

Changing Subjects, Moving Objects

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VOLUME 31

Changing Subjects, Moving Objects

*Status, Mobility, and Social Transformation in
Southeastern Europe, 1700–1850*

by

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To Ilinca

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Introduction

During the Russian–Turkish War of 1768–1774, many Wallachian boyars, greater and lesser, chose to leave their homeland (*patrie*), their belongings, and their estates in order to save their lives. Leaving ephemeral goods behind, the boyars took with them their families and close relatives and such objects that could be fitted into trunks, chests, and carriages. Their destination was Braşov (Kronstadt), over the mountains in Habsburg Transylvania. For these boyars, Ottoman subjects, Braşov was a convenient place of refuge, given its spatial proximity, but the ‘German city’ offered a totally different experience from the Ottoman-Balkan world in which they normally led their lives. Among the refugees were members of the great families of Wallachia: Brâncoveanu, Văcărescu, Bălăceanu, etc.—in fact, the entire political elite of the principality. Exile in Braşov marked many of them with the imprint of a ‘different’ way of life, but it also left the bitter taste of foreignness, of otherness, of the insecurity resulting from unstable times. Here in Braşov, Maria Bălăceanu, a member of an important boyar family, decided to adopt a ‘German’ child, who was ‘poor’ but of ‘known’ and properly wedded parents. We do not know what name this ‘German’ child had gone by in Braşov, but to be integrated into the Bălăceanu clan in Wallachia he needed a new identity. Maria, his adoptive mother, proceeded to remake this new member so that he could be accepted into the lineage. In a letter of 10 April 1797, she writes:

[A]nd when we were coming again to our homeland [*patria noastră*], here in this country, I brought him with me too. And raising him as an adoptive son, I had him christened in our Orthodox faith, in the days of His Holiness the late Metropolitan Grigorie, and after his christening, having made him my adoptive son, I also gave him in marriage, and have myself baptized [i.e. been godmother to] his five children up until now.

To cross political and social borders, the ‘German’ child put on the garb of the Orthodox Petre, his baptismal name. Three decades later, when Maria Bălăceanu recalled her Braşov experience, Petre Bălăceanu was a grown man with a wife and children, a house and outbuildings in the heart of Bucharest. And yet he still carried with him the memory of ‘his homeland’ (*patria sa*) and ‘his kindred’ (*neamul său*). For their part, the Bălăceanu kin did not yet consider him one of their own, despite all the efforts of his adoptive mother, who

had tried to 'bribe' them, by way of her testament, with various gifts of money or portions of her estate.¹

For more than a century, the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia were integrated into the Ottoman Empire through the intermediary of the so-called 'Phanariot regime'. Lying at the margins of three empires (Ottoman, Russian, and Habsburg), the Principalities often became the theatre of military operations, diplomatic negotiations, and topographic incursions with a view to possible annexation.² Traversed back and forth by diplomats, merchants, scholars, artisans, soldiers, and missionaries, these lands were the crossroads of diplomatic, commercial, and cultural knowledge and information. The Phanariot period, essential for an understanding of later developments in southeastern Europe, was long marginalized in the historiography of the region, and catalogued as a 'dark age'.³ However, a closer examination of the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century can help us to understand the role of the Phanariots in the spread of Enlightenment ideas, in the education and reforming of local elites, and in the forging of the modern states of the following century. They reshaped the meaning of the word '*patrie*' used by Maria Bălăceanu, which changed from a homeland to a national identity.⁴

For a long time it was supposed that the political elites of the period were immobile, conservative, and reticent towards the Enlightenment. I propose to demonstrate that these elites in fact constituted part of a broader picture, having connections both in the Ottoman world and in the worlds of Vienna, Venice or Saint Petersburg. For example, there were other boyars and dignitaries in exile in Braşov, whom we shall meet in the pages of this book, whose experiences are very useful for an understanding of the way in which people circulated through the empires, changing their identity and allegiance, adapting

1 BAR, Fond Manuscrite, MS 611, ff. 17v–21r. I shall return to this very interesting episode in Part IV chapter 1.

2 Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice româneşti* (Munich: 1987).

3 See Ştefan Lemny, 'La critique du régime phanariote: clichés mentaux et perspectives historiographiques', in Alexandru Zub (ed.), *Culture and Society: Structures, Interferences, Analogies in the Modern Romanian History* (Iaşi: 1985), 17–30; Nicolae Bănescu, 'Entre Roumains et Grecs: Ce Que Nous Apprend le Passé', *Nέα Πολιτικά*, 2, 9 (1937), 1049–55; Anca Dobre, 'Points de vue de l'histoire nationale grecque et roumaine sur la question des Phanariotes', in Paschalis Kitromilides and Anna Tabaki (eds.), *Relations gréco-romaines. Interculturalité et identité nationale* (Athenes: 2004, 189–94); Christina Ion, 'The Present Creates the Past: The "Phanariots" in the Romanian Text Books during the Second Half of the 19th Century', *Revue d'Etudes sud-est européennes*, 33, 1–2 (1995), 41–7; Edhem Eldem, 'Greece and the Greeks in Ottoman History and Turkish Historiography', *Historical Review*, 6 (2009), 27–40.

4 Konstantina Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean, 1800–1850: Stammering the Nation* (Oxford: 2018), 2.

to different places, and trying to finding a secure home, even if only a temporary one.

Maria Bălăceanu travelled between Vienna and Bucharest for more than half a century (1740–1797), in search of belonging and social recognition, struggling to recover her family wealth, which had been confiscated, first by Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714), and thereafter by various Phanariot rulers, and facing the contempt and hostility of princes and officials because of her family's pro-Austrian orientation. Boyaress, countess, lady-in-waiting to Empress Maria Theresa, Maria Bălăceanu felt acutely the lack of a homeland and the ambiguity of a sense of belonging that bound her neither to one environment nor to the other.

In this book I shall explore how people in the past tried to find a home in which to develop their potential, to feel in safety, to have a family, a career, to be accepted by others. How permeable were social and political borders? How did they define and interpret such concepts as 'home' and 'abroad'? Are they stable concepts or do they incorporate a significant doze of vagueness and malleability? Studying the senses of 'home' and 'away', through the biographies of three nineteenth-century activists, Dominique Reill observes that 'place' is not to be treated as a 'stable category', but 'should be read against the modern geographical grain.'⁵ The individuals who feature in this book experience mobility, exile, journeys between empires: if for some, 'abroad' means displacement and precarity, for others, 'away' is another place to live, where they may acquire riches or simply knowledge. People circulate with ease between empires, making use of the fluidity of geographical, confessional, and linguistic frontiers, highlighting the slipperiness and the suppleness of these concepts in the days before nation state-building.

In the course of a century and a half, the dynamics of geopolitics evolved, and with them, the people and ideas that modelled the region changed. This book seeks to interrogate the manner in which mobility and social, political, and cultural transformations determined people to position themselves, to conceive where they belonged and how they would be seen, to map their loyalties and to construct social, political, and cultural bridges for living and surviving together. What sort of belonging did these people construct for themselves? Where did their loyalties lie? What was the status of Ottoman subjects in the Principalities? Where did the boundaries of loyalty and subjecthood begin and end?

5 Dominique Kirchner Reill, 'Away or Homeward Bound? The Slippery Case of Mediterranean Place in the Era before Nation-States', in Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (eds.), *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century* (London: 2015), 136.

I shall try to address these questions by way of a series of microhistories whose characters illustrate experiences, multiple possibilities, and opportunities arising in the course of a lifetime. In my explorations, I have made use of the *name* as a guiding thread—as defined by Carlo Ginzburg and Carlo Poni in their analysis of microhistory—, reconstructing the web of social relations in which each individual was caught.⁶ Microhistory has, however, undergone a re-reappraisal in recent decades as an important tool of global history, generating a series of valuable studies.⁷ Starting from the information offered by the primary sources about an individual, an object, or a place, historians have proceeded to reconstruct cross-border connections and cultural and confessional processes, connecting regions, people, and contexts.⁸

Among all the microhistories in this book, four figures for the spectacular quality of their individual trajectories, eluding borders and mixing multiple strategies of integration in different contexts: François-Thomas Linchou, Ianache Văcărescu, Dimitrie Foti Merișescu, and Elena Hartulari. They will be, in fact, the pretext for an analysis of the various facets of being an office-holder (and the wife of an office-holder) in the Ottoman Empire, caught in the Phanariot network. All four were part of a world that was constantly reinventing itself politically, socially, and materially, establishing their social status and identity according to their belonging to spaces, to empires. Studying the lives, networks, and trajectories of these individuals helps us to understand the existence of a cultural and geopolitical space that extended beyond borders, offering people a variety of options and political loyalties.⁹ Moreover, these figures generated a rich documentation, providing us with the necessary sources for such an exploration. Linchou left a vast diplomatic correspondence; Văcărescu

6 Carlo Ginzburg, Carlo Poni, 'La micro-histoire', *Le Débat*, 10, 17 (1981), 135.

7 Francesca Trivellato, 'Is There a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?', *California Italian Studies*, II, 1 (2011), <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/oz94n9hq> [accessed 11.08.2021]; Francesca Trivellato, 'Microstoria/Microhistoire/Microhistory', *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 33, 1 (2015), 122–134; John-Paul A. Ghobrial, 'The Secret Life of Elias of Babylon and the Use of Global Microhistory', *Past and Present*, 222 (2014), 51–93; Maxine Berg, 'Sea Otters and Iron: A Global Microhistory of Value and Exchange at Nootka Sound, 1774–1792', *Past and Present*, 242 (2019), 50–82; Guillaume Calafat, 'Jurisdictional Pluralism in a Litigious Sea (1590–1630): Hard Cases, Multi-Sited Trials and Legal Enforcement between North Africa and Italy', *Past and Present*, 242 (2019), 142–178; John-Paul A. Ghobrial, 'Moving Stories and What They Tell Us: Early Modern Mobility Between Microhistory and Global History', *Past and Present*, 242 (2019), 243–280.

8 John-Paul A. Ghobrial, 'Introduction: Seeing the World like a Microhistorian', *Past and Present*, 242 (2019), 15–16.

9 See also the trans-imperial figures analysed by Zanou, *Stammering the Nation. Or Călin Cotoi, Inventing the Social in Romania, 1848–1914. Networks and Laboratories of Knowledge* (Leiden: 2020).

wrote a *History of the Ottoman Empire*, which contains much autobiographical information; Merișescu kept a journal for the years 1814–1818; and Hartulari set down her memoirs for the period 1810–1856. Another common factor that links them concerns their connections to the Phanariot environment in which they were formed and in which they experienced both success and failure: Linchou was secretary to Prince Constantin Racoviță; Văcărescu held important offices under various princes, while also serving as a high Ottoman official in the period 1765–1797; Merișescu occupied minor posts at the Phanariot court; and Iorgu Hartulari was the prototype of the ‘new man’ who managed, through his wife Elena (née Plitos), to enjoy all the advantages of a network that he owed to his father-in-law and brothers-in-law, all of them holders of administrative posts and high offices in post-Phanariot Moldavia. They also have in common their mobility, the journeys that they made through the empires in the search of some sort of stability, prosperity, and security. Elena Hartulari herself never went further than Czernowitz (Romanian Cernăuți, today Chernivtsi in Ukraine, at the time the capital of Habsburg Bukovina), though she ‘travelled’ assiduously through Moldavia in search of a home. Her husband Iorgu, however, went as far as Istanbul,¹⁰ and his journey is recounted in detail and with much emotional involvement in Elena’s journal. And these four figures share something else: their obsession with social recognition. All four repeatedly engage in self-definition, expressing their ideas about who they are, what sort of people they are, what place they occupy in their society, and how they should be received by others.

In the middle ground, the various secondary figures and their trajectories back and forward across borders amount to a panoply of microhistories. Thus the book tracks various destinies that contribute to our knowledge of south-eastern Europe over the course of a century. Even if its apparent focus is on Moldavia and Wallachia, where the protagonists tried to find a home for themselves, it transgresses the borders of the Principalities as it follows their individual trajectories across empires, passing through Bucharest, Iași, Sibiu, Brașov, Giurgiu (Yergöğü), Ruse (Rusçuk), Arbañași, Nikopol, Edirne, Czernowitz, Vienna, Venice, Trieste, Istanbul, Saint Petersburg, and Paris. Most of my characters speak and write more than two languages: Romanian, Greek, Turkish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Serbian, French, German, Polish, Yiddish, or Italian. Their multilingualism is reflected in their writings and also in their constant adaptation to the linguistic spaces in which they live and pursue their activity

10 In the sources, the Ottoman city is variously named ‘Constantinople’, ‘Istanbul’, or ‘Tsarigrad’. I have used ‘Constantinople’ or ‘Tsarigrad’ only when citing or referring to these sources.

for a time. Moreover, their linguistic dynamism can be seen in their constant refashioning of their names according to space, time, and interlocutor. The book is full of characters with such names as Dimitri (Dimitrie, Dimitrios, Dumitrache, Tache, Matache), Iane, (Ianis, Ianache, Ienache, Ienăchiță), Elena (Eleni, Elencu, Elenicu, Iliana, Ilinca, Ilinca), or Manolache (Manolaki, Manuil, Emanoil, Emanuil), often Hellenized under the pressure of the times. Their identification and their introduction into the narrative of the book raise problems that have been observed by Dominique Reill for the Adriatic region.¹¹ The names of the Phanariots, for example, are rendered in various spellings according to the sources in which they appear, the languages used, and the education of the author: Ipsilanti/Ýpsilanti/Hypsilanti; Suțu/Soutzo/Souzzo/Soutso; Caragea/Caradge/Karaca. Collective affiliations sometimes give rise to confusion. For example, the Serbs and Bulgarians of Rumelia are often brought together under the same label, given that both spoke Slavic languages. It is thus quite difficult to tell whether Iana from Rumelia is a Bulgarian or a Serbian or whether Iorgu (Iorgache, Iordache, Gheorgache) of Pindus is Greek or Vlach in the absence of factual criteria. Many of the 'Epirot Greeks' speak Greek or Turkish, but some also speak Romanian. Where possible, I have tried to use the identifying information offered by the actors themselves in the historical sources. In the case of names of places and institutions, I have chosen to use the forms by which they are referred to in the sources, providing where necessary an explanation or a contemporary localization.

The approach adopted in this book has not previously been considered in southeastern Europe historiography.¹² Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, research in social and political history has flourished. However, themes remain fragmentary and are rarely integrated in and circumscribed by the regional context. National borders have often proved impassable barriers, and figures that are important for an understanding of the social and patronage networks woven between empires have been treated only in terms of their 'national' role.¹³ It is this danger that Suraiya Faroqhi draws attention to when she points out that Romanian scholars have studied the work of Dimitrie Cantemir 'as a part of

11 Dominique Kirchner Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation: Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste, and Venice* (Stanford, CA: 2012), xv.

12 On mobility and migration see Stefan Rohdewald, Stephan Conermann, Albrecht Fuess (eds.), *Transottomanica – Osteuropäisch-osmanisch-persische Mobilitätsdynamiken. Perspektiven und Forschungsstand* (Göttingen: 2019).

13 Diana Mishkova, *Beyond Balkanism: The Scholarly Politics of Region Making* (London: 2018).

their national cultural inheritance,¹⁴ while neglecting, sometimes quite deliberately, the context in which he lived and pursued his career. For this reason, she emphasizes that: ‘research which is limited by national borders has been unhelpful to our understanding of many non-Muslim Ottomans with intellectual interests.’¹⁵ In the meantime, Dimitrie Cantemir has been re-evaluated in a new study that follows ‘his European adventure’ step by step,¹⁶ but he still awaits the researcher who will examine him from the perspective of a global history. The same cannot be said of Văcărescu, another intellectual, not of the stature of Dimitrie Cantemir but nevertheless of some importance for Ottoman and southeast European historiography. Romanian historiography has dedicated studies, monographs, and articles to Văcărescu, and critical editions of his works have been published. Yet for all that, the author of *Istoria prea puternicilor împărați otomani* (The history of the most puissant Ottoman emperors) remains an ‘illustrious’ unknown to international research. As in the case of Dimitrie Cantemir, Romanian historians have not strayed beyond national borders, barely (if at all) following his tracks in his Ottoman adventure.

Recent studies have shown the importance of patronage networks for an understanding of the political history of the Ottoman Empire and southeastern Europe.¹⁷ For example, Michał Wasiucionek has shown how ‘Moldavian-Wallachian boyars, Ottoman grandees and Polish-Lithuanian magnates increasingly accumulated power and privatized state resources, becoming the effective masters of their political environment.’¹⁸ Meanwhile, David Do Paço and Florian Kühnel have introduced women and the part they played in the construction and promotion of diplomatic networks, in studies that can help us to understand the active role of women’s political networks and

14 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan. Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London–New York: 2011), 85.

15 Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan*, 85.

16 Ștefan Lemny, *Cantemireștii. Aventura europeană a unei familii princiare din secolul al XVIII-lea* (Iași: 2013).

17 Carter V. Findley, ‘Political culture and the great households’ in Suraiya Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 2006), 65–80; Jane Hathaway, *The Political of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge: 1997); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways to Be Alien: Travails and Encounters in the Early Modern World* (Waltham: 2011); Marie-Carmen Smyrnelis, *Une société hors de soi: Identités et relations sociales à Smyrne aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles* (Paris: 2006); Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christian and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, NJ: 2000); Radu Păun, *Pouvoirs, offices et patronage dans la Principauté de Moldavie au XVII^e siècle: l’aristocratie roumaine et la pénétration gréco-levantine*, PhD diss., EHESS (Paris: 2003).

18 Michał Wasiucionek, *The Ottomans and Eastern Europe. Borders and Political Patronage in the Early Modern World* (London–New York: 2019), 9.

trans-imperial circulation.¹⁹ Biography has been put to new uses in innovative studies by Konstantina Zanou, Dominique Reill, and Francesca Trivelatto, connecting “humble lives” to the broader picture of global history.²⁰ To reconstitute the trajectories of the actors and their travels through the empires, I have resorted to the outlining of multiple microbiographies, gathering together the threads scattered in various places in different empires, following the trails of the actors in the attempt to assemble as many pieces of a puzzle as possible.

Home or Away: Foreigners and Their Paths Into the Sources

Foreigners, subjects, and protégés are conceptual categories with the help of which I shall attempt to trace the process by which the people of the past defined themselves. Belonging to one category or another determined the place someone occupied in society, their social status, and the manner in which they were seen and judged by others. Such administrative instruments as censuses, fiscal records, and parish registers were relatively late to appear in southeastern Europe. In the case of Moldavia and Wallachia, for example, parish registers were introduced only with the adoption of the Organic Regulations, the organic laws drawn up during the Russian occupation of 1828–1834. Fiscal records were certainly kept, as they were the basis for imposing taxes, but they are preserved only in relatively small numbers and for the later part of the period.²¹ They appeared when the princes felt a pressing need for resources to cover the tribute owed to the Ottoman Empire and the financing of the administrative apparatus. At these moments, the political authorities engaged both

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- 19 David Do Paço, ‘Women in Diplomacy in Late Eighteenth-Century Istanbul’, *The Historical Journal* (2021), 1–23; Florian Kühnel, “Minister-like cleverness, understanding and influence in affairs”: ambassadors in everyday business and courtly ceremonies at the turn of the eighteenth century’, in Tracey A. Sowerby and Jan Hennings (eds.), *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World, c. 1410–1800* (London and New York: 2018), 130–146.
- 20 Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism*; Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation*; Francesca Trivelatto, *The Familiarity of Strangers: the Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Culture Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, CT: 2009).
- 21 For fiscal conscriptions in the Ottoman Empire, see Bruce Masters, *Christians in a changing world*, in Suraiya N. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 3. *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (Cambridge: 2006), 272–279; Andreas Tietze, ‘The Balkans and Ottoman Sources – Ottoman Sources and the Balkans’, in Henrik Birnbaum, Speros Vryonis jr. (eds.), *Aspects of the Balkans. Continuity and Change* (The Hague–Paris: 1972), 285–297. For the documents kept by courts of justice, see Cahit Baltacı, ‘The Importance of the Kadı Register for the Islamic World’, *Studies on Turkish Arab Relations*, 2, 1987, 165–170; Yvonne J. Seng, ‘The Şer’iye Sicilleri of the Istanbul Müftülüğü as a Source for the Study of Everyday Life’, *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 15/2 (1991), 305–325.

in the reform of the fiscal system and in taking as accurate as possible a census of the population in order to know the value of the resources on which they could rely.²² In view of this, I shall focus my attention on the sources that are preserved in considerable numbers, in order to get a picture of the social, confessional, and cultural make-up of the region. Beyond the process by which each person constructed their identity as an individual, what interests me is the routes they followed in order to rise above their social condition. In this connection, narrative sources complement the fiscal records. They are not as numerous as we might wish, but those that have been preserved prove essential in reconstructing the process of identity-construction. Family archives, testaments, dowry lists, post-mortem inventories (*catagrafi*), and other property inventories have survived in considerable numbers and have been relatively little used in recent research.

The judicial archives offer valuable clues as to the presence of foreigners in a community and the way in which they were received. When they came before the judicial authorities, they provided identification details: name, parents' names, place of origin, occupation, marital status, permanent or temporary residence, and sometimes the reason for their presence in the Principalities. Most of the foreigners recorded in the judicial sources were of Orthodox faith. Others—Armenians, Jews, and Catholics, for example—tended to resort to their own communities to resolve problems.²³ However, this did not prevent them from appealing to the prince, invoking their status as subjects if they had permanent residence, or referring to their right to be protected if they were merely in transit. The process of identification had a significant oral component for that segment of the poor population who passed from one region to another without having in their possession what is generally known today as an identity card.²⁴ Among the Moldavians and Wallachians, a whole

22 Mention should be made here of the attempt at a fiscal census under Prince Ioan Caragea (1812–1818), at a time when the Russian–Ottoman war (1806–1812) followed by plague (1812–1814) contributed to a considerable reduction in the number of taxpayers.

23 As Alexandr Osipian has shown, Armenians who settled in Moldavian urban centres received the right to form 'autonomous communities', with their own laws and law-courts. See Alexandr Osipian, *Trans-Cultural Trade in the Black Sea Region, 1250–1700: Integration of the Armenian Trading Diaspora in the Moldavian Principality*, in *New Europe College. Black Sea Link Program Yearbook 2012–2013* (Bucharest: 2013), 120; See also Judit Pál, 'Armenian Society in 18th Century Transylvania', in Gyöngy Kovács Kiss (ed.), *Studies in the History of Early Modern Transylvania* (Highland Lakes, NJ: 2011), 151–178.

24 John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport. Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge: 2000); Valentin Groebner, *Who Are You? Identification, Deception, and Surveillance in Early Modern Europe* (New York: 2007); Martin Lloyd, *The Passport: The history of Man's Most Travelled Document* (Canterbury: 2008).

panoply of foreigners thus wound their way, variously defining themselves as Greeks, Serbs, Levantines, Turks, Jews, Armenians, Germans, French, Italians, Muscovites, or Prussians.

Who Were the Foreigners?

Who were the foreigners who moved around the empires in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries? How were they characterized and classified in the social hierarchy? How were they received and how did they manage to put down roots? The definition of the term ‘foreigner’ (*străin* in Romanian) is somewhat difficult to contextualise. Simona Cerutti, Roberto Zaugg or Peter Sahlins offer valuable insights into the subject, helping us to sketch an analytical framework.²⁵

The first essential criterion in the definition of the ‘foreigner’ concerns geographical belonging to a given territory.²⁶ Might this be sufficient to define the status of a person? The historical sources speak of ‘natives’ (*pământenii* from the word *pământ*, meaning ‘land’) and ‘foreigners’, those ‘from here’ and those come ‘from other lands’. But the documents operate with great ambiguity when they speak of the others, the foreigners, who may originate from beyond the imaginary frontiers of various sorts of community, whether delimited in confessional, linguistic, social or geographical terms. Thus, at a certain moment someone may be considered foreign in relation to someone else. But in relation to whom can a foreigner be defined? Such identities were very fluid and malleable categories in the days before national state-building. In defining the condition of the foreigner, Simona Cerutti includes four variables: succession, mobility, work, and justice; variables that establish belonging and connect the foreigner to local resources.²⁷ ‘A deficit of belonging’ is attributed to those who ‘come from elsewhere’.²⁸ To make good this ‘deficit of belonging’, the foreigner must enrol himself in a line of succession and ‘tame’ his mobility

25 Simona Cerutti, *Étrangers. Étude d'une condition d'incertitude dans une société d'Ancien Régime* (Paris: 2012); Roberto Zaugg, *Stranieri di antico regime. Mercanti, giudici e consoli nella Napoli del Settecento* (Rome: 2011); Peter Sahlins, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (Ithaca, NY: 2004).

26 See Edhem Eldem, ‘Foreigners on the Threshold of Felicity: The Reception of Foreigners in Ottoman Istanbul’, in Donatella Calabi and Stephan Christensen (eds.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe, II. Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: 2007), 114–131; Rossitsa Gradeva, ‘Turks and Bulgarians, Fourteenth to Eighteenth Centuries’, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 5, 2 (1995): 173–187.

27 Cerutti, *Étrangers*, 18.

28 Cerutti, *Étrangers*, 18.

by way of integration in the rules of the local community and by practising a trade that ensures access to local rights and justice. Hanna Sonkajärvi similarly emphasizes the importance of local institutions and practices in her attempt to establish ‘what a foreigner was’ in ancient-régime Strasbourg²⁹; while Peter Sahlins links the status of foreigner to citizenship and ‘le droit d’aubaine’, thus underlining the importance of a normative discourse and of a political authority in the construction of foreignness.³⁰ Local belonging seems to be the most ‘operative’ category for the inclusion of the foreigner in the social fabric. My research is thus directed at the paths towards integration and social recognition. ‘Le droit d’aubaine’ cannot be a criterion as it did not exist; letters of naturalization were very late to appear in the Principalities; they were unknown until the 1830s, and even then they were very seldom used.

One clarification is essential: I shall steer clear of the nationalist discourse that imposes ‘ethnic and national identities’ onto certain political or cultural figures, forcing them into the mould of national cultural heritages.³¹

But first let us try to see who the foreigners were and how they managed to acquire the status of ‘princely subject’. I shall make use of Dimitrie Cantemir’s description, because he goes beyond enumerating peoples who have settled in Moldavia, and provides information about their status in relation to the public authorities.³² In his *Descriptio Moldaviae*, Cantemir remarks that foreigners are everywhere:

29 Hanna Sonkajärvi, *Qu’est-ce qu’un étranger? Frontières et identifications à Strasbourg, 1681–1789* (Strasbourg: 2008).

30 Peter Sahlins, ‘Sur la citoyenneté et le droit d’aubaine à l’époque moderne. Réponse à Simona Cerruti’, *Annales HSS*, 63, 2 (2008), 385–398. See also Simona Cerutti, ‘A qui appartiennent les biens qui n’appartiennent à personnes? Citoyenneté et droit d’aubaine à l’époque moderne’, *Annales HSS*, 62, 2 (2007), 355–383.

31 See in this connection the interesting study of the multiple identities attributed to Hristofor Žefarović (1690–1753) under ‘the influence of nationalist ideologies’ and the sterility of such analyses: Vančo Gjorgjiev, Vojislav Sarakinski, ‘The Many Nationalities of Hristofor Žefarović’, *Analele Universității «Ovidius» Constanța, Seria Istorie*, 16 (2019), 5–17. On Anton Pann disputed by Romanian and Bulgarian history, see Luminița Munteanu, ‘Being Homo Balkanicus without Knowing It: The Case of Anton Pann’, *Turkey and Romania. A History of Partnership and Collaboration in The Balkans* (Istanbul: 2016), 123–138; See also Wladimir Fischer, ‘Creating a National Hero. The Changing Symbolics of Dositej Obradović (1811–1911)’, in Susan Ingram, Markus Reisenleitner and Cornelia Szabo-Knotik (eds.), *Cultural Practices and the Formation of Imagined Communities around 1900* (Vienna: 2001), 101–121.

32 The ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity of the region is a frequently occurring topos in the travel literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See Rossitsa Gradeva, ‘The Ottoman Balkans – a Zone of Fractures or a Zone of Contacts?’ in Almut Bues (ed.), *Zones of Fracture in Modern Europe: the Baltic Countries, the Balkans, and Northern Italy* (Wiesbaden: 2005), 61–75.

I do not believe there is any other country the size of Moldavia in which one meets so many and such diverse peoples. Apart from Moldavians, whose ancestors came originally from Maramureş, there also live in Moldavia Greeks, Albanians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Poles, Cossacks, Russians, Hungarians, Germans, Armenians, Jews, and those Gypsies with many children.³³

Further on, he describes the way in which they are received by the political community: 'The Greeks, Albanians, Serbs, and Bulgarians live freely in Moldavia, and a part busy themselves with commerce, [while] a part serve with a princely salary.'³⁴ These foreigners, of Orthodox faith and originating in the Ottoman Empire, came to practise their occupations in Moldavia for a time. The merchants used the Principalities as a zone of transit towards Sibiu and Braşov, and beyond them to Venice, Vienna, Trieste, and Leipzig. They enjoyed the privileges offered by the prince and paid customs duty on the wholesale goods they brought into the country in transit. Others came in the retinue of the Phanariot princes and swelled the ranks of servants at the court, guarding and defending the princely family, providing domestic service, or enrolling in the city guard. Indeed their presence left its traces in the enrichment of Romanian vocabulary with terms specific to the positions they occupied in the military hierarchy, borrowed from Ottoman Turkish or Greek. A series of figures appear in the records who in the process of identification invoke the activities they have carried out, whether military or domestic.³⁵ In the judicial archives, these 'mercenaries' are a permanent source of disorder: their abuses and violent acts are a frequent motive for complaints from communities to the local and central authorities.³⁶

Far more numerous were the Armenians. They were categorized as subjects, and paid the prince 'the same tax as the townsfolk and merchants in other cities and market towns of Moldavia.' They were free to practise their faith and to erect 'great churches.'³⁷ Also included among subjects were the Jews, who

33 Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei* (Bucharest: 1973), 217.

34 Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, 217.

35 For all these offices, see Dionisie Fotino, *Istoria Generală a Daciei sau a Transilvaniei și a Moldovei* ed. & trans. George Sion (Bucharest: 1859), 308–313. (Originally published as *Historia tes palai Dakias ta nyn Transylvanyas, Wallachias, kai Moldavias ek diaphoron palaion kai neon syngrapheon syneranistheisa para Dionysios Photeinou* (Vienna: 1818–1819),

36 See Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 'Legal Process and the Meanings of Justice (dreptate) in Eighteenth Century Romania', in *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés/ Crime, History & Societies*, 23, 2 (2019), 5–27; Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 'Marié à un étranger, marié à l'étranger. Mobilité et statut social dans l'Europe du Sud-Est (1780–1830)', in *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique moderne et contemporaine*, 1 (2019).

37 Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, 218.

paid 'a special tax each year, higher than the usual one.' They also had the right to practise their faith and could erect synagogues of wood, but not of stone.³⁸ The only group who did not have the right to practise their faith openly or to build places of worship were the Turks. Although, according to Cantemir, they were to be found in great numbers in Iași and in almost all the market towns of Moldavia, they were not allowed to buy houses or estates.³⁹ Also mentioned are Russians and Hungarians, who were also visible in large numbers due to the proximity of their countries.⁴⁰ In the documentary sources, all these foreigners are put into certain practical categories to make them easy to situate in the process of identification. The documents operated with indicators reflecting geographical origin, religious confession, socio-economic condition, language spoken, and sometimes descent, marital status, and occupation. Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Turks, Hungarians, and Bulgarians formed their own communities, settling on the edge of local communities and building places of worship (except in the case of the Turks), schools, and other institutions to represent themselves. In the towns, they settled in particular districts; in the countryside they formed distinct settlements, due to the policy of colonization practised by the Phanariot princes.⁴¹ As Mathieu Grenet observes, collective identities are much easier to trace both in the documentary sources and in the discourse of political power.⁴² Consequently, we find Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Turks, Serbs, and Bulgarians gathered in communities according to their confessional, linguistic, or geographical characteristics. However, within these collective communities, which are easy to trace in the urban environment, there lived individuals who deployed their various belongings and allegiances in diverse and much more nuanced ways.

What sort of mobility can we trace in the South-East of Europe? Lidia Cotovanu speaks of a 'little migration' that went on between the two sides of the Danube, and makes up a detailed map of the localities involved and of the individuals who set out in search of another 'homeland'.⁴³ Olga Katsardi-Hering,

38 Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, 218.

39 Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, 218.

40 Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, 218.

41 See also Andrew Robarts, 'Imperial confrontation or regional cooperation? Bulgarian migration and Ottoman–Russian relations in the Black Sea region, 1768–1830s', *Turkish Historical Review*, 3/2 (2012): 149–167; Constantin N. Velichi, *La contribution de l'émigration bulgare de la Valachie à la renaissance politique et culturelle du peuple bulgare (1762–1850)* (Bucharest: 1970).

42 Mathieu Grenet, *La fabrique communautaire. Les Grecs à Venise, Livourne et Marseille, 1770–1840* (Rome, Athènes: 2016), 294–297.

43 Lidia Cotovanu, 'L'émigration sud-danubienne vers la Valachie et la Moldavie et sa géographie (XV^e–XVII^e siècles): La potentialité heuristique d'un sujet peu connu', *Cahiers*

on the other hand, proposes a schema that reflects the mobility of the Greeks along long commercial routes and speaks of 'a peripheral economic community' with reference to the Greeks settled in Moldavia and Wallachia. These 'Greeks' were, in fact, intermediaries between local communities and large-scale commerce, with an active involvement in agriculture, craft trades, and small-scale commerce.⁴⁴ Braşov and Sibiu in Transylvania, important commercial centres of the region, provided luxury products for the Moldavian and Wallachian boyar class, but also functioned as hubs for the collection and redistribution of goods from all over the region.⁴⁵ However, the Greeks travelled far, building a large diaspora along the Mediterranean and Adriatic coasts.⁴⁶ Venice, Livorno, and Marseilles were home to a considerable Greek diaspora, connected by way of cross-cultural trade with other Greek communities settled along the trade routes of the Balkans. With reference to the changing of routes according to the circumstances of international politics, Grenet introduces the notion of 'space in motion', showing how the 'Greeks' reoriented themselves towards Vienna or Trieste, cities that played a significant role in the cultural preparation of the Greek revolution.⁴⁷

The impressive development of commercial networks between the Ottoman Empire and the lands of the Austrian crown, between Istanbul and Vienna, was a result of the policy of tolerance and the privileges granted by Empress Maria Theresa and later by her son Joseph II to 'Greek' merchants. The conquest of the Balkans by these 'Greek' merchants had begun well before the eighteenth century, as is shown in Traian Stoianovich's study on this theme.⁴⁸ However, the eighteenth century brought a much greater intensity of economic migration, especially after the 1718 Treaty of Passarowitz, followed by the Habsburg Monarchy's active policy of developing trade with the Balkan regions of the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁹ The founding of the Companies of Greek merchants in

balkaniques 42 (2014), 2–19; Lidia Cotovanu, *Migrations et mutations identitaires dans l'Europe du Sud-Est (vue de Valachie et de Moldavie, XIV^e–XVII^e siècles)*, thèse de doctorat, EHESS, (Paris: 2014).

44 Olga Katsiardi-Hering, 'Central and Peripheral Communities in the Greek Diaspora: Interlocal and Local Economic, Political, and Cultural Networks in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in Minna Rozen (ed.), *Homelands and Diasporas. Greeks, Jews and Their Migrations* (London: 2008), 173–174.

45 Gheorghe Lazăr, *Les marchands en Valachie, XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles* (Bucharest: 2006).

46 Grenet, *La fabrique communautaire*.

47 Grenet, *La fabrique communautaire*, 111.

48 Traian Stoianovich, 'The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', *Journal of Economic History*, 20 (1960), 234–313.

49 David Do Paço, 'Extranéité et lien social: l'intégration des marchands ottomans à Vienne au XVIII^e siècle', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 61, 1 (2014), 123–146.

Braşov and Sibiu encouraged the circulation of people and goods from the Ottoman to the Habsburg territories.⁵⁰ An analysis of the body of documents preserved in the archives of Sibiu and Braşov brings to light the importance of the Greek language in commercial communication and the role of these merchants in the circulation of (luxury) goods and the mobility of knowledge. The Greek Companies in the two cities wove commercial networks that linked Istanbul, Bucharest, Iaşi, Sibiu, Braşov, Trieste, Venice, and Vienna. In each of these cities there were members of the network, defending and administering company interests. Foreign merchants circulated across Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania, bringing with them goods that they were only allowed to sell wholesale or to carry further on to their places of residence.⁵¹ By the agreement of the neighbouring states, they paid a single customs duty and, as individuals or as a group, they enjoyed privileges granted by the princes.⁵²

I have insisted here on the merchants because they are the most visible category in the documentary sources. They were the bearers not only of a material culture that they succeeded in propagating through their merchandise, but also of a certain type of knowledge that they spread along with the books, maps, 'scientific' instruments, albums, and calendars that they sold. Together with the merchants, a series of tradesmen came and established small family businesses: slipper-makers (*condoraşii*), shalwar-makers (*şalvaraşii*), hat-makers (*işlicari*), coat-makers (*zăbunari*), dealers in fine fabrics (*bogasieri*), beadmakes (*mărgelari*), shoemakers (*cavaşi*), coffee-makers (*cafeşii*), sherbet-makers (*şerbeşii*), tobacconists (*tutungii*), pastry-makers (*simigii*), butchers (*casapi*), *bragă*-sellers (*bragaşii*), money-changers (*zarafi*), and others settled

50 On the Greek Companies see: Cornelia Papacostea-Danielopolu, 'L'organisation de la Compagnie grecque de Braşov (1777–1850)', *Balkan Studies*, 14 (1973), 312–323; eadem, 'La Compagnie grecque de Braşov. La lutte pour la conservation des privilèges (1777–1850)', *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, 12 (1974), 59–78; Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiu-Hermannstadt. Oriental Trade in Sixteenth Century Transylvania*, (Köln-Weimar-Vienna: 2007); Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, 'Between "Faithful Subjects" and "Pernicious Nation": Greek Merchants in the Principality of Transylvania in the Seventeenth Century', *Hungarian Historical Review* 6, 1, 2017, 111–137.

51 See the *ferman* of Sultan Abdülhamid I specifying the rules to be respected by non-Muslim Ottoman merchants in Wallachia and Moldavia. They had to present their documents (Tk. *tezkere*: travel permit) to the princes, to buy merchandise (in this case honey and flour), and to bring it to sell in Istanbul. *Documente turceşti privind la istoria României*, vol. II (Bucharest: 1983), vol. II, 4–8, 7/16 September 1775.

52 On the commercial relations between the Ottoman and Habsburg Monarchy, with the involvement of the Danubian Principalities, see Bogdan C. Murgescu, 'Balances of Trade and Payments between the Ottoman Empire and Central Europe (16th–18th centuries)', in Simonetta Cavaciocchi (ed.), *Relazioni economiche tra Europa e mondo islamico secc. XIII–XVIII* (Florence: 2007), 961–980.

in urban centres. The very names of these occupations testify to migration from the area of the Ottoman Empire. The activity of the Princely Academies of Iași and Bucharest encouraged the presence of Orthodox 'students' sent to complete their education.⁵³ Some of them chose to stay and to integrate themselves in the administrative systems of the Principalities, putting themselves at the service of the princes.⁵⁴ These 'expatriates', as Peter Burke calls them,⁵⁵ were invited to contribute not only to the spread of knowledge but also to the setting up of educational and cultural initiatives necessary to their country of adoption. Greek was the language of this cultural elite and the principal language of teaching in the Princely Academies, where many of the teachers were Greeks.⁵⁶ Michał Wasiucionek has shown very clearly how the Moldavian and Wallachian elite were quick to adopt the Greek language, which enabled them 'to partake in Ottoman imperial culture as an Orthodox "Ottoman-local elite":⁵⁷

Princely Subjects and Ottoman Subjects

In the eighteenth century, Moldavia and Wallachia were two political communities made up of subjects governed by a prince (*domn* or *voievod*) appointed by the Porte.⁵⁸ The payment of tribute to the sultan assured protection for the two countries, and implicitly for their subjects.⁵⁹ As Viorel Panaite has observed, the two tributary provinces had autonomy, but this was an autonomy exercised within the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁰ As they 'enjoyed' the protection of the Empire and paid tribute, the people of Moldavia and Wallachia are referred to in the

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- 53 Ariadna Camariano-Cioran, *Acemiile Domnești din București și Iași* (Bucharest: 1971).
- 54 Ștefania Costache, 'Loyalty and Political Legitimacy in the Phanariots' Historical Writing in the Eighteenth Century', *Südost-Forschungen*, 69/70 (2010/2011), 25–50.
- 55 Peter Burke, *Exiles and Expatriates in the History of Knowledge, 1500–2000* (Waltham: 2017), 82.
- 56 Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *The Enlightenment as Social Criticism: Iosipos Moisiodax and Greek Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: 2014).
- 57 Michał Wasiucionek, 'Greek as Ottoman? Language, Identity and Mediation of Ottoman Culture in the Early Modern Period', *Cromohs: Cyber Review of Modern Historiography*, 21 (2017–2018), 70–89.
- 58 Marian Coman, *Putere și teritoriu. Țara Românească medievală (sec. XIV–XVI)* (Iași: 2016).
- 59 Viorel Panaite, 'Power Relationship in the Ottoman Empire. Sultans and the Tribute Paying Princes of Wallachia and Moldavia (16th–18th Centuries)', *Revue des Etudes sud-est européennes*, 33, 1–2 (1999–2000), 51.
- 60 Viorel Panaite, 'Wallachia and Moldavia according to the Ottoman Juridical and Political View, 1774–1829', in Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos (eds.), *Ottoman Rule and The Balkans, 1760–1858. Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation* (Rethymno: 2007), 24.

sources as *Ottoman subjects*, designated with the terms *re'aya* and *zimmi*.⁶¹ As such, they had the same rights as the other non-Muslim Ottoman subjects in the Empire: the right to practice their religion freely, the right to property, and the right to life.⁶² In addition, they made use of their status as Ottoman subjects to resolve disputes, applying to the Porte for assistance and thus recognizing it as a supreme authority and forum of appeal in judicial matters. In the seventeenth century, some Moldavian boyars had invoked the right of the prince to judge lawsuits between Moldavian subjects, while cases between a Moldavian and a Muslim were taken before a *kadı* (an official judge), but in the eighteenth this old custom almost disappeared.⁶³ As I shall show, non-Muslim Ottoman subjects in the Principalities sometimes approached the sultan directly, asking him to judge their lawsuits. In other cases, displeased at the judgements delivered by the princely *divan*, they appealed to the local Ottoman authorities, especially the *kadı*, or even to the imperial *divan*.⁶⁴ Some cases were judged by the imperial *divan*, while others were sent to the prince with the request that he resolve them, adding that if the parties did not accept his judgement, they should be sent to the local Ottoman officials, namely the *kadıs* of Giurgiu or Brăila.⁶⁵

Wallachian and Moldavian Christians who travelled in the Ottoman Empire were subject to the general rules regarding foreigners: they could remain for a short period of up to a year and acquired the status of *müste'min*, if they held a temporary residence permit (*aman*).⁶⁶ As Juliette Dumas has shown,

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- 61 For an analysis of the use of the term *re'aya*, see Aleksander Fotić, 'Tracing the Origin of a New Meaning of the Term Re'āyā in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans', *Balkanica*, XLVIII (2017), 55–66.
- 62 Viorel Panaite, 'The Re'ayas of the Tributary Protected Principalities: The Sixteenth Through the Eighteenth Centuries', in *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 9, 1, (2003), 85–86.
- 63 Nándor Erik Kovács, 'The Legal Status of the Danubian Principalities in the 17th Century as Reflected in the Şikayet Defteris', *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1 (2014), 11.
- 64 Rossitsa Gradeva, 'Orthodox Christians in the Kadı Courts: The Practice of the Sofia Sheriat Court, Seventeenth Century', *Islamic Law and Society*, 4/1 (1997), 37–69; Sophia Laiou, 'Christian Women in an Ottoman World: Interpersonal and Family Cases Brought Before the Shari'a Courts During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. (Cases Involving the Greek Community)', in Amila Buturović and Irvin C. Schick (ed.), *Women in the Ottoman Balkans. Gender, Culture and History* (London: 2007), 243–271; Fariba Zarinebaf, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul 1700–1800* (Berkeley: 2010).
- 65 Rossitsa Gradeva, 'On Zimmis and their Church Buildings: Four Cases from Rumeli', in Eugenia Kermeli and Oktay Özel (eds.), *The Ottoman Empire: Myths, Realities and 'Black Holes'. Contributions in Honour of Colin Imber* (Istanbul: 2006), 203–237.
- 66 Regarding foreigners' period of residence in the Ottoman Empire, see Maurits H. van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System: Qadis, Consuls and Beratlis in the 18th Century* (Leiden: 2005), 30–31.

'a *müste'min* is not a foreigner like others'; the status involved rights, but also obligations.⁶⁷ Analysing the lawsuits opened by *müste'min* and judged by the Ottoman courts of justice, Dumas notes the importance of embassies and treaties (capitulations) in regulating the status of foreigners in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁸ Among the rights of the *müste'min*, the most important concerned exemption from the tax known as *cizye*. After this period, foreigners in the Empire could theoretically be assimilated to the category of *zimmi*, and paid *cizye*, in addition to the taxes paid by Muslims. On the other hand, they were exempt from military service, and they had the right to appeal to Muslim courts of justice and the right to practise their own religion freely.⁶⁹ The status of foreigners was much more complex, and included, on the one hand, 'a remarkable, and maybe unique, degree of openness and permeability to aliens,' and on the other, 'a policy of degrading hospitality.'⁷⁰ Furthermore, starting in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire underwent a series of social and political transformations that enabled the rise of local elites among its non-Muslim subjects. Recent research has shown that southeast European elites profited from the changes in the Empire, collaborating with the Ottoman elites, with whom, indeed, they had much in common: as Antonis Anastasopoulos puts it, they 'shared certain basic common experience and values.'⁷¹

As I shall show in this study, the elites of Moldavia and Wallachia also adapted to the institutional and political changes, preferring to interact with the imperial structures in order not to be left outside the political and (most importantly) economic game.

The transition from foreign subject to princely subject involved fiscal, juridical, and social stages. The Phanariots encouraged the settlement of foreign merchants and skilled craftsmen, especially in urban centres, for their contribution to the prosperity of their host country, but made their status conditional on residence and payment of taxes. A decree issued by Prince Alexandru

67 Juliette Dumas, '*Müste'min* Dealing with the Ottoman Justice: Role and Strategy of the Ambassador', *Oriente Moderno*, 93 (2013), 480.

68 Dumas, '*Müste'min* Dealing with the Ottoman Justice', 477–494.

69 Viorel Panaite, 'Being a Western Merchant in the Ottoman Mediterranean', in Deyfi Kenan (ed.), *Isam Papers. Ottoman Thought, Ethics, Law, Philosophy-Kalam* (Istanbul: 2013), 91–136.

70 Edhem Eldem, 'Foreigners on the Threshold of Felicity: The Reception of Foreigners in Ottoman Istanbul' in Donatella Calabi and Stephan Christensen (eds.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe, II. Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: 2007), 119.

71 Antonis Anastasopoulos, 'Introduction', in Antonis Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire* (Rethymno: 2005), xvi.

Ipsilanti (1774–1782) shows that foreign merchants who wanted to keep shops and sell retail were required ‘to settle here, to accept their taxation’ (*să se așeze aici, să-și ia dajdia*), in other words, to establish permanent residence in Wallachia and to pay their share of taxes.⁷² A similar practice can be seen across the Carpathians in the lands of the Habsburg Monarchy. For example, by a decree of 1741, Empress Maria Theresa ruled that Ottoman subjects might receive the right to conduct their business affairs without restrictions of any kind only if they brought their families with them to Hungary. Then in 1769, she conditioned the trading activity of Ottoman subjects on permanent residence and an oath of subjecthood to the empress.⁷³ To encourage them to settle in the territories of the crown and to contribute to the development of their new ‘homeland’, she issued the Act of Naturalization in 1774, followed in 1781 by the Edict of Tolerance, which contributed to the settlement and integration in local society of the Balkan Orthodox population.⁷⁴ These measures offered the Greeks an opportunity to receive civil rights and to become members of the economic elite.⁷⁵

How did all these foreigners put down roots in the host country? What was involved in passing from the status of foreign subject to that of princely, and implicitly Ottoman, subject? How did all these foreigners influence material culture and consumption in southeastern Europe? In the following chapters, I shall try to analyse the status of subject as it is captured in the archive documents. It is a question that has only tangentially received the attention of researchers.⁷⁶ Somewhat more attention has been devoted to the ‘Muslims’ or ‘Ottoman subjects’ of Muslim faith who settled or tried to settle in the Principalities.⁷⁷

72 V.A. Urechia, *Istoria românilor* (Bucharest: 1891), I, 97–98, 12 July 1776.

73 Olga Katsiardi-Hering and Ikaros Madouvalos, ‘The Tolerant Policy of the Habsburg Authorities Towards the Orthodox People from Southeastern Europe and the Formation of National Identities (18th–early 19th Century)’, *Balkan Studies*, 49 (2014), 25–26; Suraiya Faroqi, *Artisans of Empire. Crafts and Craftspeople Under the Ottomans* (London: 2009), 144–145.

74 Katsardi-Hering and Madouvalos, ‘The Tolerant Policy of the Habsburg Authorities’, 26.

75 Katsardi-Hering and Madouvalos, ‘The Tolerant Policy of the Habsburg Authorities’, 26.

76 Jean D. Condurachi, *Câteva cuvinte asupra condiției juridice a străinilor în Moldova și Țara Românească până la Regulamentul Organic* (Bucharest: 1918); Cotovanu, *Migrations et mutations identitaires*.

77 Mustafa A. Mehmet, ‘Despre dreptul de proprietate a supușilor otomani în Moldova și Țara Românească în secolele XV–XVIII’, *Cercetări istorice*, III (1972), 65–81; Maria Matilda Alexandrescu-Dersca, ‘Despre regimul supușilor otomani în Țara Românească în veacul al XVIII-lea’, *Studii. Revista de istorie*, XIV/1 (1969), 661–672; Maria Matilda Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, ‘Sur le mariage entre les Turcs ottomans et les Roumains (XV^e–XIX^e siècles)’, *Recherches sur l’histoire des institutions et du droit*, 6 (1981), 15–17; Maria Matilda

In what conditions could a foreigner become a local subject, following the stages of social-juridical integration? Firstly, we should not automatically assume that a foreigner operating in the Principalities would want to settle in the host country. They might pursue their activity there while still depending on another sovereign power, might speak another language than Romanian (or Greek), might adhere to a faith other than Orthodoxy, and might still consider themselves to belong to a foreign space. Permanent residence and payment of taxation were the criteria that transformed a foreigner into a subject, binding them to their country of adoption.⁷⁸ But as I have mentioned, the process of integration and assimilation into the fabric of the host country depended very much on the process of identification undergone by every foreign candidate for subject status. The diversity in the socio-economic standing of the foreigners, as it emerges from the sources, points to the inequality in their means of access to integration in society. It seems to have been easier for a favourite arriving in the retinue of a prince to work his way into the princely council by way of administrative office, to marry the daughter of a wealthy boyar, and then to be recognized as himself a member of the boyar class. He included in his process of identification the prestige of the prince, who could ease his path towards integration.

A Greek shoemaker, on the other hand, arriving in Bucharest from Salonica, had first to rent a workshop and stall, and to win the trust of neighbours, clients, and residents of the district in order to find himself a wife chosen from among his business associates.⁷⁹ Once married, he could buy a stall, in addition to what came in his bride's dowry, enter the shoemaker's guild, win the right to sell retail, and start to build a family, a lineage, a house, a fortune, an inheritance.⁸⁰ It should be added that the wealth of the foreign merchant who had become a subject was protected. The prince had no right to confiscate the

Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, 'Sur le régime des ressortissants ottomans en Moldavie (1711–1829)', in Cristina Feneşan (ed.), *Seldjoukides, Ottomans et l'Espace Roumain* (Istanbul: 2006), 439–480.

78 Cotovanu, *Migrations et mutations identitaires*, 428. Lidia Cotovanu emphasizes that it was fiscal domicile that transformed a foreigner into a local subject, and Orthodox faith that gave him access to juridical structures, while the linguistic aspect was less important. *Ibid.*, 440.

79 There was no clear delimitation between master craftsman and trader. For example, the shoemaker (*cavaş*) made shoes, but also sold them.

80 Also in the eighteenth century, there was competition between 'native' merchants (or those already settled with fiscal residence in Moldavia or Wallachia) and foreign merchants regarding respect for the commercial rights. See the document of 1 January 1731, Iaşi, issued by Prince Grigore Ghica, in which he tries to resolve a dispute between the two camps, giving the 'foreign' merchants the right to sell goods retail in exchange for a

goods of a foreigner who died without heirs in the host country.⁸¹ This is made clear in a document issued by Prince Constantin Ipsilanti (1802–1806): ‘when it should happen that some Christian merchant dies without true heirs, let no one be free to take and sell his things and his merchandise, but let the *staroste* [master of the guild] with guardians go to put a seal on the goods and whatever there is, and when it is set in a place under seal, make known to the prince all that is left, and let it remain thus until the masters come who are entitled to take those things.’⁸²

All the same, the process was not as simple as it might appear. To be recognized as a member of the class of great boyars, a candidate had to be Orthodox (though there were exceptions); to hold considerable wealth; to speak Romanian (or ‘Moldavian’) and Greek; to acquire boyar etiquette and luxury garments; and to adhere to the daily sociability specific to the rank and position. When they analysed the status of boyar in occupied Oltenia (1718–1739), the Austrians came up against the stubbornness of the boyars, who linked their privileges and their entitlement to posts in the administrative apparatus to the holding of extensive properties and the antiquity of their lineages. When the Austrians asserted that there were no nobles in Wallachia, and wrote that ‘[boyar] means a person who himself occupies one of the most important offices at court and whose ancestors have been in uninterrupted possession of such court positions,’ the boyar counsellors of the Austrian administration proposed a classification, dividing the boyar class into three levels and insisting that those included in the first ‘are of superior origin, of lineage that is old and always in the most prominent offices.’⁸³ The same idea was reiterated in the reforms of Prince Constantin Mavrocordat (1735–1741), who linked boyar status to administrative office, in spite of the opposition of the boyars themselves.⁸⁴ In this context, displaying a luxurious lifestyle became a sign of social

monthly payment. Ioan Caproșu (ed.), *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași. Acte interne* (Iași: 2001), vol. IV, 81–82.

81 By way of comparison, in the Ottoman Empire, the property of foreigners was protected under the capitulations. If a foreigner died, his property reverted to the heirs named in his testament; in the absence of a testament, it was inventoried and entrusted to the relevant consul or ambassador to be kept until the heirs appeared. Edhem Eldem, *Capitulations and Western Trade. Western Trade in the Ottoman Empire: Questions, Issues and Sources*, in Suraiya Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 3, *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (Cambridge: 2006), 283–335.

82 BAR, MS 242, f. 15–16, 1 June 1803.

83 Șerban Papacostea, *Oltenia sub stăpânirea austriacă (1718–1739)* (Bucharest: 1998), 145–146.

84 Paul Cernovodeanu, ‘Mobility and Traditionalism: The Evolution of the Boyar Class in the Romanian Principalities in the 18th Century’, *Revue des Etudes Sud-est Européennes*, 24/3 (1986), 249–257.

distinction for a society that had not known noble titles or ranks. The elegance and etiquette introduced by the Phanariots constituted an important reference point, and the ruling elite entered a competition of social representation, investing its fortunes in clothes, banquets, carriages, and jewellery. The display of social status through fashion and manners was part of the process of differentiation and social distinction.⁸⁵

The shoemaker, hat-maker, and petty trader could merge into the mass of the urban population; as a rule, their inclusion in the fiscal register was at their own request as they attempted to put down roots. The political authorities in Moldavia and Wallachia had neither the financial nor the human resources to supervise the mobility of the population. Most of the time, they relied on the role of the local community in exerting social control. Craftsmen and merchants joined guilds according to their occupations, and were under the control of the master of the guild.⁸⁶ The master supervised not only the training of journeymen, but also collective fiscal responsibility, by collecting individual contributions.⁸⁷ They all tacitly followed a path towards assimilation and aggregation in the local structures, by way of the stages already mentioned above, which applied and can be traced in other European towns too: practising a trade, entering a guild, marrying into an honourable family.⁸⁸

Foreign women appear periodically in the archival sources, but information about their integration and assimilation is scanty. By examining the granting of citizenship rights to women in medieval and modern Italy, Simona Feci has shown that they managed to combine the advantages of their place of origin with those of their new residence, maintaining their material and symbolic

85 For the Romanian boyar class and the construction of identity through luxury and fashion, see Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 'Shawls and Sable Furs: How to be a Boyar under the Phanariot Regime (1710–1821)', *European Historical Yearbook*, 20 (2019), 137–158.

86 On the organization of guilds and the importance of religion in their structuring, see Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Understanding Ottoman Guilds', in Suraiya Faroqhi and Randi Deguilhem (eds.), *Crafts and Craftsmen of the Middle East. Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean* (London: 2005), 3–40.

87 On the way in which Greek merchants were integrated in Moldavia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see also Laurențiu Rădvan, 'Foreign Merchants in Iași (17th–18th centuries)', *Istros*, 18 (2012), 453–480; Eugen Pavelescu, *Economia breslelor în Moldova* (Bucharest: 1939).

88 Wolfgang Kaiser, 'Extranéités urbaines à l'époque moderne', in Pilar González-Bernaldo, Manuela Martini and Marie-Louis Pelus-Kaplan (eds.), *Etrangers et sociétés. Représentations, coexistences, interactions dans la longue durée* (Rennes: 2008), 78; Roberto Zaugg, 'Entre diplomatie et pratique judiciaires: la condition des étrangers sous l'Ancien Régime napoléonien', *Revue d'histoire maritime*, 17 (2014), 322–323.

interests.⁸⁹ In Moldavia and Wallachia, we cannot speak of citizenship as such, as the notion did not yet exist. However, the documents refer to the ‘right of the city’, in other words, the right of residence in the city, which often came with a series of fiscal privileges.⁹⁰ This was granted directly by the prince, after a thorough investigation of the social and economic situation of the applicant. The temporary character of the prince’s rule meant that the privileges he granted ended with his reign, and a new application had to be made to the next ruler in order to preserve or extend them. Being excluded from political life, women were not entitled to hold office in the administrative or judicial apparatus. Many of them did not practise a profession and were not involved in commerce (unless through taking over the business of a deceased husband), with the result that they appear in the historical sources mainly as wives, daughters, or mothers. As such, women played a role behind the scenes, directing the political game from the shadows.⁹¹ As the number of surviving documents increases, so women become more present in the archives, and their role in constructing trans-border networks becomes more and more evident. From the second half of the eighteenth century, and even more in the nineteenth, women seem to make up for their earlier invisibility, contributing by their presence in correspondence and in family archives to the tracing of a material culture that was necessary for the upholding of social distinctions and specific to the process of identification. Women thus emerge from the shadows of anonymity, expressing and displaying themselves, with a visibility that is a boon to the researcher. Widows and spinsters help us to understand how women managed to integrate themselves in the social fabric and to face the challenges posed by their new residence with its local judicial and fiscal systems. Emerging from the protective framework of the family, these women had to struggle alone for day-to-day survival and to maintain the social position that they owed to their descent and their education.

89 Simona Feci, ‘Mobilité, droits et citoyenneté des femmes dans l’Italie médiévale et moderne’, *Clio. Histoire des Femmes*, 43 (2016), 47.

90 See the case of the Canela sisters, who came from Istanbul to Bucharest, where they built a stone house for themselves in the Șerban Vodă district. Prince Grigore Ghica granted them the right of residence in the city, with a series of fiscal privileges and exemptions. ANIC, Mitropolia Țării Românești, CDLXXIII/1, 27 November 1748.

91 See in this connection Leslie Peirce, *Beyond Harem Walls: Ottoman Royal Women and the Exercise of Power*, in Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby (eds.), *Gendered Domains. Rethinking Public and Private in Women’s History* (Ithaca, NY – London: 1992), 40–55.

Sudiți and Protégés

After the peace of Küçük Kaynarca and the establishment of consulates in Iași and Bucharest, a new social and juridical category appeared: the *sudiți*. The foreign powers opened these consulates for the purpose of protecting their subjects' business activities on the territory of the Principalities. Extending the provisions of the capitulations to include their subjects, Russia, the Habsburg Empire, Prussia, France, and Britain created the category of *sudiți* (from the Italian *sudditi*): foreigners who enjoyed privileges and protection.⁹² The economic, juridical, and personal privileges held by these individuals in comparison with the general population led to the 'procurement' of this status by various means, and the development of a sub-category of protégés. Félix Colson, secretary of the French consulate in Bucharest, and later secretary to the boyar Ion Câmpineanu, makes clear the boundary between the two groups: 'The consuls have subordinates of two classes; *immediate* subjects, that is, subjects of the Empire that they represent, or else protégés, that is, subject to the jurisdiction and coming under the protection of the consul, by virtue of treaties or abusively.'⁹³ In other words, *sudiți* were foreigners living on the territory of the Principalities and under the protection of their respective consulates, while protégés were locals (Moldavians, Wallachians, Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians) or foreigners who did not have consular representation who put themselves under the protection of a foreign consulate operating in the Principalities. Under pressure from the consulates, a Chancellery for Foreign Affairs [*Logofeția Pricinilor Străine*] was set up in each of the two Principalities, with responsibilities including resolving litigation of 'sudit with *raia* [*re'aya*]' or 'sudit with *sudit* of different protection.'⁹⁴ Exactly when these departments were founded in Wallachia and Moldavia remains unclear. For Wallachia there is as yet no study on the subject, but if we are to believe the disposition given by Prince Ioan Caragea, the Chancellery for Foreign Affairs in that principality was in operation from the end of November 1812.⁹⁵ In the case of Moldavia,

92 Stela Mărieș, *Supușii străini din Moldova în perioada 1781–1862* (Iași: 1985).

93 'Les consuls ont des subordonnés de deux classes; *sujets* immédiats, c'est-à-dire sujets de l'Empire qu'ils représentent, ou bien, *protégés*, c'est-à-dire soumis à la juridiction et relevent de la protection du consul, en vertu des traités ou par abus.' Félix Colson, *De l'Etat présent et de l'avenir des Principautés de Moldavie et de la Valachie, suivi des traits de la Turquie avec les puissances européennes* (Paris: 1839), 249.

94 ANIC, Fond Manuscrite, Ms. 1073, f. 1, 30 November 1812.

95 ANIC, Fond Manuscrite, Ms. 1073, f. 2, 29 November 1812; See also Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă, 'Logofeția Pricinilor Străine din Țara Românească', *Revista Arhivelor*, LXVIII, 3 (1991), 367–379.

Stela Mărieș maintains that the Chancellery was founded sometime between 1777 and 1780.⁹⁶

The privileges enjoyed by protégés led to an arbitrary growth of this category, membership of which allowed one to escape the provisions of Wallachian, Moldavian, and Ottoman fiscal legislation. Both the Porte and the rulers of the Principalities tried to stop, or at least to control the chaotic expansion of the number of protégés, but with little success until the second half of the nineteenth century, with the passing of laws regarding naturalization and citizenship.⁹⁷

Foreigners, whether Phanariots, merchants, artisans, doctors, or teachers were the agents of change in southeastern Europe. Transiting empires, they made possible the circulation not only of goods but also of knowledge, and became a model for the communities that hosted them temporarily or permanently.

Content and Structure

Each chapter will focus on a particular theme, through the intermediary of one central figure. The first chapter will deal with all those ‘foreigners at the princely court’. What did it mean to be in the service of a Phanariot prince, a bey, or a pasha? The office of princely secretary (*secretar domnesc*) has received very little attention in Romanian historiography in particular and Balkan historiography in general. There are, of course, numerous individual biographical-documentary studies, but few prosopographic analyses such as I propose in this book. A prince or a pasha of any importance would be surrounded by doctors, teachers, secretaries, and diplomatic agents from various corners of Europe. French, German, Italian, or Ragusan, these individuals came to occupy an important position in the entourage of a ruler by virtue of their knowledge. The Phanariot rulers managed to gather around themselves an intellectual elite that they transported from the banks of the Bosphorus (Istanbul) to those of the Dâmbovița (Bucharest) or the Copou Hill (Iași), some

96 Mărieș, *Supușii străini din Moldova*, 40.

97 For the Ottoman Empire, see Ariel Salzmänn, ‘Citizens in Search of the State: the Limits of Political Participation in the Late Ottoman Empire’, in Michael Hanagan and Charles Tilly (eds.), *Extending Citizenship, Reconfiguring States* (New York: 1999), 37–66; Frank Castiglione, ‘“Levantine” Dragomans in Nineteenth Century Istanbul: The Pisanis, the British, and Issues of Subjecthood’, *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, XLIV (2014), 169–195; Will Hanley, ‘What Ottoman Nationality Was and Was Not’, *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 3, 2 (2016), 277–298.

of whom subsequently followed them into their political exile, while others were scattered among other European courts or turned towards more financially advantageous positions. The creation of such a structure would have been impossible without the bureaucratic reorganization of the Ottoman Empire and the development of a Foreign Affairs service.⁹⁸

From the Italian Anton Maria del Chiaro to the Ragusan Stefan Raicevich, from the Frenchman François-Thomas Linchou to his compatriot Georges Mille, all these figures fulfilled essential functions in the service of their masters and left rich accounts of the society of the time. Some of them, however, went further and pursued strategies of integration in the local community, trying to settle, to establish a home, a family, to insert themselves into local networks, investing in social relations and the acquisition of the ranks or insignia necessary for acceptance. The case of François-Thomas Linchou is a special one, through which I shall attempt to decipher the social and political mechanism used in the construction of a multiple belongings and allegiances. By way of Thomas-François Linchou, secretary to Prince Constantin Racoviță, I shall examine the strategies that could be applied to insert oneself into the local community, and how this community reacted towards a ‘foreigner’.⁹⁹

In the second part, I shall again traverse and transgress imperial borders to follow the construction of the career of a high Ottoman dignitary. The chapter on Ianache Văcărescu seeks to elucidate the career-building and status-building strategies of a man who achieved high office. I shall analyse the important role played by material culture in affirming and maintaining such a status. At the same time, his example helps us to understand the struggles of such high office-holders to survive and prosper in a ‘foreign’ environment with different social norms and codes. Also relevant in this connection are the letters of exiles in Braşov in 1769–1772, during the Russian–Ottoman War.¹⁰⁰

With the third part, we descend to the ranks of the common people and of the numerous Orthodox Christian ‘refugees’ seeking a secure social position in the Principalities. Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, and Russians travelled through the Principalities in the course of their professional and commercial activity.

98 See Carter V. Findley, ‘The Legacy of Tradition to Reform: The Origins of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 1 (1970), 224–357; Virginia Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700–1783* (Leiden: 1995), 12–23.

99 A short version of this chapter was published under the title “‘Le Coquin Grec’ vs. ‘le Véritable François’: Being a foreigner in the Danubian Principalities in the Eighteenth Century”, in *Cromohs (Cyber Review of Modern Historiography)*, 21/2017–2018, 91–105.

100 A short version of this chapter was published under the title: ‘A Wallachian Boyar in Emperor Joseph II’s Court’, in *Journal of Early Modern History*, 2019, 341–362.

Artisans and merchants, these ‘Greeks’, as they were generically named on account of their Orthodox faith, preferred to develop their businesses on the imperial peripheries, gradually becoming indispensable suppliers of goods for the local elites. Some of them ventured into large-scale trans-imperial commerce, linking Vienna and Leipzig with Istanbul; others were content with small cross-border trade, settled in centrally-placed towns, and invested in the education and professional training of a second generation. Such is the case of Dimitrie Foti Merișescu, Epirot through his father, Wallachian by birth (born in Bucharest), Moldavian in his professional trajectory. He will help us to understand the role of a trans-imperial network in advancement and social ascent.¹⁰¹

With old age approaching, hounded by her own children in interminable court cases, wearied by a difficult marriage, Elena Hartulari (née Plitos) decided to write her memoirs, setting down on paper the unhappy course of her life. Her husband’s career, the ranks he obtained, and the wealth he accumulated are presented and explained through the prism of the major contribution she brought due to her belonging to a patronage network. Apart from the fact that Elena Hartulari is the only woman in Moldavia or Wallachia to have left such a detailed account of her everyday life, her journal is also the only one that gives a detailed description of the social and political networks that were active in Moldavia in the early nineteenth century. Assiduously contested by her own children as the legitimate possessor of an immense fortune accumulated by her husband, their father, Elena Hartulari resorted to this explanatory and justificatory action, in which she underlines the role played by women in the social ascent of men. My analysis is helped by the discovery in the Archives in Iași of an immense quantity of hitherto unpublished documents concerning Iorgu Hartulari’s business dealings and posts. A first-generation Greek, Iorgu knew how to manoeuvre his father-in-law’s network in order to enter the entourage of Prince Mihail Sturdza. As the prince’s right-hand man, Iorgu took over the business of leasing monastic estates (both dedicated and non-dedicated), and succeeded in making himself indispensable. The surviving documents reflect very well the ability of this office-holder, who interacted with various imperial officials (Stephanos Vogorides, the bey of Samos, the patriarch of Constantinople, the patriarch of Jerusalem, Kapudan-pasha Mehmed, Prince Mihail Sturdza, boyars and wealthy merchants) to build an immense fortune entirely from speculation.

101 A short version of this chapter was published under the title: ‘I believe in stories: The journey of a young boyar from Bucharest to Istanbul in the early nineteenth century’, in *Turcica*, (50) 2019, 285–317. All of the three chapters introduced in this book have been revised and enriched with new information and documents.