse. To add to these irregularities, abbreviations were often used.

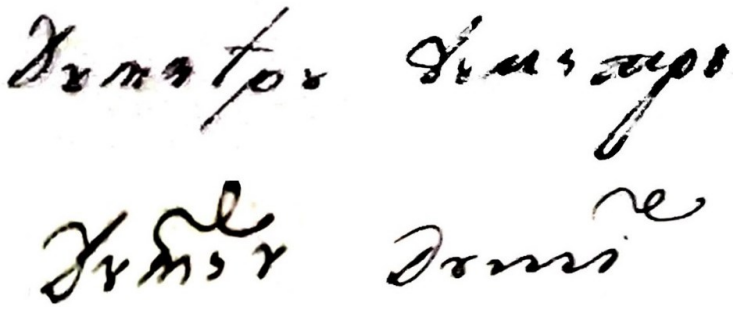
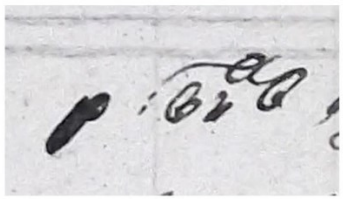


Figure 1. Exemplification of Cyrillic writing styles
in Wallachia: the name Dumitru

Influence from the Latin alphabet can also be noted, the reason why the Wallachian and Moldavian writing from that age is sometimes referred to as "transition alphabet", employed before the adoption of the Latin alphabet in the 1860s. Whatever the letters and calligraphy used, the source was transcribed into the present-day Romanian alphabet, following a graphic principle, according to which I prioritized signs over pronunciation. My goal was to be as transparent as possible as towards what signs were used, and not to interpret how they were pronounced. I used the closest but also the most basic correspondence between the two alphabets, avoiding the use of accents. I also avoided the tacit filling of abbreviated words, often used in Romanian source editions. Instead, I marked the abbreviated parts with brackets "(…)", as in the following example:



r(omân) | văd(u)v

Figure 2. Exemplification of transcribing abbreviated words.

Another tacit intervention on the historical text often made by Romanian historians is when confronted with the sign ъ/ь – ă. This sign was often used in constructions that today use the sign "â". The argument is that the sound was pronounced as today (â), but only written differently out of pure convention – so it should be transcribed as "â". I avoided making this modification and reflected the signs as they are in the source.

The only compromise from the graphic principle is made in the case of what seem to be silent vowels. They are represented in soft signs that mark the palatalization of consonants: -ă, -u, as well as -â (more rare), often found following -n, and -l. These signs appear out of two possible reasons. First, out of convention, as a legacy of Slavic writing, in the same manner as modern Slavic Cyrillic alphabets include the *yer/er* sign. Second, via Romanian, where each consonant, if pronounced independently, has vowels attached to it. In speech, these vowels become silent when the consonant is linked with other sounds to form a word or syllable. The fact that some writers represented silent vowels might suggest that their spelling was not cursive, but made syllable by syllable or letter by letter. Soft signs were usually attached at the end of consonants (like Ivanâ and sinâ in Figure 3), but in rare cases they can also be found preceding it (like Maînda and Aîndrei). Whatever the explanation, signs marking silent vowels were omitted from the transcription.

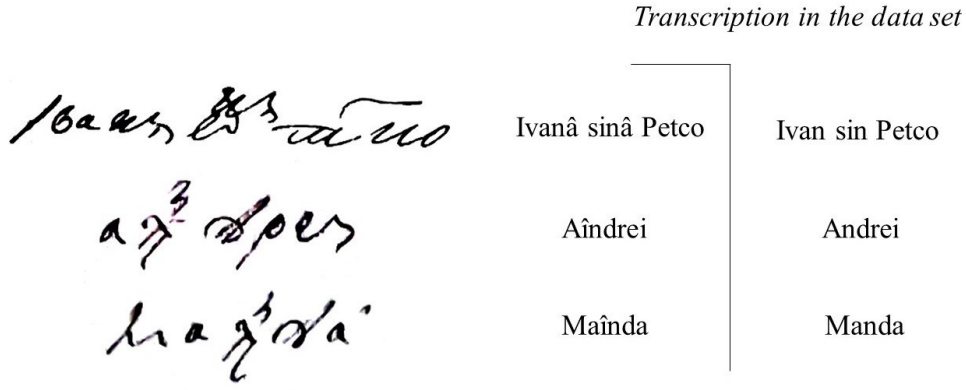


Figure 3. Exemplification of silent vowls in Walalchian Cyrilic writing.

The second important aspect related to transcription is the source's tabular form. The intention was to replicate it as much as possible, but two of its columns contain more than one set of terms or expressions, each associated with a different type of historical information. In their case, replicating the exact source format would render the basic transcription extremely hard to work with. Moreover, separating each by type of information would not hinter the understanding of the content, as explained further below. From this point of view, strictly respecting the source table is an unnecessary principle. Therefore, in the transcription phase, I proceeded to split these columns, as follows:

I. „Name" (column 2). As implied, it contained the name, and, besides it, the relation of the individual to other co-residents. Since there was no official procedure in defining or assigning names, individuals could be referred to by their baptism name, but also by their title/appellative, occupation, nickname, kin. Informal practices used at that time make classifying names

and nicknames rather tricky. At the same time, it is not the purpose of this paper, nor that of the population sample, to discuss and account for all the nuances. My purpose is only to give the information a minimal coherence and let the reader and user of the sample judge by themselves how names and identities overlapped. In this sense, I used three minimal criteria to distinguish between different components. First, I isolated the first name (given at baptism) from any other word or phrase, because it is very easily recognizable in Romanian sources. Second, I took the first name as a reference point and proceeded to separate all other parts according to their position to the first name. Third, the relation to other members of the household was judged separately, since its demarcation also came without ambiguities. Following this principle, I classified the information present in the column „Name" as follows:

- information recorded before the first name. It was usually an expression used to address individuals by referring to their status, in turn, shaped by multiple criteria: noble rank, occupation, age. Old people were addressed using: „baba", „mătușa" (for women) /„moș", „uncheașu" (for men); priest by *popa*, *preotul*, *duhovnicul*; noblemen by their rank, and so forth.;
- the first name, which was the name given at baptism;
- information following the first name can be assimilated to family names or nicknames. As in other European countries, family names were often derived from kinship, taking the form of simple or composite nouns. The latter were quite recurrent, formed by adding particles derived from Slavonic. These particles were: *sin* ("son of"), *zet* ("son-in-law of"), brat ("brother of"), *vnuc* ("grandfather of"), followed by the kin's name. Alternatively, Romanian could be used: *ginerele lui* ("son-in-law of"), *fratele lui* ("brother of"), *sora lui* ("sister of"). The genitive particle *al/a lui* or simply *lui* ("of") was used mainly to mark filiation of male offspring: Dinu lui Marco = "Dinu [son] of Marco". A secondary use was for widows, who most often were referred to by their deceased husband's name: Mitra a lui Barbu = "Mitra [widow] of Barbu". The same applied if the husband was absent from the household in the moment of the census (some were recorded as imprisoned or serving in the Army). The referred kin could be named only by the first name or by first name and family name (or substitute). Multiple patterns could be found for family names, including combinations of kinship and nicknames, or two kinship references. Examples: *Tudor Costandin, ce-i zice și Găină Măreață* (father's first name + one's nickname); *Stan Stelea ce-i zice și zet Ganea* (father's first name or family name(?) + father-in-law's first name); *Ghiță cumnatu lui Ștefan brat Vâlcea* (brother-in-law's first name + brother-in-law's brother's first name); *Ilie Ștefan Cârciumaru Galiceanu* (father's name + occupation + nickname,

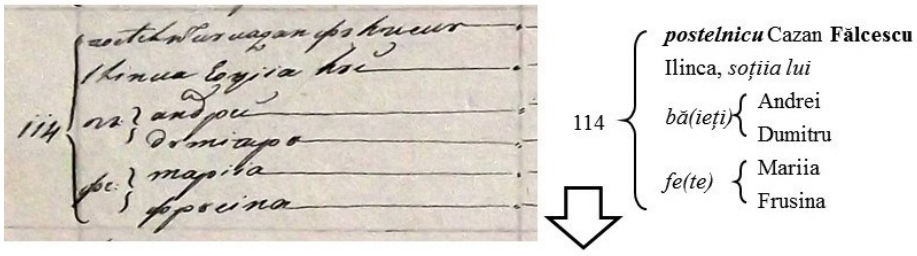
derived from the place of origin). All of these possibilities make naming patterns in the census extremely various;

- status/relation to other members of the household or family: wife, son daughter, mother, father, servant, and so on. These expressions could also precede or follow first names but are easily distinguishable because each census taker used standardized expressions, repeated in the same sequences (for example, the wife was enumerated after the husband, sons before daughters). Accolades were used for individuals sharing the same status, thus adding a visual mark for this type of information, clearing it of ambiguities (Figures 4 and 6).

When transcribing the census forms, I divided the „Name" column into four artificial columns, each assigned to one of the four variables presented above (Figure 4):

- *appellative_or* – containing any information recorded before the first name, such as titles or nicknames;
- *first name_or* – name of baptism;
- *second name_or* – anything that followed the name of baptism, substituting as family name;
- *relation_or* – for any information referring to the relation of persons that lived together.

This separation enables each element to be tackled more easily, while not interfering too much with the historical information. If the user of the sample decides that the title and second name are interchangeable, or that the second name can be divided or classified in various ways, the format fully allows for such initiatives.



house no._or	appellative_or	first name_or	second name_or	relation_or
114	***postelnicu***	Cazan	**Fălcescu**	
114		Ilinca		*soția lui*
114		Andrei		*bă(ieți)*
114		Dumitru		*bă(ieți)*
114		Mariia		*fe(te)*
114		Frusina		*fe(te)*

Figure 4. Exemple of how the column Name was transcribed.

II. „Worked land – Pogoane lucrate” (column 9, see Figure 7). Here, the census agent wrote the number of plots (*pogoane*) used by each individual for crops and hayfields. This column was split in as many unique usages found in all of the sample.

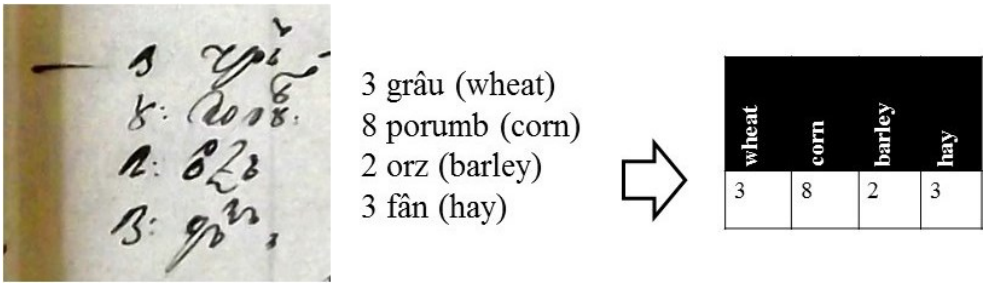


Figure 5. Exemple of how the column Used land was transcribed.

A similar case can probably be made for the column Disabilities since it recorded not only disabilities but also the time of their occurrence (at or after birth). However, this column had relatively few rows filled, so, working with its content is not difficult. Hence, the source format was respected in this instance.

All other columns were transcribed as they are in the source and are included in the public datasets.

Lastly, some parts of the source were excluded entirely from the population sample itself, since the information does not refer to individual persons, but the whole community. These are the aggregate reports the census takers wrote for each settlement (Figure 8). They are being transcribed but will be made available separately from the primary datasets.

Harmonization and harmonized variables

The process of harmonization (or standardization) consisted of creating variables (columns) in which the historical information is converted in a standardized form (labels or codes), making it easier to use digitally, in versions suited for scientific purposes. Revisiting a previous example, “son” in the census appears as: *fiu-său, fii-său, fiu, fecioru, feciori, băiat, băieți*. To a census agent, the exact term or form made little difference. But for a historical demographer interested in converting census forms into data, and then analyzing the data, such lack of uniformity can translate into a real impediment. Therefore, adaptations are necessary.

For the 1838 datasets, the process of harmonization involved:

1. Creating new sets of variables for information that either does not exist in the source, either it exists, but not in tabular form. Such variables refer to topics like:

a. Basic descriptors:
   i. Geo-referenced information: places, administrative units. Every row/record in the dataset, which represents one individual, is assigned variables describing places;
   ii. Numeric identification numbers that, applied to individuals or groups of individuals, facilitates analysis;
b. Gender of individuals – is not present as an independent column in the census form, but can be inferred;
c. Quality-flag variables: these variables assess the degree of confidence in the process of adaptation (harmonization), marking potential problems.

2. Creating sets of variables that complement existing columns in the census forms, where the original information was too irregular to use, like in the previous example (of "son").

I will further detail how these processes take place by tackling each type of information present in the datasets.

*

Basic descriptors were created in order for the information to be identified geographically and historically. Their design takes into consideration the possibility of the database to be expanded with samples from the same source or different sources. In such an event, each record (person, row) will have to be distinguished by identifiers unique within the entire collection. The variables allocated to these identifiers are:

- *source*: this variable uses a single label: Wallachia general census 1838;
- *id_source*. represents the numeric version of *source*: instead of a text label, it uses a numeric code: "101" was assigned to the census.
- *id_person*. As the name suggests, it is a (numeric) code applied to all persons within the datasets. When future samples are added, the methodology of generating the code ensures non-repetition. The personal ID number is formed by concatenating three codes:

id_source code (3 digits) + LAU-2 code[64] + running number within the LAU-2 code for all locations currently belonging to the LAU + running number within the historical place (five digits)

Example: the first person recorded in the village Gângiova (Map 7) will receive the following code: 101725790200001 = 101 (the code for the Wallachian census) + 72579 (LAU-2 code for the commune of Gângiova) + 02 (because the historical village Gângiova was the second village located within the territory of present-day Gângiova commune) + 00001 (because the person is the first one enumerated within that village.

[64]This is a numeric code assigned to all territorial administrative units (unități administrative teritoriale), a system used across the European Union. See Eurostat: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/local-administrative-units (June 2020).

- *country_hist:* name of the historical country (principality) where the source originated.
- *admhist_1:* first historical administrative division bellow country level, in this case, *județ* (district/county).
- *admhist_2*: second historical administrative division bellow country level – plasă / plai – see Map 4;
- *place*: name of the historical settlement, as it appears in the census operation (it disregards possible alternative names present in other sources).
- *place_div*: name of the settlement's division (hamlets, neighborhoods, sectors), if these are reflected in the census. If they are not, the label "undivided" was used.
- *place code*: applied to settlements, this variable uses the same methodology as MOSAIC. Each code is formed by concatenating:

country ISO code (3 digits)[65] + the LAU-2 code (9 digits) + running number within the LAU-2-code for all villages belonging to the same LAU-2 (3 digits)

See example in Map 7.

Gender was inferred using mainly the information regarding the relationship to other persons. Labels such as "wife", "sons", "daughters" made this task relatively easy. If the relation status was missing because the person was the head of the household, civil state was used for reference, as well as other elements (the presence of a wife, occupation, etc.). It was harmonized following the MOSAIC guidelines, into two variables:

- *sex*, using four labels: male, female, illegible and missing/unknown.
- *qsex*, a variable that marks whether or not there are potential contradictions between the information used to infer sex.

Age will be represented by three variables:

- *age_or*: the basic transcription from the census form, information that comes in numeric of alpha-numeric form. Examples: *1*, *2*, *3*, *20*, *34*, *de 2 săptămâni* ("2 weeks old"), *de 6 luni* ("6 months old");
- *age*, the same variable as in MOSAIC, designed for statistical analysis, retaining only number formats. Whole numbers were reproduced as they are in the source, except when the reported age more than 125, in which case it received a special code. Fractions of ages were ignored, retaining only whole numbers. Special codes were used where the age was unknown, less than 1.
- *qage*, or quality flag check for age. This variable mark two instances where the quality of the historical information is of visible concern: ages over 125

[65] See United Nations Statistics Division: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradekb/knowledgebase/country-code (June 2020).

or if the age of the individual is not in accordance with that of related individuals (as in the MOSAIC Guidelines). Different codes/labels were used for each situation.

Marrital status too will be reflected by the same three variables: the original transcription (*marrital status_or*), plus the two others used in MOSAIC: *marst* (the harmonized information for marital status) and *qmarst* (the quality check variable coresponding to *marst*).

Relations between individuals. In historical times, the networks each individual was part of can be defined by multiple criteria: economic relations (employer-employee; landowner-land tenant), spatial proximity (neighbor-neighbor; coresident-coresident), kinship, spiritual kinship, friendship, discord. The criteria that is best reflected in the census form is that of coresidence. Individuals that were grouped by house were those for which relations were defined in most detail and in the most uniform manner. In some cases, it is possible to infer kinship ties between individuals belonging to different houses. Names make such reconstructions possible. In the example below, we see Ioan, son of Mirea Boată, living in house no. 16. In the next house, there is Ioan, son of Ioan Boată. We can safely assume that the two are related, the ages confirming that Ioan from house 17 is most likely the son of Ioan from house 16.

Table 2

Wallachia, census of 1838. Extract for village Coveiu de Sus (Dolj), households no. 16 and 17 (columns *Name* and *Age*)

16	Ioan	Mirea Boată		55
	Stana		soția sa (wife)	50
	Dinu		fiu-său (son)	15
	Mariia		fata (daughter)	10
17	Ioan	sin Ioan Boată		26
	Mariia		soția sa (wife)	23
	Dinu		băieți (sons)	4
	Marin			1
	Maria		fata (daughter)	3

For the time being, the first samples of the database are projected to exclude harmonized variables on cross-household ties. There are several reasons for this: these relations can be established mainly in cases of direct filiation of male descendants; for now, it is uncertain how many of them can be identified; the process of identification is mostly manual (therefore the effort needed is considerable and the results unpredictable). Hence, I decided to prioritize coding only for ties that are visible inside the household.

Here, various overlapping links can be drawn. Let us take, for example, the two households from the village of Tunarii Români, presented in Table 3. Their structure can be defined in a number of ways, like considering generational thresholds.

Household 27 hosted three generations. Matei Pârvu lived with his wife, four unmarried children (Ion, Iancu, Opra, Anuța) and two married sons: Stan and Neagoe. Stan's son, Ion, was the younger member of the household, representing the third generation when compared to Matei, and the second generation when compared to his father. If we account for kin status, then the situation complicates itself: Ion (age 1) is the son of Stan, grandchild of Matei and nephew to Neagoe, Ion, Iancu, Opra, and Anuța. Marica is wife to Neagoe, daughter-in-law to Matei, sister-in-law to Stan and aunt of Ion (age 1). Household 25 also had three generations, but its structure is far simpler. Instead of three married couples, it only had one: Vană, son of Pârvu lived with his wife Floarea and three children (Ilie, Stanca, Opra), but with his mother, Vanca, as well.

To create order out of these entangled perspectives, and simultaneously retain the complexity of each household, historical demographers operate with two main complementary concepts, each convertible into variables.

The first is the conjugal family unit, or CFU. It is comprised of the individuals that were part of the same nuclear family and lived together. When two or more related families shared one household, this concept prioritizes individuals who headed their own family, isolating them from other kin. It means that CFUs can take only three forms: couples without unmarried children, couples with unmarried children, single parents with unmarried children[66]. In household 27, there are three CFUs: one lead by Matei Pârvu, one by Stan, and one by Neagoe. Applying the same logic, in household 25, we have only one CFU – that of Vană. Even though he lived with his mother, their relationship is not classified. On the one hand, Vană was married, so he is the head of his own CFU. On the other hand, since Vanca was left without coresident unmarried children, she is simply not part of a CFU.

Translating these concepts to a coding system did not follow specific international standards, because, to my knowledge, there are not any that are widely used. This should not worry the user of the dataset, because the classification of CFU is straightforward, so navigating through systems used by different historians is an easy task. Hence, because of the few unique labels used, the user can simply replace them, if they see fit to do so. The Dem-Ist database uses three variables for CFUs:

- *cfu relation*: represents the status of each individual inside the CFU: "head", "wife", "child", "unknown/ambiguous" and "no CFU"– the last label reserved for persons like Vanca from our example. "head" applies either to a husband or a widowed parent (regardless of gender).
- *id_cfu*: a unique numerical code specific to the members of the same CFU. It is generated in the same manner as *id_pers*, except it applies to more than one person. Individuals who were not members of CFU (labeled "no

[66] Eilidh Garrett, Alice Reid, Kevin Schürer, Simon Szreter, *Changing Family Size in England and Wales: Place, Class and Demography, 1891–1911*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 59.

CFU") also received a unique ID within this variable. The codes used in Table 3 are for example purposes only, to show the members of the same CFU. The codes in the public sample are different.

- *q_cfu_relation*: the quality of information on which the coding is based. It will contain three labels:
  - "not altered" – if there is no problem with the historical information;
  - "altered because of missing information";
  - "altered because of contradictory information";
  - "not altered, non-consecutive order" – used in cases were the CFU relation was transparent, but members are not listed in consecutive order (which may cause ambiguities).

Conceptualizing and coding the CFU is not sufficient to encompass the complexity of inner-household relations. That fact that in household 27, we have three CFUs, does not tell us anything about what kind of kinship links their members. So, the second set of variables applies to the entire residential group. The Dem-Ist database uses the same system of classification as MOSAIC, replicated from NAPP. This system uses the household head (or householder) as reference, and classifies all other residents according to their relation to the household head. In household 25, everyone is labeled according to their position towards Vană: wife, child, child, child, and mother. The same in household 27, in regards to Matei. The following variables were created to harmonize residential status:

- *hh_relation*: the equivalent of *relate* in MOSAIC, applying the system of standardization described above;
- *id_hh*: a unique numerical code given to the members of the same household, formed in the same manner as *ID_pers* and *ID_CFU*. The codes used in Table 3 are for example purposes only, to show the members of the same household. The codes in the public sample will be different;
- *qhhrelation*: the equivalent of *qrelate* in MOSAIC, a variable that signals problems in coding the original information.

Table 3

Wallachia, census of 1838. Extract for village Tunarii Români (Dolj), households no. 25 and 27 (columns *Name* and *Age*).

house no.	first name	last name	relation	age	CFU ID	CFU relation	Hh ID	Hh status
25	Vană	sin Părvu		30	1	head	1	householder
	Floarea		soția sa (*his wife*)	28	1	wife	1	spouse
	Ilie		fiu-său (*his son*)	2	1	child	1	child
	Stanca		fată (*girl*)	3	1	child	1	child
	Opra		fată (*girl*)	1	1	child	1	child
	Vanca		mumă-sa (*his mother*)	70	2	no CFU	1	parent
27	Matei	Părvu		68	3	head	2	householder
	Marica		soția sa (*his wife*)	60	3	wife	2	spouse

Table 3 (continued)

Ion	băeți (*boys*)	12	3	child	2	child
Iancu	băeți (*boys*)	9	3	child	2	child
Opra	feate (*girls*)	16	3	child	2	child
Anuța	feate (*girls*)	13	3	child	2	child
Stan	fiu-său (*his son*)	21	4	head	2	child
Ioana	soția sa (*his wife*)	19	4	wife	2	child-in-law
Ion	fiu-său (*his son*)	1	4	child	2	grandchild
Neagoe	brată (*brother*)	17	5	head	2	child
Marica	soția sa (*his wife*)	17	5	wife	2	child-in-law

Occupation was challenging to manage because of two main factors. Firstly, recording it was *de facto* not restricted to one column. According to the instructions, it should have been limited to *Occupation*, but, since fiscality overlapped with social status, in turn overlapping with professions, some census agents listed occupation under the *Fiscal category* as well. Three patterns emerged: recording occupation solely under Fiscal category, recording it only under Occupation, recording it both columns. Moreover, these patterns did not apply universally, but only for three main categories: the clergy, public officials, and military recruits. So, from the start, this irregularity had to be fixed. A second challenge was to adapt the information to international standards. HISCO – Historical International Standard Classification for Occupations – is probably the system used most widely, including by the HPDT. It is practically the adaptation of the ISCO (International Standard Classification for Occupations), but destined for use in historical research developed by a team of researchers at the International Institute of Social History[67]. It is also not a single of variable, but several:

- HISCO – the coding system for occupations;
- HISCO Status, referring to career stages (apprentice, journeyman, master) or other hierarchical levels applied to the occupation (education, business ownership);
- HISCO Relation – kinship relation to practitioners;
- HISCO Product – the nature of objects or services provided by occupations.

Given the complexity of these systems and of the Wallachian data itself, the ambiguities in equating Wallachian terms/occupations to international standards, also given the reduced manpower of the project, the initial releases of the Dem-Ist database will be harmonized according to just one system: HISCO. Overall, occupation will be present in the following variables:

- *occupation_or*: the basic transcription of the column *Occupation* from the census form.
- *occupation 1*: this variable offers the occupation recorded in either column (*Occupation* and/or *Fiscal category*). If an individual has two recorded

[67] Marco H.D. van Leeuwen, Ineke Maas and Andrew Miles, *HISCO – historical international standard classification of occupations*, Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2002.

occupations, only the first is covered in this column. No changes were made to the terms used in the source.

- *occupation 2*; for the second recorded occupation (if appliable);
- *occupation source*: this variable shows from what column the occupation was extracted (*Occupation* and/or *Fiscal category*);
- *HISCO_oc_1*: this variable harmonizes the information from *occupation_1*, using the HISCO classification tree, composed of nine major groups, each with its own minor groups[68];
- *HISCO_oc_2*: idem, but for *occupation_2*.

Fiscal category and dependent information chapters (class and nationality) represent another field where no internationally standardized coding was used for reasons that should be obvious: the historical information is too specific and hard to interpret in a standardized form. As said, this column combined fiscality and social status, so we have two types of information, but that could not be separated during the transcription phase, since very often they were embedded in the same term or expression. In this case, the solution was to distinguish between them in the harmonization phase, by allocating special variables to each.

In Wallachia, not all socio-professional categories were subject to paying taxes. These were: the nobility, the clergy, slaves, foreign subjects, as well as those that offered or were mandated to offer their services to the state. Military recruits were also exempted, as well as a person of their choosing.

Individuals from remaining categories were categorized using a combination of criteria: occupation, type of settlement, existing family, family origin, capacity to earn a living. They were subjected to:

- The main tax, or head-tax (*capitație* or *bir*), destined to the state coffers, was paid by everyone who did not practice crafts or commerce (most of whom were agriculturers). It was complemented by a local tax (*zeciuală*), equivalent to 10% of the head tax. All married men (from the mentioned category) paid these taxes, although exceptions applied: in the case of incapacity and during the first six months after their first marriage. Widows and those incapacitated were exempted, with one exception: if the widow lived with one unmarried abled son, over the age 20. In that case, half of the amount of the head-tax was due.
- The "patent" (*patentă*), paid to the state by urban artisans and merchants, plus a local tax.
- A tax owed by *mazili* – the descendants of second-class nobles.

The manner in which all of these arrangements are reflected in the 1838 census is as follows. Those exempted because of social class were marked simply by stating their title or social status: noble, clergy, slave, etc. Nobles were recorded by rank, clergy by position. According to the instructions, slaves had to be recorded by type of owner, while also mentioning the owner's name. The rest usually fell

[68] Besides the cited work, see also https://historyofwork.iisg.nl/major.php (June 2020).

under the main categories mentioned above: head-tax payer (regardless of the sum required to pay) and exempted (regardless of reason). Sometimes the census agent went into detail and reported even more exact circumstances, but this was not a common practice, so the source is biased in this regard.

One additional mention should be made regarding former crown slaves. Wallachia formerly knew their existence, but with the Organic Regulation the prince lost ownership over them, and they became known as "State Gypsies" (*țiganii Statului*). With minor exceptions, they appear as such in the census. This term, however, should not be taken in a denotative sense – the state (government) did not own them. They could not be sold, exchanged, married off into captivity, as slaves were – such actions were illegal[69], as was their use in unpaid labor[70]. They were taxed as free people were, and, in 1838, a law proclaimed their freedom[71]. The relative freedom that they experienced during this decade caused much confusion, as different dates are cited for their emancipation, both in historical sources and by historians (1831, 1832, 1837, 1838, 1843, 1847). The most common one used today is 1843, referring to a law that transferred fiscal and police authority over them from one branch inside the Department of Interior office to another, a law that did not refer to their freedom or emancipation. In my view, how this law was later cited as emancipation is a meer cliché, with no explicit arguments[72] and derived from an

[69] Bogdan Mateescu, *Căsătoria robilor: între alegerea cuplului și voința stăpânului. Studiu și documente de arhivă despre căsătoriile robilor din Țara Românească după 1830*, Brașov, Etnous, 2014, p. 21–38. In this aspect, historians generally focused on the fact that after 1831 they were taxed as free people, but ignored other issues such their right to marry or the interdiction to marry slaves (in 1832) and other obligations towards the government. Labor duties, military recruitment; or rights such as access to public health, education and justice courts. The exact set of rights and obligations that they were subject to – regardless if it determined the status of slave or freeman, or just as tax payers – is still to be fully studied and understood.

[70] They did participate in some mandatory labor, but, in my opinion, it was in the same manner as free people. One fundamental difference between these duties and those that envolved slaves was payment. For numerous examples 1830s paid contracts (or references to contracts) between former crown slaves and public institutions, see the National Archives of Romania, fond Vornicia Temnițelor (1831–1840).

[71] The same law allowed for the marriages between them and Romanians.

[72] For example, Viorel Achim writes that "The abolition of the slave status was carried out by the removal of these Gypsies from the tax records of the Prison authority, and their transfer to the civil authority" (*The Gypsies in the Romanian Principalities: The Emancipation Laws, 1831–1856*, in „Historical Yearbook. Nicolae Iorga Institute of History", I, 2004, p. 115). The author's statement does not contain any explanation. Of course the individuals were transferred from one record (administration) to another – that was the essence of the law. However, since the law did not refer to the status or rights of individuals, for a historian, the point was to explain why this transfer should (or should not) be considered an emancipation. What rights did the individuals gained – how did these rights defined them as free men? What ownership rights that the state lost? What did the law actually mean in relation to authority? Instead, the author avoids these issues and simply repeats a summary of the bureaucratic aspect of the law, as other authors did as well. In my opinion, from the point of view of written and customary law, the law of 1843 did not touch upon freedom or slavery. By all accounts, the respective individuals were already considered free by 1843.

error made in the civil code in 1854[73]. In the sample, these individuals are harmonized as *fiscalized Roma*[74] and, in my opinion, should not be considered as slaves of the government (at least not until strong arguments are brought).

To tackle these entanglements, I designed the sample to have four variables:

- *fiscal_or*: fiscal status as recorded in the source;
- *fiscal_status*: harmonized variable. Here, individuals are classified in four categories: "head-tax payers" (regardless of taxation level), "patent payers", "*mazili",* "former crown slaves" and "exempted" (regardless of reason);
- *reason for exemption*, applied only to exempted individuals. The title of the variable is self-explanatory; four labels were used: "social category", "military recruit", "foreign subject", "unspecified," and "other/ambiguous".
- *class_fiscal_*gen. Here I harmonize the social class of exempted classes of individuals, each receiving a general label: "noble", "clergy", "slave", "foreign subject", and others.
- *class_fiscal_subtype.* Every exempted individual is labeled according to the subtype recorded in the census:
  - nobles according to their ranks: *postelnic, medelnicer, serdar*, etc.;
  - clergy and employees of the Church, according to their rank: deacon, priest, dean, bishop;
  - slaves according to their owner: private slaves or Church slaves;
  - foreign subjects according to their nationality.

Property was more simple to deal with since it encompassed only one type of information, although some nuances applied differently from towns to villages. Since the initial samples of the database include only the latter, I will leave towns outside the discussion, for now. In the countryside, the focus fell on land ownership, the census column being designed to record the main social actors from this point of view: small land tenants (*clăcași*), small landowners (*moșneni*), large land tenants (*arendași*) and large landowners (*proprietari*, *moșieri*). The dataset will cover this aspect in two columns:

- *property_or*: the basic transcription;
- *property*: the harmonized version. It uses only a few labels: mainly, the four categories described above. "Others" or "unknown/ambiguous", might be added. In some circumscriptions, the expression *scutit* (exempted) is used widely, referring to peasants that did not own land but, at the same time, were not subjected to obligations/payments by the landowners. Usually, it applied to old, widowed and/or incapacitated, or peasants that only used land for house and garden, not for crops. But it is uncertain the extent to which this principle was continuously followed, and which census agents ignored it. Given this potential problem, it should be assumed that

[73] Bogdan Mateescu, *Căsătoria robilor…,* p. 31–38.
[74] I avoided the term "tax payer" because some were exempted.

clăcaș might refer to landless peasants in general, not just for those that were effectively subject to agrarian duties. Because of this discrepancy, I used the label *clăcaș* (small land tenant) even if the person is mentioned as exempted. An additional variable is created for the latter situations:

- *labor_exempted*: all persons marked as *scutit* will receive a yes under this column. The user of the database should mind the bias of the historical information in this respect.

Ethnicity was recorded in the homonym column from the census form. Like in the case of occupation and fiscal category, overlapping identities caused some complicated patterns of references. The following patterns can be observed:

- Romanians, the ethnic majority of the principality, were usually divided according to origin and/or nationality. Wallachian subjects were labeled *Rumân* or *Român* (Romanian); Moldavian subjects – *Moldavian*; Austrian subjects – *Ungurean* (roughly translated as Romanian from Transylvania).
- German-speaking people were recorded as *Neamț* (German); with exceptions made in the case of Prussians (mentioned as such).
- Roma were sometimes divided by professional groups (*neamuri*): *Rudari*, *Ursari*, etc.
- Converts to Orthodox (Eastern) Christianity received a special mention of their baptism: *ovrei / turc botezat* (baptized Jew / Turk);
- Non-Orthodox were sometimes labeled according to their religion, and not their ethnicity: *calvin*, *luteran*.

Therefore, ethnicity was recorded with special references to nationality, subculture and religion. However, these patterns do not seem to have been applied universaly, so the level of detail should should be taken as biased. Given the potential error in analysis, the Dem-Ist samples will contain the following types of variables related to ethnicity:

- *ethnicity_or*: the basic transcription of the source column.
- *ethnicity_gen* (general). In this harmonized variable, labels were reduced to general categories: Romanians (regardless of nationality/origin), Germans (regardless of nationality), Roma (regardless of professional category), etc. Non-ethnic denominations were labeled unknown/ambiguous.
- *ethnicity_subtype*: here, harmonized labels reflect all subtypes of references, regardless of their specificity (religious, cultural, professional).

Wealth and resources. Here, processing the information was the most simple. Problems posed by the original format only exited in the case of used land, resolved since the basic transcription phase, as explained earlier. The population sample will contain:

- one variable for each type of land use found in the forms. So far, these are: wheat, corn, barley, oat, millet, and hay. The variables are titled according to the name of the crop plus the ending *_or*. The information is expressed

in the number of *pogoane*, the unit of measurement used in the Romanian principalities, equivalent to approx. 0.5012 ha.

- one variable for each kind of domestic animal: horses, bulls, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, buffalo, donkeys, and mules, representing the sum of each kind of livestock.
- one variable for the number of hives: *hives_or*;
- one variable for the sum of plum trees: *plum trees_or*;
- one variable for the sum of mulberry trees: *mulberry_trees*;
- one variable for the sum of other fruit trees: *other fruit trees_or*;
- two variables for vineyard, depending on the unit of measurement used in each circumscription: rows or *pogoane*;

Disability is present as the following variables:

- *disability_or*: the basic transcription of the homonym column from the census form;
- *disability_gen.* this variable gives a generic description to the disability, by assigning each case to one of the following labels:
  - "general impairment". This label is used for situations where the individual is suggested to be generally incapable of self-sustaining. Fiscally, it overlaps with situations where individuals were exempted because they were unable to provide from themselves. Predictiabily, this is especially the case of the elderly.
  - "sensory impairment" for cases of blindness, deafness, muteness.
  - "physical impairment" for dysfunctionalities of the limbs.
  - "mental/intellectual impairment", where terms like *prost / nebun / lipsit din minte* are employed by the census taker;
  - "multiple impairments": if the individual fell in two or more of the above categories.
  - "diseased": applied to individuals recorded as having a desease in the moment of the census. Such instances are more rare:
  - "ambiguous/unknown"

Other labels may be created by time the samples will be released.

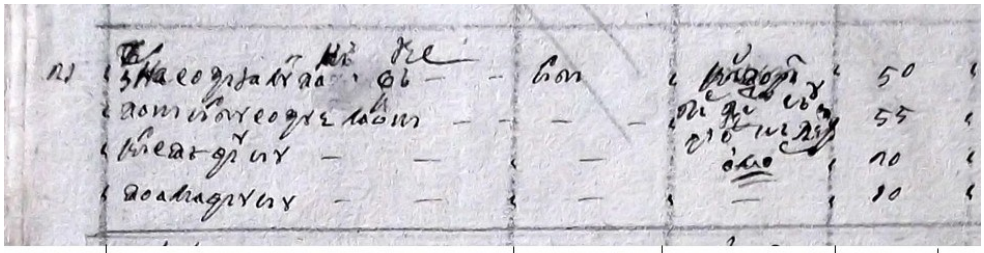
- *disability_subtype:* this variable consists of subcategories of the previous labels. For example: "blindness", "deafness", "muteness" will correspond to "sensory impairments". The full set of labels is in progress of being developed.
- *disability_event* is a variable simple to tackle, consisting only of three labels:
  - "at birth", for disabilities recorded by the census taker as dating since birth;
  - "post-birth", for disabilities mentioned as having occurred after birth;
  - "unspecified".

Social class and **nationality** will, for now, be reduced the the variables derived from the column Fiscal category, presented above. In future phases

international systems (such as HISCLASS, derived from HISCO) will probably be implemented.

The type of presence is a crucial aspect covered both in historical and modern-day censuses. Unfortunately, the Wallachian govrenment did not give any instructions in regards to this topic, leaving ground-level agents to sort it as they saw fit. The outcome can only be characterized using the words relativeness and irregularity. Some agents seem to have completely disregarded absent persons, or the issue of absence (recorded individuals might have been absent, but there is no mention of this fact). Others included absentees, providing the context in notes attached to various entries, in various columns. Figure 3 illustrates such a detail in column 4 (Marrital status), but similar examples can be detected in columns 6 (Fiscal category) and even 7 (Property). In the population sample, presence is harmonized in two variables:

- *presence*, using the same labels/codes as MOSAIC: present, absent, obviously dead, double entry, unknown. The user of the database is once again reminded that these apply to a set of historical information that itself is not based on a known methodology. Therefore, this variable should be used with caution;
- *presence_source* – in cases where the status of the individual is anything but "present", this variable indicates the census column(s) where the contextual information lies. In the example from Figure 6, the label would be "Name, Marital status".



21	Igna, soția lui Pană Văc(a)r(u) Pană Sărbu, soțu e la ocnă Cărstea, fiu-său Toma, fiu.său	sărbă	căs(ă)torit(ă), bărbatu său în ocnă pent(ru) omor	50 55 20 10
21	Igna, *wife of* Pană Văc(a)r(u) Pană Sărbu, *the husband is in the mines* Cărstea, *her son* Toma, *her son*	*Serb*	*married, her man [is imprisoned] in the mines for murder*	50 55 20 10

Figure 6. Exemple of recording of an absent person. Fragment from village Boanta, subdistrict Câmpu-Romanați.

General quality check. Another step in preparing the material for public release is verification for flaws in either transcription or harmonization.

A first phase of this process is carried out during transcription, by transcribing each page column by column, rather than row by row. In the eventuality that individuals or households were omitted by mistake, a gap in the Name column would be visible after typing in other columns. A mismatch would occur between names, marital state and age, which would prompt an *ad-hoc* verification.

Harmonized variables are tested for the following anomalies that mark potential mistakes in the coding:

- regarding groups of individuals: households or CFUs with no coded heads or with more than one head; married individuals without a spouse of with more than one spouse.
- regarding individuals:
  - Age/marital status: heads of families and widowed persons younger than 18; incompatibility between CFU status and marital status (example: "child" under CFU, but coded as "married"; "wife" recorded as unmarried or "widow");
  - Gender: incompatibility between the coded gender and that derived from the original information (example: individuals recorded as "*mumă-sa*" ("his mother") under *Name*, but coded as "male" under *sex*; or gendered names that do not correspond to their coded gender);
  - Social status: incompatibilities between CFU status and occupation: "wife" and "child" with a recorded occupation, fiscal status or property status.
- regarding wealth: individuals with more than five items of the categories that are usually very scarce: donkeys, mulls, buffalo. Such instances may be the result of mistyping the numbers in the wrong columns (example: transcribing the number of pigs (which were quite common) under buffalo). Or, individuals with more than ten bulls, or cows, since such livestock were usually few, only several animals per owner. In their case, typing errors could occur, or transcribing the number of sheep under cows, for example.

For each anomaly, the transcribed or harmonized information is verified by consulting copies of the historical document.

Finally, the column *Remarks* will be added, signaling problems that are not covered in the individual quality check variables (q_age, q_sex, q_cfu_relation, q_hh_relation). These problems include transcription issues such as uncertain readings, or unusual features of the source information or format.

*

To conclude, the Dem-Ist database will be released with two population samples from the 1838 Wallachian general census: one for subdistrict Balta-Dolj, and one for Nucșoara-Muscel. Each sample will have two versions (Romanian and

English) and will contain 31 variables (columns) of basic transcription of historical information, as well as 37 harmonized variables. Out of the latter, 12 are according to international systems of standardization applied to the same kind of historical information, and all will come both text format (labels) and numeric format (codes). This paper was meant to provide only the general methodology behind the process of compiling these samples. How each original entry is converted into a standardized form will be presented in separate online publications, accompanying the samples.

Work on digitizing these forms will continue beyond the current project's framework. New material will be added, and existing samples will be improved with new samples and potential corrections. Hopefully, future projects will equip the database with features enabling online analysis, data visualization or access to archival copies of the census forms.

CONCLUSIONS

Romanian demographic sources are still very far from being valued at their full potential. For the 19th century, most bear similarities with those from other European countries: civil state records, fiscal censuses, general censuses, population counts, counts, or lists of specific population groups. While some are known to historians for decades, the majority are yet to be discovered in terms of preserved material. Moreover, all still need to be addressed in terms of research questions and paths in the fields of humanity, whether it is social history, economic history; general inquiries, or micro-historical approaches. This is hardly possible, since very few editions exist and the published material is tough to use, since it is in paper format. Databases for historical demography not only constitute a platform for publishing archival documents, but also provide it in formats indispensable in specific fields of historical demography. With the launching of Dem-Ist database in 2021, and its expansion further into the future, these sources can be re-discovered and integrated into new research paradigms.

APPENDIX

I. Examples of formats used in compiling 19th century population records

Table 4

Lists of taxpayers and their wealth, 1828. Fragment for village Negrași (Vlașca).
Romanian National Archives, Fond Administrative Vechi (1828–1831), file 3263/1828, p. 12v.

lude	*number*	*Name, patronym, nickname*	*Abled sons*	*oxen*	*cows*	*horses*	*buffalo*	*sheep*	*goats*	*hives*	*stânjeni*	*vineyard*	*plumns*	*On whose estate*
lude	**număr**	**Numele, sinul, porecla**	**feciori**	**boi**	**vaci**	**cai**	**Bivoli**	**oi**	**Capre**	**stupi**	**Moși, stânjini**	**vie**	**pruni**	**Pă a cui moșie**
2														Moșie megieșească
	1	Iordache Argeșan		4	4	4								
	1	Dinu Grecu	1	2	2						25		60	
	1	Radu sin Badea Mănoiu		4	5			38			10			
…	…	….	…	….	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…

Table 5

Records of mandatory contributions to emergency food supplies, 1831. Fragment – village Dobrogostea (Argeș), 1831. Argeș District Archives, Fond Pretura Plasei Pitești (1831-1951), file 4003/1831, p. 18.

Corn, pogoane	*Millet, pogoane*	*Corn, baniță*	*Millet, baniță*	*Village Dobrogostea*
Porumb pogoane	**Meiu pogoane**	**Porumb baniță**	**Meiu baniță**	**Sat Dobrogostea**
4		4		Ion Cărpeniș
4		4		Dumitru, brat
2		2		popa Ion
3		3		Anghel Rașca
….	….	….	….	….

Table 6

List of villagers and their wealth, 1832. Fragment for village Polovragi (Gorj). Romanian National Archives, Fond Vornicia din Lăuntru (1829–1858), file 386/1832, vol. II, p. 1050.

bulls	*cows*	*goats*	*sheep*	*rammers*	*steeds*	*mares*	*donkeys*	*mulles*	*subdistrict Novaci, village Polovragi*
boi	**vaci**	**capre**	**oi**	**berbeci**	**cai**	**epe**	**măgari**	**catări**	**Plaiul Novaci, Satul Polovragi**
4	2	14	16	2		2			Nicolae sin Avram
3	2		34	6		2			Ion sin Manasiia
3	2	13	26	4	1				Dinu sin Manasiia
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…

Table 7

List of landless peasants living on estates belonging to the Church, ... Fragment for village Bârsanu (Vâlcea). Vâlcea District Archives, Fond Prefectura Județului Vâlcea (1830–1950), file 77/1837, p. 76.

Monastery	*Estate*	*Name of land tenants, patronym and nickname*	*Plots attributed to each land tenant, according to the Regulation*	*prăjini*	*Additional plots*	*prăjini*
Numirea mănăstirilor	**Numirea moșiilor mănăstirești**	**Numele clăcașilor cu sinu și porecla lor**	**Suma pogoanelor de loc ce are fieșcare clăcaș după Regulament**	**prăjini**	**Suma pogoanelor ce prisosesc**	**prăjini**
Sfânta Episcopiie Rămnicu	Moșiia Drăgășani, satu Bărsanu	Dinu Lănaru	8	1		
		Gheorghe sin Stan Ceteră	6	3		
		Radu Grădișteanu	6	28		
…	…	…	…	…	…	…

Table 8

List of men and boys compiled from the orders of the Russian military government, 1849. Fragment for village Dimieni (Ialomița). Ialomița District Archives, Fond Prefectura Județului Ialomița (1830–1849), file 983/1849, p. 13.

No. of families		*First and last name*	*Their number*	*age*	*Fiscal status*
No. familiilor		**Numele și pronumele**	**No. lor**	**Anii fiecăruia**	**Orănduiala la care să află**
1	3	Frangul Baboia	1	50	Birnic
		Stan, fii-său	1	15	
		Costandin	1	8	
1	4	Ion sin Petre Ursan	1	40	Idem
		Tudor, fii-său	1	12	
		Ștefan, idem	1	9	
		Dobre, idem	1	5	
…	…	…	…	…	…

Table 9

List of Church slaves, Wallachia, 1839, fragment for village Drăguțești (Vâlcea). Vâlcea District Archives, Fond Pretura Plăşii Oltul de Jos – Budeşti (1831–1948), file 35/1839, p. 38.

No.	*Vllage Drăgușești Names of slaves belonging to the Holy Monastery of Cotmeana, settled on this estate, along with the name of their chieftains*	*age*	*Payed tax*	*Their condition*						
				occupation	*bulls*	*cows*	*horses*	*sheep*	*goats*	*pigs*
No.	Satul Drăgușești Numele țiganilor Sintei Mânăstiri Cotmenii ce sânt statorniciți tot pă această moșie, precum și numele vătafilor lor	Vârsta de câți ani este fiecare țigan	Ce capitație a plătit	Starea lor						
				Ce meșteșug au	boi	vaci	cai	oi	capre	porci
1	Gheorghe, acestor țigani de mai jos	35	Vătaf	muncitor	4	4	2			8
	Costandina, soțiia	(…)[75]								
	Pătru, sin	6								
	Ion, sin	4								
	Floarea, sin, fată	3								
2	Sandu Ologu	70	6	portar						
	Mariia,soțiia	65								
	Ilinca, sin, fată	18								
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…

[75] Not specified in this case.

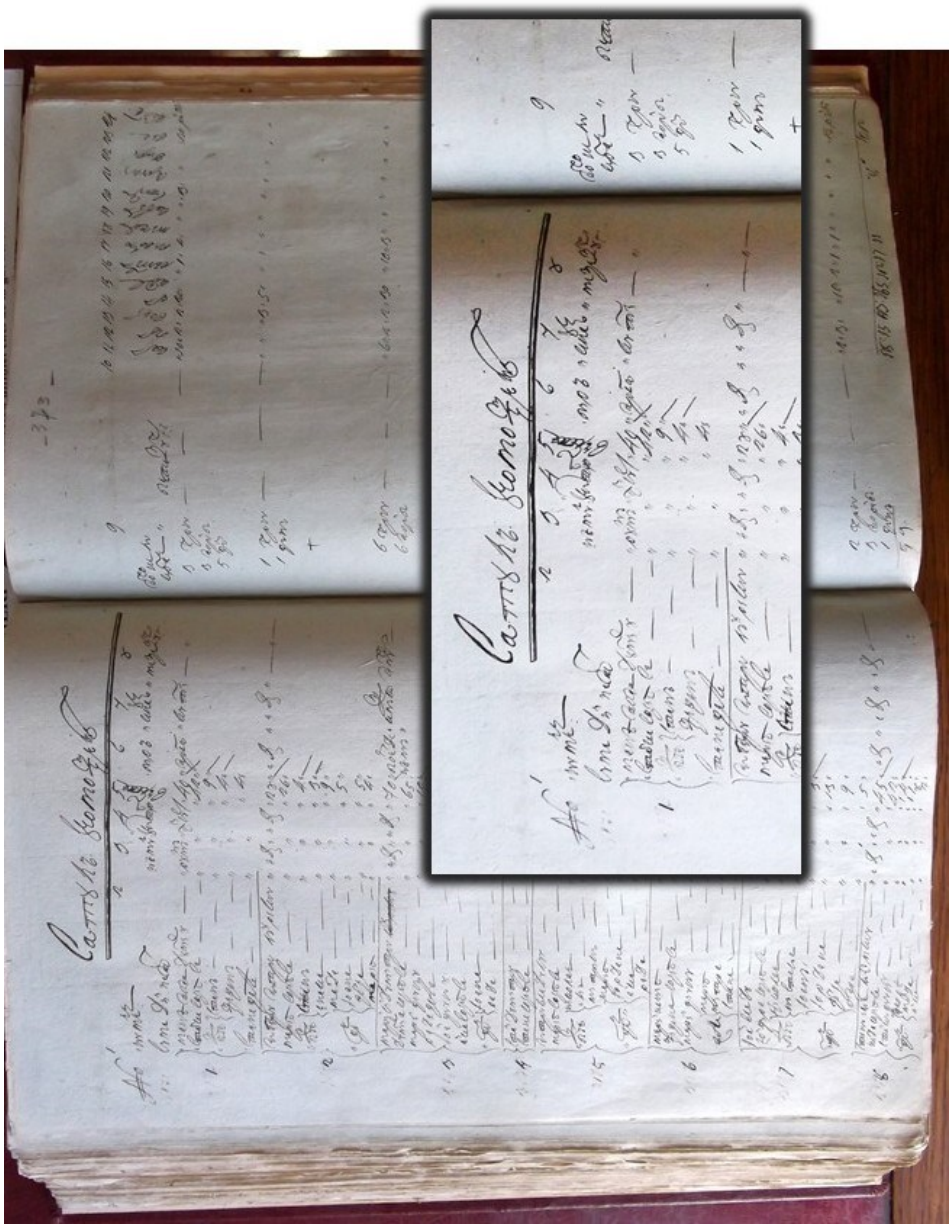


Image 1. 1838 Wallachian census, form type A (province). Fragment for village of Comoșteni (Dolj). Romanian National Archives, Fond Catagrafii (1818–1870), register I/9, p. 373.

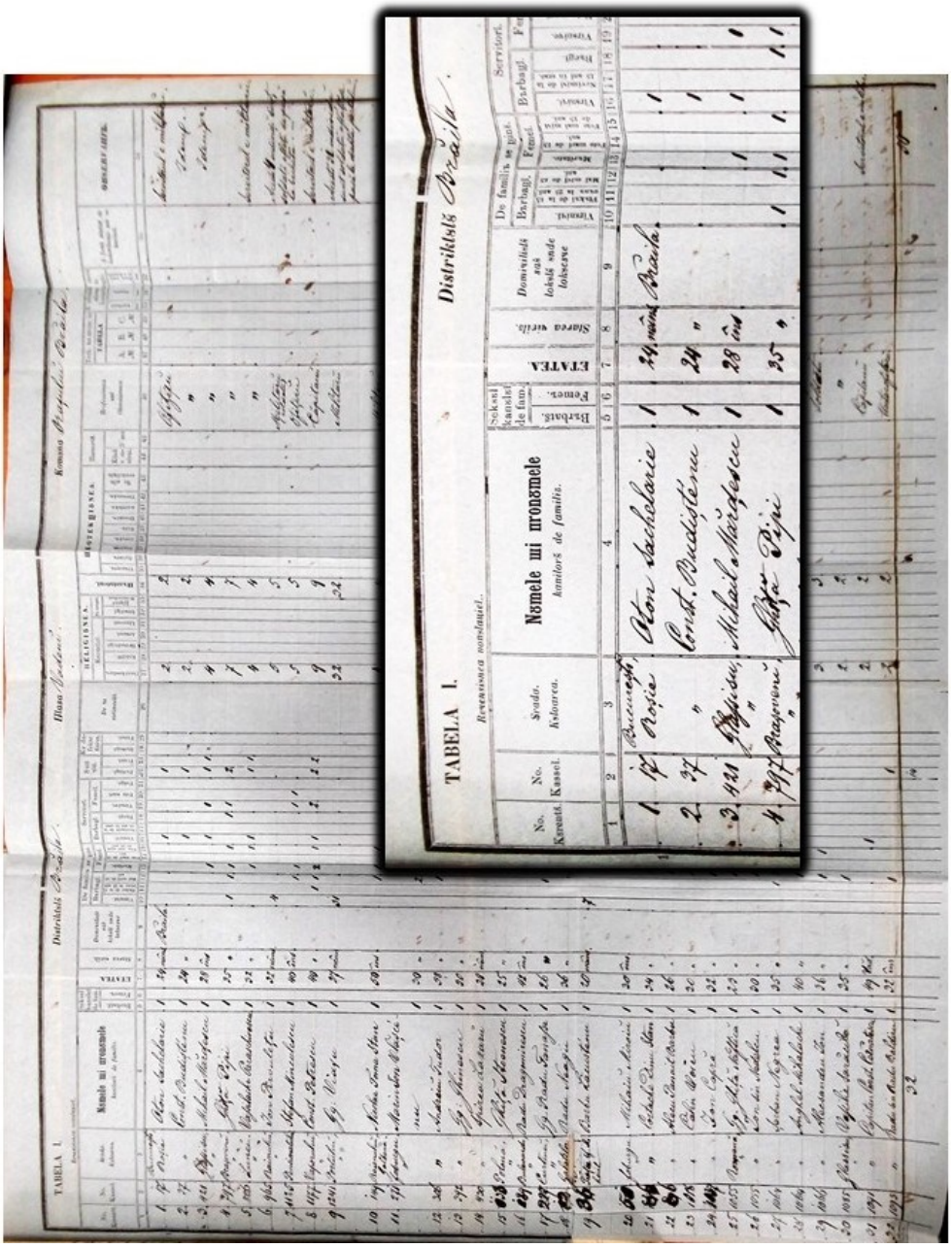


Image 2. Wallachian census – Type I. Fragment, the town of Brăila. Romanian National Archives, Fond Direcția Generală a Statisticii (1844–1901), file 54.1859, p.83.

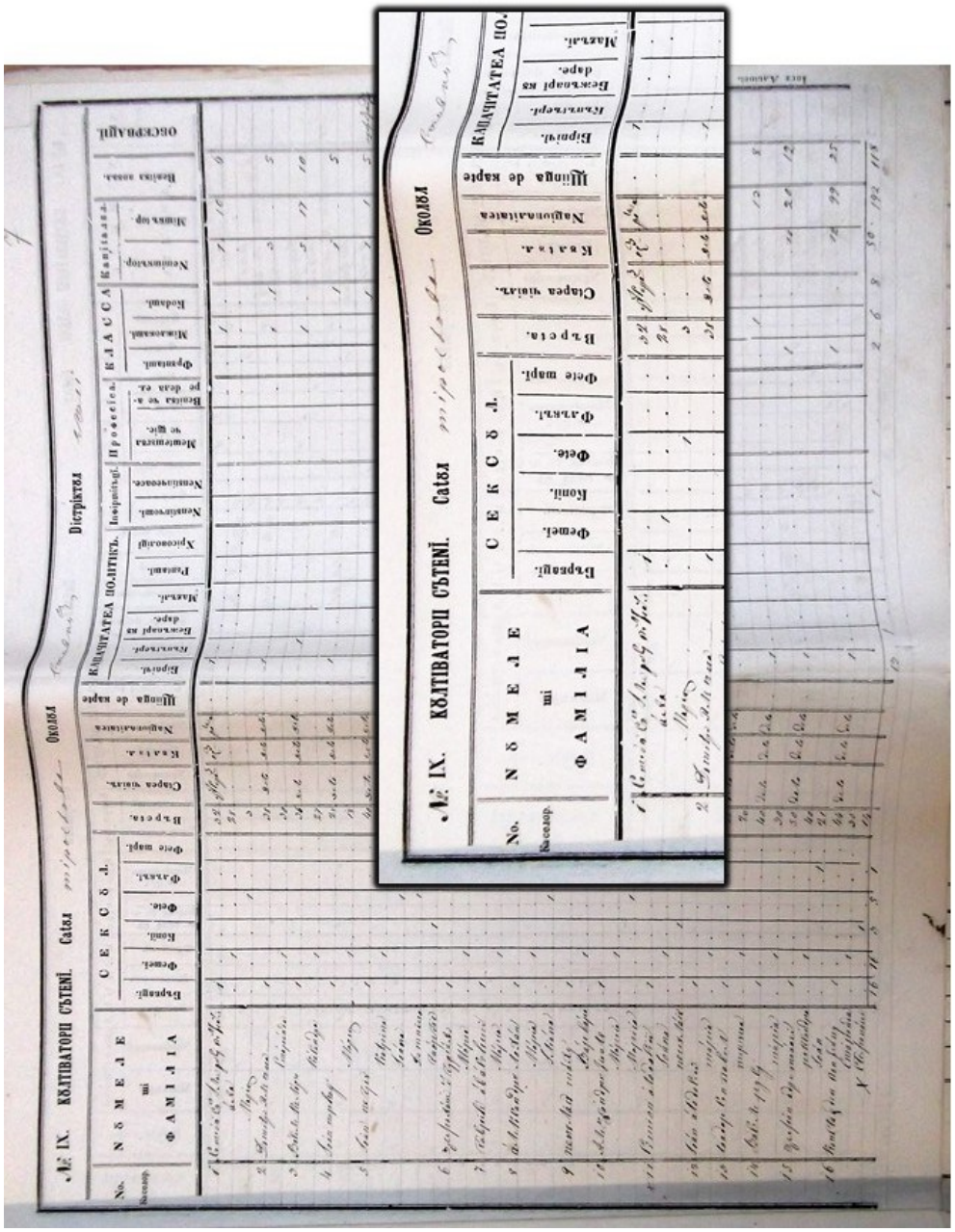


Image 3. 1859 Moldavian census, form type IX. Fragment, village Miroslava (Iași). Iași District Archives, Fond Isprăvnicia Iași (1828–1860), register 4968/1859, p. 7.

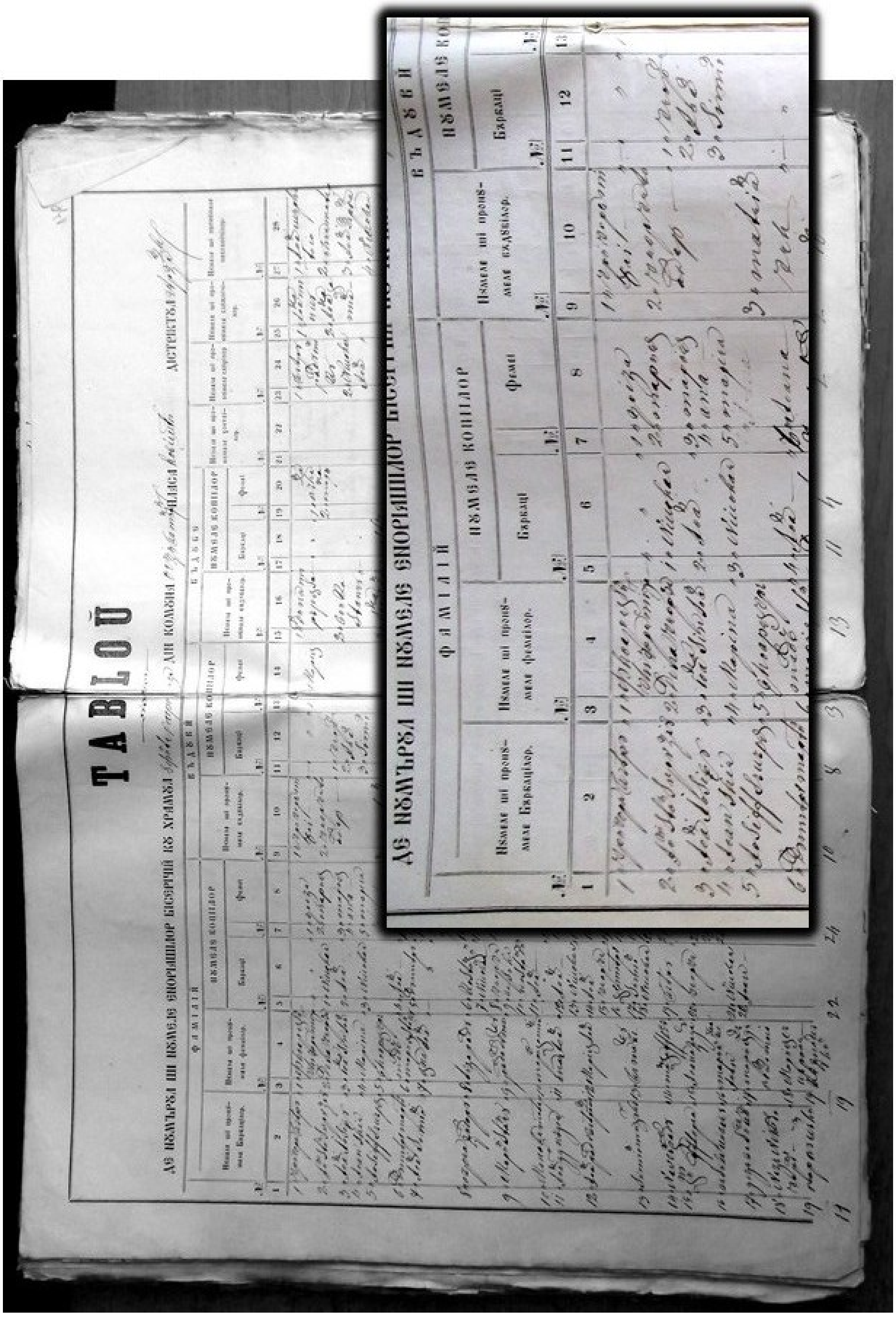
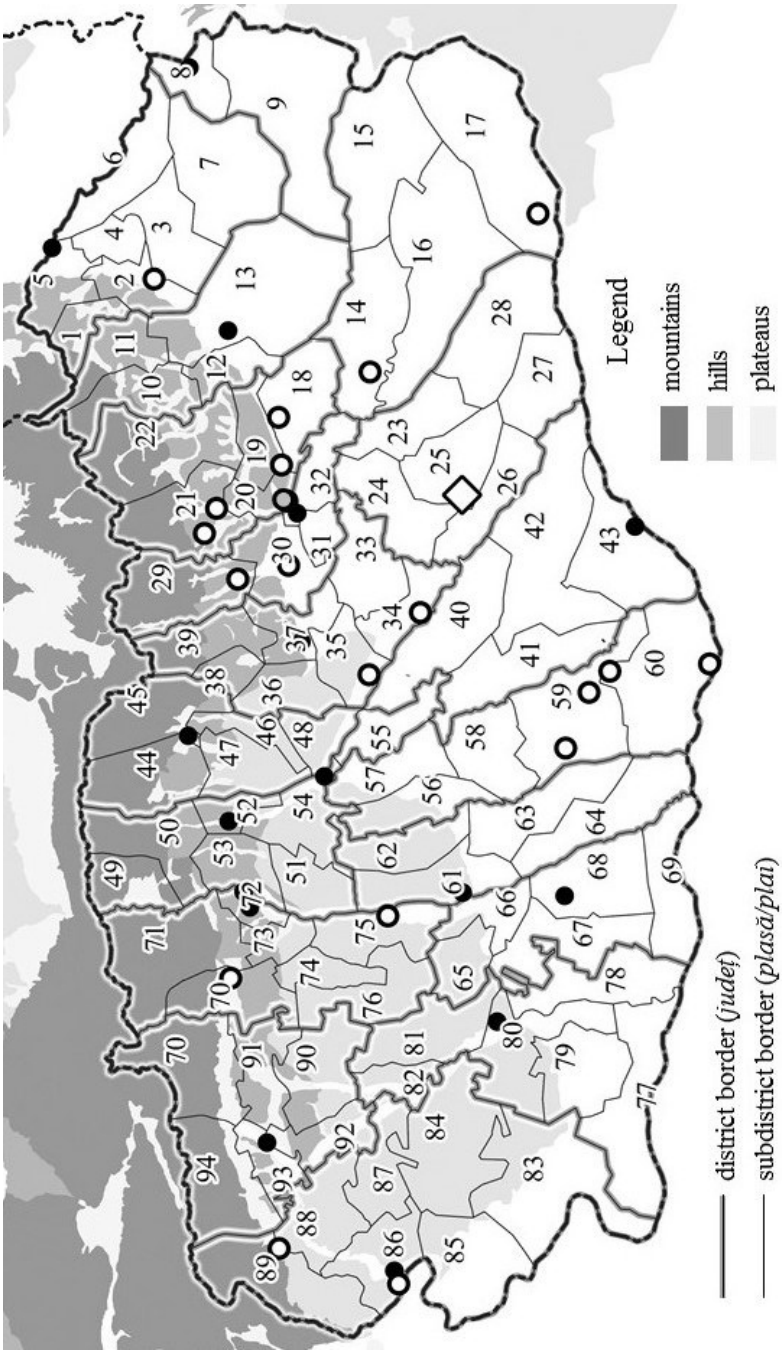


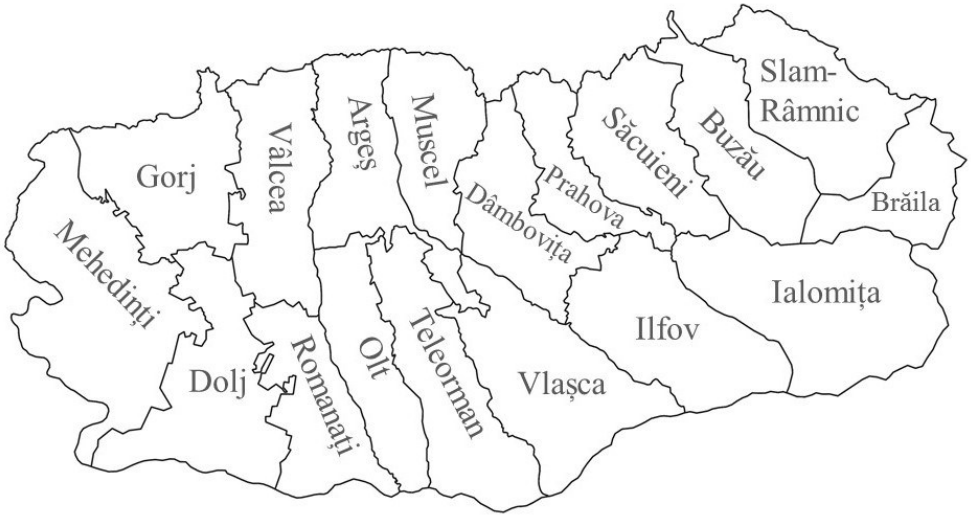
Image 4. Romania, census of parishoners, 1863-4. Fragment, village Oeștii Pământeni / Holy Trinity parish, Argeș Diocese, Argeș District Archives, Fond Episcopia Argeș (1816–1951), register 36/1863, p.130.

II. Wallachia in 1837

Map 4. Administrative divisions: districts and subdistricts.

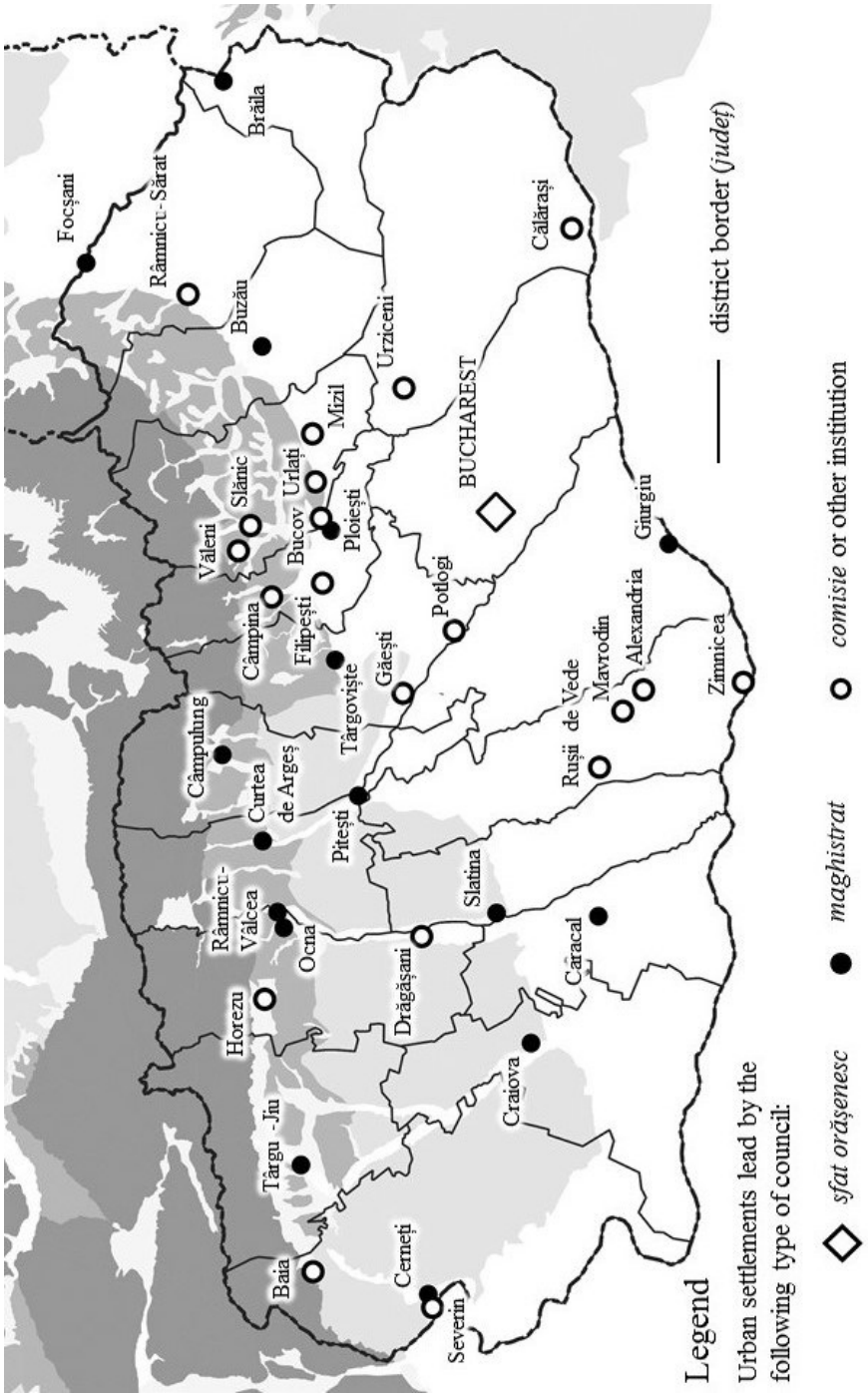


Map 4 – Legend. Names of districts ("județe") and subdistricts ("plăși" or "*plaiuri*" – in italics); for urban settlements see next map.



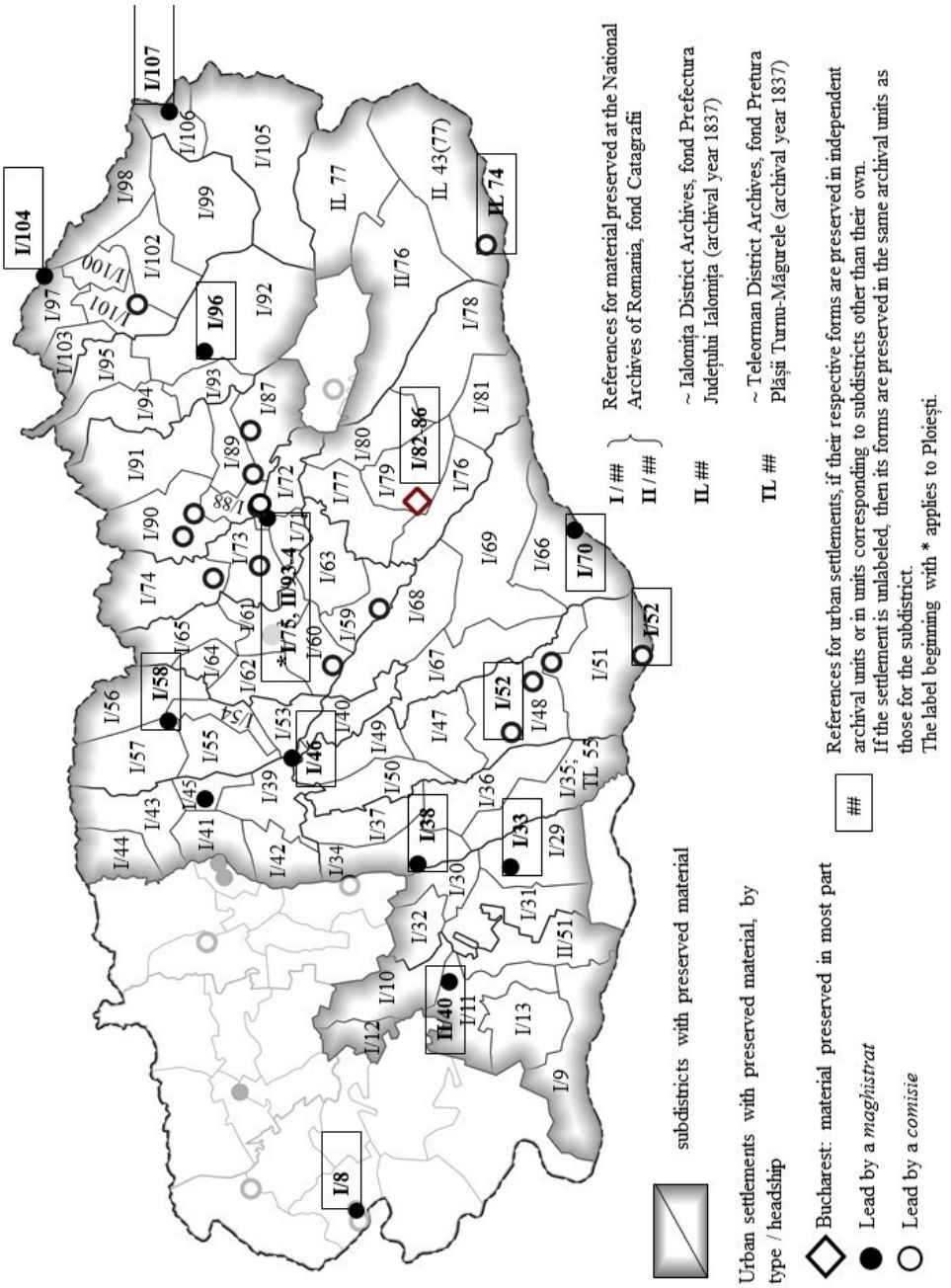
Slam-Râmnic	1	*Râmnic*
	2	Râmnicu de Sus
	3	Râmnicu de Jos
	4	Orașu
	5	Marginea de Sus
	6	Marginea de Jos
	7	Gradești
Brăila	8	Vădeni
	9	Balta
Buzău	10	*Pârscov*
	11	*Slănic*
	12	Sărata
	13	Câmpu
Ialomița	14	Câmpu
	15	Balta
	16	Ialomița
	17	Borcea
Săcuieni	18	Câmpu
	19	Tohani
	20	Podgoria
	21	*Teleajen*
	22	*Despre Buzău*
Ilfov	23	Gherghița
	24	Znagov
	25	Dâmbovița
	26	Sabar
	27	Olteniței
	28	Ciocănești
Prahova	29	Prahova
	30	Filipești
	31	Târgșoru
	32	Câmpu
Dâmbovița	33	Ialomița
	34	Bolintin
	35	Cobia
	36	Dâmbovița
	37	Dealu
	38	*Dâmbovița*
	39	*Ialomița*
Vlașca	40	Ogrăzeni
	41	Izvoru
	42	Balta
	43	Marginea
Muscel	44	*Nucșoara*
	45	*Dâmbovița*
	46	Argeș
	47	Râurile
	48	Podgoria
Argeș	49	*Loviștea*
	50	*Aref*
	51	Olt
	52	Argeș
	53	Topolog
	54	Pitești
	55	Găläșești
Teleorman	56	Cotmeana
	57	Teleorman
	58	Mijlocul
	59	Târgul
	60	Marginea
Olt	61	Oltul de Sus
	62	Vedea
	63	Șerbănești
	64	Oltul de Jos
Romanați	65	Tezlui
	66	Oltul
	67	Câmpu
	68	Mijlocul
	69	Balta
Vâlcea	70	*Horezu*
	71	*Cozia*
	72	Râmnic
	73	Otăsău
	74	Cernea
	75	Olt
	76	Oltețu
Dolj	77	Balta
	78	Dumbrava
	79	Câmpu
	80	Jiul
	81	Amaradia
	82	Gilort
Mehedinți	83	Câmpu
	84	Dumbrava
	85	Blahnița
	86	Ocolu
	87	Motru
	88	Baia
	89	*Cloșani*
Gorj	90	Gilortu
	91	Amaradia
	92	Tismana
	93	Jiul
	94	*Vulcan*
	95	*Novaci*

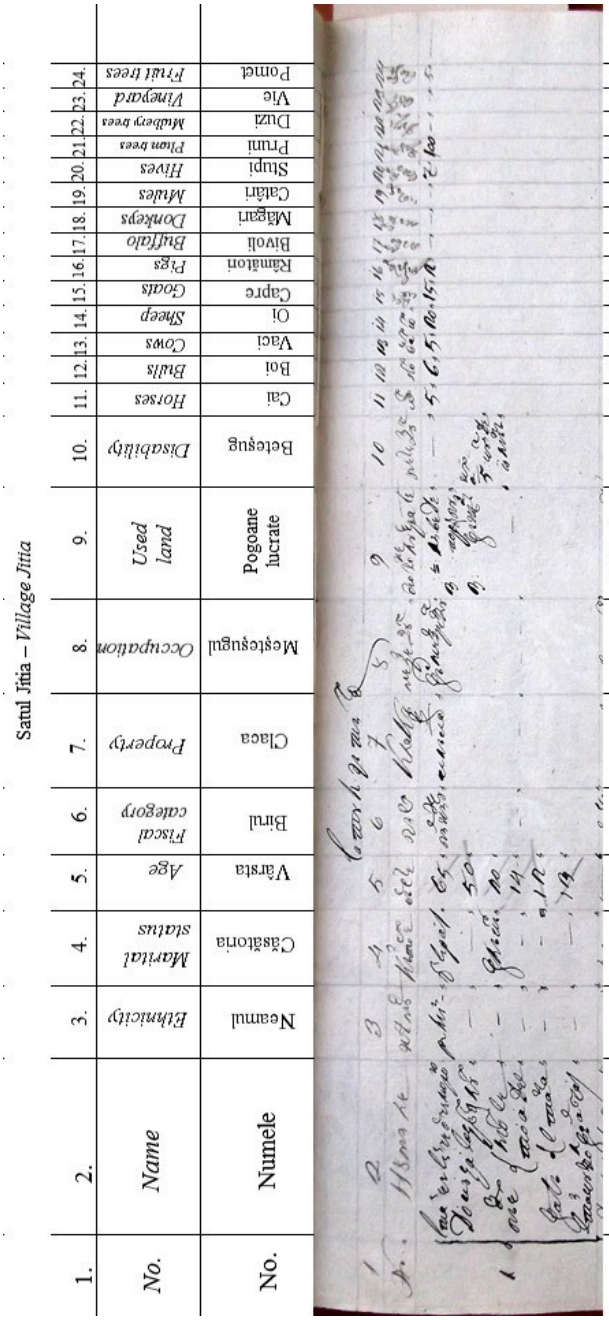
Map 5. Urban settlements by type of headship.



III. The 1838 general census of Wallachia

Map 6. Territory covered by preserved population forms and their archival references.

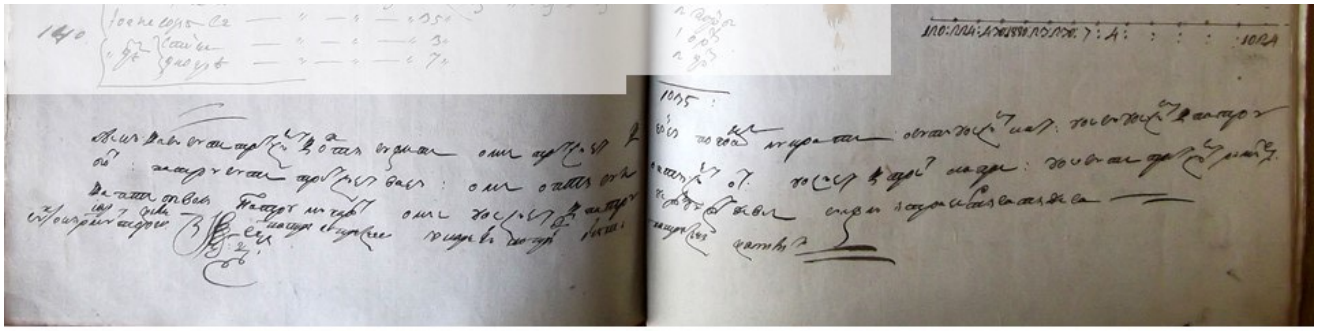




Satul Jitia – *Village Jitia*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.
No.	*Name*	*Ethnicity*	*Marital status*	*Age*	*Fiscal category*	*Property*	*Occupation*	*Used land*	*Disability*	*Horses*	*Bulls*	*Cows*	*Sheep*	*Goats*	*Pigs*	*Buffalo*	*Donkeys*	*Mules*	*Hives*	*Plum trees*	*Mulberry trees*	*Vineyard*	*Fruit trees*
No.	Numele	Neamul	Căsătoria	Vârsta	Birul	Clasa	Meșteșugul	Pogoane lucrate	Beteșug	Cai	Boi	Vaci	Oi	Capre	Rămătoni	Bivoli	Măgari	Catâri	Stupi	Pruni	Duzi	Vie	Pomet
1.	Stanciu sin Gheorghe Moroiu	rumân	însurat	65	birnic	clăcaș	fără(ă) meșteug	0.5 livede 3 porumb 3 fânețâ		5	6	5	20	15	2				7	100			5
	Dochița, soția lui			50																			
	băeți { Moise		flăcău	20	-	-	-	-	(de) 5 ani ciung de o mână														
	{ Toader			14																			
	fată < Stana			12																			
	Stanciu Șolfea?, argat			13																			
1.	Stanciu sin Gheorghe Moroiu	*Romanian*	*married*	65	*Head tax payer*	*Small land tenant*	*no occupation*	*0.5 orchard 3 corn 3 hay*		5	6	5	20	15	2				7	100			5
	Dochița, *his wife*			50																			
	boys { Moise		*lad*	20	-	-	-	-	*(for) 5 years lopped of one hand*														
	{ Toader			14																			
	girl < *Stana*			12																			
	Stanciu Șolfea?, *farmhand*			13																			

Figure 7. Form type A (province): header and example of recorded information.



1035	120	224	430	1880	23	230	7	4	1024

Adică şasă sute treizeci şi opt suflete, o mie treizeci şi cinci pogoane lucrate, o sută doăzeci cai, doă sute doăzeci şi patru boi, patru sute treizeci vaci, o mie opt sute optzeci oi, do(uă)zeci şi trei capre, dooă sute treizeci râmăt(o)ri, şapte bivoli, patru măgari, o mie doăzeci şi patru de rănduri de vie să află într-acest sat Desa.
Iar file patrusprezece, în care să coprind o sută patruzăci familii.

Suptocârmuitoriu Nicolae Gioroceanu

Therefore, sex hundred thirty eight souls, one thousand thirty five plots, one hundred twenty horses, two hundred twenty four bulls, four hundred tirthy cows, one thousand eight hundred and eighty sheep, twenty three goats, two hundred thrirty pigs, seven buffalo, four donkeys, one thousand twenty four rows of vine; found in this village of Desa.
And fourteen pages, that include one hundred fourty families.

Subprefect Nicolae Gioroceanu

Figure 8. Example of local-level census aggregate.

Map 7. Exemplification of how current administrative units are used to generate the *place code*.

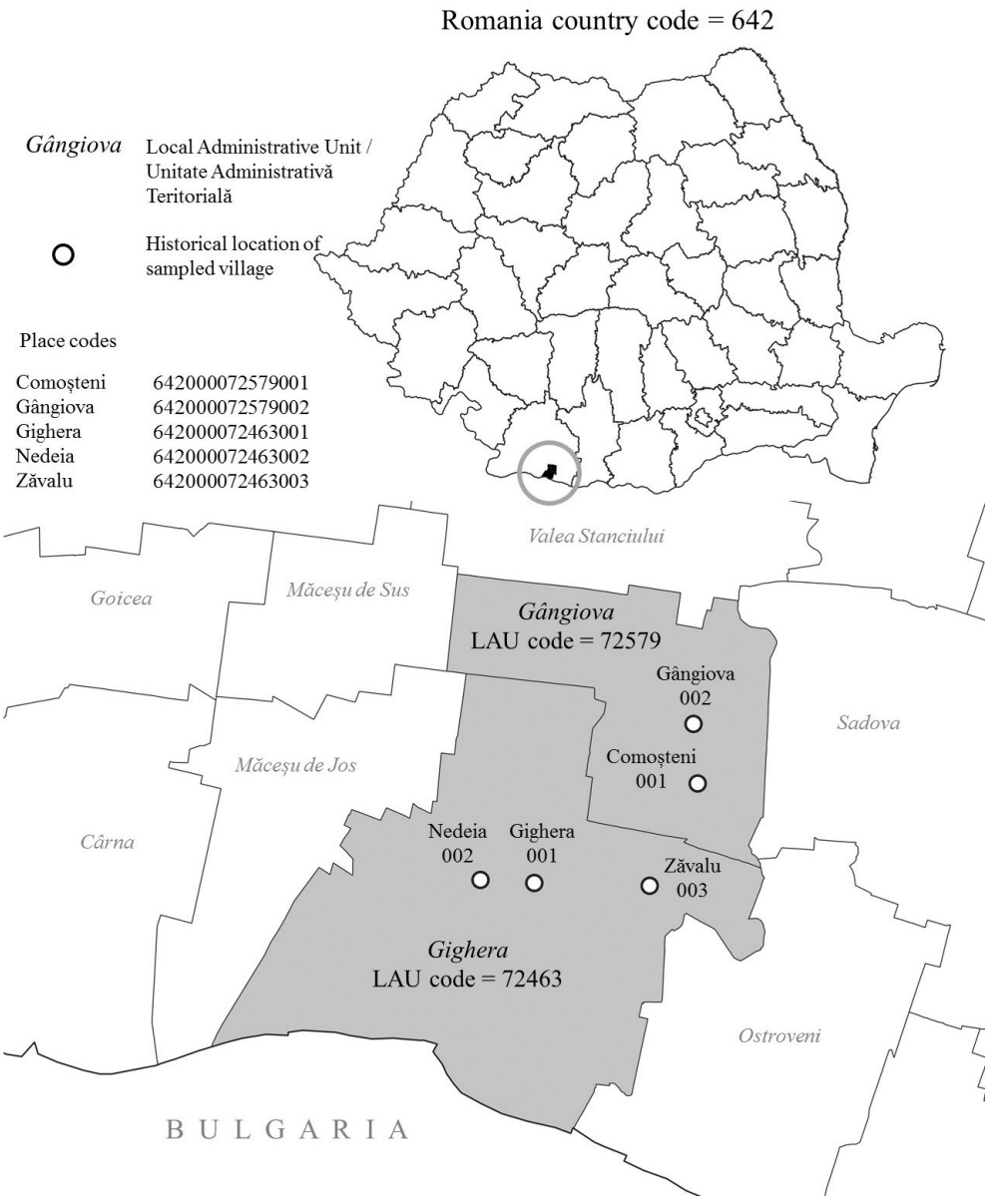


Table 10

Projected variables of the initial 1838 samples; their relation to the original form.

column in the census form	column in the basic transcription	column in the public data sets	Language	format[76]	international standards used for coding
		source	Ro, En	both	
		country_hist	Ro, En	text	
	admhist_1	admhist_1	Ro	text	
	admhist_2	admhist_2	Ro	text	
	place	place	Ro	text	
	place_div	place_div	Ro	text	
		place code		num.	MOSAIC
		id_pers		num.	MOSAIC
*No. (*House number)	House no.	house no_or		num.	
		id_hh		num.	
Numele (Name)	title	appellative_or	Ro	text	
	first name	first name_or	Ro	text	
	second name	second name_or	Ro	text	
	relation	id_cfu		num.	
		cfu_relation	Ro, En	both	
		q_cfu_relation	Ro, En	both	
		hh relation	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
		q_hh relation	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
		sex	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
		q_sex	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
Vârsta (Age)	age	age_or	Ro	alpha-num	MOSAIC
		age		num.	MOSAIC
		q_age	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
Căsătoria (marital status)	marital status	marrital status_or	Ro	text	
		marst	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
		qmarst	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
Neamul (Ethnicity)	ethnicity	ethnicity_or	Ro	text	
		ethnicity_gen	Ro, En	both	
		ethnicity_subtype	Ro, En	text	
Birul (Fiscal category)	fiscal category	fiscal_or	Ro	text	
		fiscal_status	Ro, En	both	
		reason for exemption	Ro, En	text	
		class_fiscal_gen	Ro, En	both	
		class_fiscal_subtype	Ro, En	both	
Meşteşugul (Occupation)	occupation	occupation_or	Ro	text	
		occupation 1	En	text	
		occupation 2	En	text	
		occupation_source	Ro, En	text	
		HISCO_oc_1	Ro, En	both	HISCO
		HISCO_oc_2	Ro, En	both	HISCO

[76] "Both" means that the variable has different formats, depending on the version of the sample: text format in the label version; numeric format in the code version.

Table 10 (continued)

Claca (Property)	property	property_or	Ro	text	
		property	Ro, En	both	
		labor_exempted	Ro, En	text	
Beteşugul (Disability)	disability	disability_or	Ro	text	
		disability_gen	Ro, En	both	
		disability_subtype	Ro, En	both	
		disability_event	Ro, En	text	
Pogoane lucrate (Used land)	wheat	wheat_or		num.	
	corn	corn_or		num.	
	barley	barley_or		num.	
	oat	oat_or		num.	
	millet	millet_or		num.	
	hay	hay_or		num.	
Cai (Horses)	horses	horses_or		num.	
Boi (Bulls)	bulls	bulls_or		num.	
Vaci (Cows)	cows	cows_or		num.	
Oi (sheep)	sheep	sheep_or		num.	
Capre (Goats)	goats	goats_or		num.	
Râmători (Pigs)	pigs	pigs_or		num.	
Bivoli (Buffalo)	buffalo	buffalo_or		num.	
Măgari (Donkeys)	donkeys	donkeys_or		num.	
Catâri (Mules)	mules	mules_or		num.	
Stupi (Bee hives)	bee hives	bee hives_or		num.	
Pruni (Plum trees)	plum trees	plum trees_or		num.	
Duzi (Mulberry trees)	mulberry tree	mulberry tree_or		num.	
Vie (Vineyard)	vineyard - rows	vineyard rows_or		num.	
	vineyard - pogoane	vineyard pogoane_or		num.	
Pomet (Fruit trees)	fruit trees	fruit trees_or		num.	
[various columns]		presence	Ro, En	both	MOSAIC
		presence_source	Ro, En	text	
	remarks	remarks	Ro, En	text	

Credits, citations and remarks on to the maps published in this paper

All maps were made by the author of this paper, using the resources presented below.

The 1833 Bergenheim-Galizin map of Wallachia[77] served for the approximate reconstruction pf administrative borders in 1837 (Maps 2–6). Certain corrections or adaptations were applied where needed, in order to respect 1837 boundaries. To

[77] National Archives of Romania (SANIC), Fond Documente Diplomatice (1626–1847), 146.

give just one example, on the Russian map, the district of Brăila is wrongfully represented with three subdistricts. The most Southern one belonged to Slam-Râmnic until 1831, when it merged with subdistrict Balta from Brăila. Besides such details, the reader should mind the fact that the administrative limits illustrated in this paper reflect only the situation of late 1837, at the beginning of the census. Changes took place shortly after the census ended (some even during the making of the census): subdistricts Aref and Loviștea were merged, the most Southern tip of Mehedinți district was moved to Dolj; several exchanges were made between Olt, Argeș and Teleorman. Similar cautions should be taken for urban settlements, as some changed their status (institutions) within the same timeframe.

Given the fact that no publically available vector data exist for Romanian historical geography of the 1830s, the instruments used so far had to be developed from 0. Their development is ongoing, being continuously improved and corrected. For this reason, minor differences can be observed between the maps presented here and those from previous publications.

For natural landscape represented in Map 3–5, I used the vector data authored by Bogdan Candrea, Petronela Candrea și Mihai Daniel Niță, published on the platform geo-spatial[78].

Current administrative borders shown in Map 7 are defined by the vector data released by Agenția Națională de Cadastru și Publicitate Imobiliară (ANCPI), with feature attributes added by geo-spatial.org; downloaded from geo-spatial.org in December 2019.

DIGITIZING THE WALLACHIAN CENSUS FORMS OF 1838. THE FIRST POPULATION SAMPLES OF THE DEM-IST DATABASE

Abstract

The 1838 census of Wallachia is the first modern Romanian census and one of the first in South-Eastern Europe. Its population forms are preserved in most part, but are mostly unpublished and very few researches are based on them. After a representative sample from this material was published in 2012 in the MOSAIC database, the process of digitization continues at the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, which plans to host the Dem-Ist database, explicitly designed for demographic sources created in the former principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

At the same time, the historiographic context in which this effort takes place calls for a general discussion on the need for such instruments, and the slow progress in which statistical sources are valued. On the one hand, this paper will attempt to contribute to such a discussion. On the other, it will present the general framework and methodology in which the first Dem-Ist population samples are being compiled.

Keywords: 1838 census, Wallachia, database, Romanian historical demography, population studies.

[78] http://www.geo-spatial.org/download/harta-unitati-relief-romania, downloaded in December 2019.