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Roma camp, Transylvania, approx. 1875-1910. Photo by Leopold Adler (1848-1924).
Ethnological Archive of the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant, Inventory no. AL-0482.

A. Raffet, "Famille tzigane (Valachie)," published in: Anatole de Demidoff, *Voyage dans la Russie Méridionale et la Crimée par la Hongrie, la Valachie et la Moldavie*, exécuté en 1837 par Mr Anatole Demidoff, Ernest Bourdin et Comp., éditeurs, Paris, 1840.



Famille tzigane (Valachie).

Marriage and Family Life of Romanians and Roma: Aspects Reflected in the First Two Modern Romanian Censuses

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ABSTRACT

This research constitutes a historical and micro-demographic approach to the subject of marriage and family. Despite the expected uniformity of many social behaviors or demographic patterns characteristic of a preindustrial society as the one studied here, the Romanian and Roma communities under scrutiny appear to still have been marked by important differences in terms of urban/rural residence, employment, residential status, social status, freedom or lack thereof, differences that had the potential to influence close ties between individuals. Social stratification in urban Wallachia offers the best examples of how domestic service, employment, and slavery can be framed from the point of view of family and private life. Even so, since the field of micro-demographics is relatively new in Romanian historiography, the goals of this paper are not centered on a particular research question. Instead, they are largely exploratory and overlap with those of my unpublished doctoral thesis. I did, however, incorporate the aforementioned contextual elements into the analysis, but as pathways of interpretation, and not starting points of discussion. I used nineteenth-century population lists to glean as much as I could on marriage, widowhood, the presence of children, and overall belonging to a nuclear family. Next, I translated the data thus gleaned into different indicators, which I then applied in analyzing different population groups, with a focus on Romanians and Roma. The sources I used are the first two general modern censuses in Romanian history, which were conducted in 1838 in Wallachia and 1859 in Moldavia.

KEYWORDS

Wallachia, Moldavia, Romanian censuses, slavery, household.



A historical demography approach: advantages and pitfalls

In this study, I rely on census information to determine differences between different population groups in terms of marriage and family life. More precisely, I inquire if specific behaviors varied according to occupation, social status, or residential status. In this article I focus on marriage and the number of children. Given the scarcity of similar studies and the lack of research on family and household demography for this particular space and period, this research was designed as an

exploratory effort. In my endeavor, I did not start from a single or a particular question, other than those that would have anyway arisen on the exploratory path taken. This path includes the following focus points:

1. *Timing of first marriage*: Stages such as late adolescence and early adulthood are indicative of the timing of the first marriage. If a population group experienced early marriage more often than others, it would translate into a higher share of young(er) individuals ages 15–19 and 20–24. Similarly, lower shares of widowhood at much older ages can be interpreted as higher rates of remarriage.



2. *Widowhood*: How did it vary across ethnicity?

3. *Number of children*: Like remarriage, it fluctuated according to birth and death rates, not to mention remarriages. At the same time, this indicator correlates well with others, such as the share of married people. In this respect the two can influence each other, if no outside variables interfere randomly. For example, early or premature marriage should show a lower number of children in their teens.

Marriage and family life were topics that made their way into Romanian historiography especially after 1990. Social history written from the perspective of grand historical themes such as class struggle and modernization gradually lost attractiveness and gave way to micro-history. The works of Violeta Barbu, Gheorghe Lazăr, Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Florina Constantin, Nicoleta Roman—to name just a few—reflect a strong influence of the *Annales* school. Instead of subordinating social relations to strict paradigms related to economics and class, historians turned to conceptualizing and analyzing close ties between individuals and the norms that regulated them. Researching legal and administrative records gave more insight into marriage, divorce, family and marital strategies, childhood, and wealth transmission. In particular, with respect to Roma and their history of slavery in the Romanian Principalities, the paradigm shift did not take place, since a robust social history of slavery is yet to emerge. A more in-depth history of marriage and family life exists primarily for middle and upper classes. Romanian historians were firstly preoccupied with the princes and the nobles. Several themes of discussion were developed around the geopolitics of matrimonial ties between governing houses, or political and social goals of marriage between noble families. Marriage was not only an instrument to forge political

alliances, but also economic ones, in order to accede to the nobility or to maintain one's status and save the family pride and wealth (Lazăr 2006; Iancu 2004; Atanasiu 2015; Cernovodeanu 1997). For the lower classes, there are the more in-depth studies of Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu (2011), focusing on the late eighteenth century.

For slaves, given the laws and practices described below, marriage was especially problematic (as compared to free people). Practically, the slaves experienced an additional layer of regulations, consisting of interdictions. The extent to which these applied and shaped social realities and family life is debatable. General opinion about slavery, among both academics and the wider public, often resorts to extreme judgments in evaluating the effects of slavery, i.e., it either minimizes or maximizes the impact of slavery. Legal constraints—including the owner's will and authority—are either seen as having been brutally enforced or are disregarded as meaningless, accompanied by examples of slaves escaping the grasps of their owners. However, such discussions take place in the absence of a social history of slavery. Historical demography provides an alternative to the study of the abovementioned topics. It, too, contributes to our knowledge of the past, to the point of establishing new paradigms, theories and concepts, heavily used by non-demographers alike. In the West, studying kin and family ties, life inside the household, as well as the impact of industrialization and urbanization, can hardly be imagined without the contributions of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, of its collaborators and followers across the world, or of different other schools of quantitative history. Needless to say, this approach experiences its own flaws and setbacks, from source quality to methods and even the relevance of some of its results. Possibly the most frequent criticism is that historical demography lacks context and interpretation. Or, to put it more bluntly, it offers numbers, not words.

To some extent, this criticism is justified, but it still fails to see these results as more than mere numbers, i.e., as historical facts. And not only facts, but facts that would otherwise be harder to obtain, and that come in a form that allows for comparisons between epochs and spaces. We don't need advanced statistics to assume that domestic service was practiced in towns across modern or pre-modern Europe, or that in Eastern European countries, ages at marriage were lower than in most Western countries. However, if we want to engage in something more relevant, such as studying the extent and nature of domestic service, as well as variations in ages at marriage, historical demography provides the best pathways. Ultimately, what historical demography can offer us, given the right sources, methods, precautions, or adjustments, is the overall impact of multiple factors on a population group. And this should be relevant enough in its own to justify its undertaking as an independent research field.

Further reconstructing context and the interplay between these factors can be taken as separate, without necessarily placing it in the area of non-serial or non-statistical sources. Some demographic sources already contain fundamental contextual elements that should be prioritized over those from other materials. A census form provides us not only with the names and marital status of individuals, but also with their age, wealth, occupation and position inside the household. Given the richness of this material, one has to consider the opportunity of exploring interpretations for statistical results by formulating hypotheses and testing them using the same source, before adopting a broader framework. This approach could be even more effectively applied to Romanian history studies, where additional resources can be very scarce or partially incompatible. There are no substantial thematic inventories of Romanian archival sources, sources published in extenso, whereas databases are only now emerging.

As a result, my attempt here to glean as much data as I could from old Romanian censuses and to provide a detailed analysis that follows social history topics are both very new approaches in the Romanian landscape. After a promising start made by Ecaterina Negruți in the 1980s (see especially her 1984 book *Satul moldovenesc în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX -lea: contribuții demografice* [The Moldavian village in the first half of the nineteenth century: demographic aspects]), family and household demography of the former principalities failed to take off. Subsequent contributions were partial and scarce, among them those of historians Georgeta Filitti, Spiridon Cristocea, or Alexandru Vlăduțeanu. Unfortunately, they were far from matching the progress made in Western academia, and even the work of other Eastern European historians, such as Maria Todorova and Rudolf Andorka, not to mention the works of the Cluj-Napoca historical demography school (for Transylvania). The field covering slavery is even more underdeveloped, but, in both cases, new historiographic trends are emerging. A sample of the 1838 Wallachian census was included in the MOSAIC database (Mosaic Project 2015), and more recently, in 2018, an effort to study the Roma using the same source (and others) emerged as an international project led by David Gaunt.¹ Hopefully, upcoming years will see the writing of a new chapter in the historical family demography of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Similarly to most nineteenth-century European countries, there are three main types of demographic sources covering Romania and the two principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia: population lists, vital records, and aggregates of information extracted from the two.² The first two categories are usually more fruitful, as they contain information at the individual level, but the last category should not be disregarded either. The advantage of using these sources is that they enable the

1) "Mapping the Roma communities in 19th century Romania," financed by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (Östersjöstiftelsen), hosted by Södertörn University, Stockholm.

2) Such as published or unpublished census results or population movement statistics.

measuring of the extent of specific behaviors, like the timing of marriage, or the rates of remarriage, widowhood, and celibacy. Interpreting specific results based solely on demographic results can be problematic. On the one hand, one of the main criticisms about historical demography studies is that they lack interpretation and context. On the other hand, this stance fails to take into account that it is often difficult to contextualize statistical analysis because of the nature of historical sources in general, not just that of censuses and lists of events. The results of statistical analysis can be considered the outcome of an entire set of factors, without revealing much about the weight of each factor.

This study draws on population lists compiled as census forms. They are classified as cross-sectional demographic sources, meaning that they record the entire population at a single moment in the span of history. I do not have access to information about the individuals before or after the moment of census taking—in contradistinction with sources like vital records, which cover the entire lifetime of an individual, and are thus referred to as longitudinal sources. It is evident that in the field of historical demography, the latter are better suited to the studying of marriage, as illustrated by the research work on Transylvania done by Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Bolovan, Luminița Dumănescu, Crinela Holom, Daniela Deteșan, and Oana Sorescu-Iudean. Still, censuses should not be ignored. By looking at the characteristics of individuals by age, I can infer the extent to which specific stages of life were marked by specific statuses or patterns. The significant risks involved here are twofold. First, some behaviors can only be studied indirectly through proxy indicators. In our case, remarriages are the most apparent problem. I cannot measure the exact frequency of second marriages, but only infer if some groups remarried more often than others, by comparing the levels of widowhood. The more numerous the widows, the less

frequent were remarriages, and vice versa. A second risk is that important variables are invisible in the census. So, I cannot measure their impact, not even on a proxy level. Such is the case for death rates, birth rates, and mobility (both spatial and social). Widowhood is again connected with death rates, and so is the number of children and the age pyramid of the population. Often, the historical demographer is left guessing the impact of invisible demographics.

At their best, censuses can undoubtedly be used to show age-specific demographic patterns. These patterns should be taken either as indirect proof or as running hypothesis for social practices, rather than as a direct expression of them, as I will exemplify.



Historical context

The context under investigation refers to Moldavia and Wallachia, the two Romanian principalities that, in 1859, united to form Romania. Formally under Ottoman rule, the two countries often found themselves the battleground of the neighboring powers or used as tokens of negotiation. However, nineteenth-century attempts to maintain more balanced power relations in South-Eastern Europe led to international protection for the Romanian principalities, first from Russia (1829), then from Western European powers (after 1856). This paved the way not only for their union, but also for important legal and social reforms. Written law prevailed over customs. Civil codes had already been adopted in 1817 in Moldavia (Code of Calimach) and in 1818 in Wallachia (Code of Caradja), while other penal and commercial codes gradually replaced old edicts in the following decades. Parts of the older laws were used to regulate Church matters and family life, as explained in the next paragraphs. In 1831–2, under Russian supervision, the



first constitutional laws took effect, i.e., the Organic Regulations. At the same time, modern forms of administration were established, as well as new branches of government: healthcare, education, communication, statistics, alongside those already existing. It was also around this time that the first modern general censuses were conducted, the same ones that this paper uses. The first was commissioned in Wallachia at the end of 1837, with the population being recorded during that winter. It was followed by two censuses carried out in 1859, after the reform of the statistical bureaus. That year, as a result of the 1858 Paris Convention and of internal factors, the principalities were formally joined in a single country and continued to unify their institutions over the following years.

In the two principalities and throughout nineteenth-century Romania, marriage was governed by three authorities: Church law, secular law, and customs. Until 1865 the Church had the monopoly over officiating marriages and divorces, its decisions and ceremonies being recognized by secular authorities. This changed when the Government started recognizing only civil unions and separations, introduced by the newly adopted civil code and placed under the authority of multiple institutions. This paper covers the period of the pre-civil union decades of the nineteenth century. However, the interplay between different systems of norms should be carefully examined.

Church law established the fundamental principles of the act of marriage and the conditions that the individuals had to fulfill (both individually and as a couple) in order to get married. These principles were drawn from several sources. Since 1652, the code *Îndreptarea Legii* [Guide to the Law] was used in Wallachia both by Church and State in civil and penal matters. A similar code was being used in Moldavia since 1646. Both were inspired by, but not limited to, Byzantine Canon Law (Canons of the

Apostles and Ecumenical Councils). Since civil and penal codes gradually replaced most of their provisions by the nineteenth century, the Church still relied on these codes to govern family life, priesthood, and monasticism. Regarding marriage, the main principles that the Church enforced through its law and moral teachings were (Vintilă-Ghițulescu 2011: 127):

- a) discouragement of celibacy (except for monks);
- b) a generally low age at marriage, compared to that promoted in the Catholic world;
- c) a higher age of the husband than of the wife;
- d) interdiction to marry blood relatives (up to the seventh branch);
- e) interdiction to marry spiritual kin (between families tied by godparenthood);
- f) interdiction to marry individuals from other denominations;
- g) interdiction to engage in polygamy.

These principles lasted throughout the nineteenth century (after *Îndreptarea Legii* [Guide to the Law] was no longer in use), through sets of internal rules issued to priests and courts, sometimes complementing or overwriting the old ones, in the sense of establishing clearer bounds. The difficulty lies in clarifying what changed, when, and by what means, since there is no known chronology. In Wallachia, for instance, the old canons were compiled into a new code that was published in 1851 under the title *Manual de pravilă bisericească sau legiuiri trase din canoanele Sfinților Apostoli, ale Sfințelor Soboare și ale altor Sfinți Părinți* [Guide in ecclesiastic law, or laws originating in the Canons of the Holy Apostles, Holy Councils, and other Holy Fathers]. But, shortly after, the newly issued rules had to be amended, since, surprisingly, the new code did not cover all aspects regarding marriage. An early 1853 memorandum circulated among the priests



set out, in short, the following conditions for marriage³:

- a) Minimum age 20 for men and 14 for women;
- b) Consent from the parents or guardians;
- c) Good physical and mental health;
- d) Regular participation in communion and confession of the persons about to get married;
- e) Knowledge of a few prayers that were recited during the liturgy;
- f) A specific spousal age difference. The husband could be older than the wife, but not vice versa. Also, the difference between them should not exceed one third of the wife's age.

So, most of the principles applied in previous centuries were kept, with the addition of an increased minimum age and more attention towards the religious life of the parishioners.

Secular law was applied differently to free people than to slaves. For the general population, it contained provisions on various civil matters related to marriage, mainly endowment, inheritance, regulated through the civil codes. However, in the case of slaves, secular law accompanied Church law, enforcing a separate set of underlying requirements that had to be fulfilled in order for a marriage to take place. These were: the knowledge and consent of the slave owner and the interdiction to marry free people. If the marriage took place in breach of these obligations, then two main scenarios could unfold, according to the law. If they were both slaves, and if none of the newlyweds asked for permission from their owner, then the couple would be legally separated (with the decision pronounced by a Church court of justice). If only one owner knew about the marriage, then he had to compensate the other owner. If one of the newlyweds was a free man/woman, and if the owner knew and approved of the marriage, then the slave would also become free; if the owner did not approve, then the marriage would

be dissolved. All of these were designed to use marriage as a means of controlling the slaves and enforcing ownership over them.

The examined population fitted very well east of the "Hajnal line," a general divide made popular by John Hajnal (1965), used to describe Eastern versus Western European marriage behaviors. So, as my own population samples show, celibacy was very rare, and marriage occurred relatively early, with most individuals marrying between their mid-teens and mid-twenties. Still, the urban population had higher ages at marriage, as well as higher shares of widows and widowers. Widowhood and remarriage were connected. Men remarried more often than women, a trend that can be observed in other countries as well, and up to this day. The hypothesis for this might as well apply beyond Romania and the Romanian principalities, i.e., the widowers held a stronger economic position (as compared to the widows), in an age where men, in general, were more advantaged by social norms. Also, women might have been more reluctant to join with a new partner, since domestic abuse was not uncommon. For a woman, widowhood could have offered a window not only out of an abusive relationship, but also to economic opportunities. After the death of their husbands, women could more freely use their endowments and the overall resources of the household (Roman 2018).

The choices behind marriage and remarriage ultimately meant a negotiation between several factors: social norms, economic incentives, and economic pressures, not to mention the master's will (in the case of slaves). For both upper and lower classes, marriage meant fulfilling a social ideal—that of being part of a family. For lower classes especially, remarriage was sometimes motivated by economic pressure. Peter Laslett (1988) coined the term "nuclear hardship" to discuss the difficulties encountered by nuclear family households, in comparison with extended family or multiple family households. But

the discussion can just as well consider nuclear families *per se*, and not just within households. One-parent families would have had more difficulties than two-parent ones. Urban economy was less reliant on physical labor, thus workforce needs were lower. Unfortunately, I did not have the proper data to test these theories.

Households, however, can be good indicators of social status. Their structure varied according to labor intensity, employment of domestics or workers (together with apprentices and journeymen), social norms (like caretaking for the elderly), ownership over slaves; all of these factors interacting with the physical limits imposed by living premises. One factor that can be considered when dealing with household structure and formation is government intervention or influence. Different taxes or building regulations could have incentivized specific living arrangements—for example, sharing the same dwelling in order to pay less taxes. In Wallachia and Moldavia, this was not the case. The vast majority of obligations imposed upon the population (government taxes, local taxes, military conscription, labor duties), together with jurisdictions (like parishes or schools allocated per village) were regulated using the “family” as working unit, and not houses or households. Above all, people were subjected to (or exempted from) the same taxes regardless of their living arrangements. This is not to say that governments were not preoccupied with habitat and dwellings. A process of systematization of settlements began in 1832 in Wallachia, which coincided with a failed attempt to ban underground dwellings (*bordeie*). I would assume that, even if successful, these reforms did not affect the demographic aspect of the household, but only the location of houses (or their type, in the cases of underground dwellings). Later, in Romania, more significant regulations were put into place that affected living quarters: the 1864 land reform prevented the selling of land received from the

Government, while building regulations imposed a minimal size of houses. We can argue that both sets of measures favored the demographic complexity of households, but for the historical context of this research, I will assume that government regulations had a minimal impact, and living arrangements were shaped by social and economic relations instead.



Slavery and marriage among slaves: a complex landscape of norms

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the call for social reform was dominated by two issues. Firstly, the problem of landless peasants, which formed the majority of the rural population and had their obligations to the landlords gradually increased, while their rights reduced. Secondly, the dire material condition of the Roma and their status as slaves, which had lasted since the Middle Ages. This section will address and contextualize Roma slavery.

Let me begin by clarifying a confusion arising from the semantics of the category of slave. *Robie* was the Romanian term used to refer to the status of the Roma. When the word *sclavie* (neologism derived from *slave*) entered the vocabulary, the two terms became synonyms and were often used interchangeably, along with their derivatives. They all meant one thing: human property, as opposed to people that were considered free. For example, in the sources used here, the table header of the 1859 census form contains the word *dezrobiți* (“emancipated,” derived from *robi*), a column is titled “*cui proprietate au fostu*” (whose property they were). On one page the census taker noted “*foști sclavi a(i) răposatului Toaderi Balși, fostul caimăcanu*”⁴ (former slaves of Teodor Balș, former governor). The identical meaning of *sclavi* and *robi* was something that in the

4) Iași District Archives, Fond *Isprăvnicia Iași*, file 4972, 65 (village Schinoasa).

age was taken for granted, including among Wallachian and Moldavian abolitionists.

Nowadays, however, the word *robi* can stir up a bit of controversy. One argument was made that *robie* should be treated distinctly from *slavery*, since the Roma that were *robi* were treated differently than those who were slaves in different historical times (like in ancient Rome or in America). However, the assessment that Roma were not *slaves*, but *robi*, ignores the obvious fact that *rob* meant being human property under the law, which is the very definition of *slavery*. Admitting that in different historical contexts slaves had different sets of rights or obligations, or that the limits of the owner's authority varied, should prompt researchers to compare these variants and not to change fundamental terms or definitions. Using either term is fine in Romanian. Nevertheless, I am adamant that using *slave* in an English paper is preferable and should not constitute a topic of controversy for the aforementioned reason. Additionally, there is a conflation of *slaves* and *serfs*, and I was often asked: "Don't you mean *serfs* and not *slaves*?" Without a doubt, *slavery* is the right word to describe the experience of the Roma, as I explain in the next paragraph.

As used in this paper, the word *slave* should be taken in the literal sense. Individuals were considered property and were treated as such: priced, bought, sold, exchanged, donated, inherited, or disputed upon in courts of justice. Their workforce was due to serve their masters, meaning that they had to perform tasks without expecting compensation, or had to pay the owner for the simple fact that they were considered property. Some could perform independent occupations, outside the owner's household or economic establishment, but still had to pay a tribute as a slave (see the 1840 case of Gheorghe, the coachman, in Mateescu 2014a: 233). Their private lives depended much on the will of the owner, who decided or approved where the slaves lived, with whom, if they traveled, if they married. The power of the

owner, however, was not absolute. The law did not grant power over the slave's life, and customs usually established some codes of conduct: the owners were not to physically or sexually abuse their slaves, nor were they to split different nuclear families. They also had to ensure humane conditions for their slaves, including to clothe them. Breaching such rules happened often and did not result in punishments for owners. The full details of these norms and institutions are still blurry, as solid research on the legal aspects of slavery in the Romanian principalities is sorely needed. Many laws were not published, some were often forgotten by some authorities while applied by others, and some civil aspects were more or less left to customs. In some cases, there was not a singular and widely applied rule, not even under the customs. For example, when it came to the rights of slave owners over the slaves' possessions, civil institutions found themselves in conflicting stances.⁵

Since modernization brought reforms in education, justice, taxation, governing over slaves was complicated even for the authorities. Could slaves represent themselves in court? Could slaves benefit from public education and healthcare? Should slaves pay certain taxes?⁶ These were questions raised by contemporaries, but later overlooked by historians. A comprehensive and in-depth study on the full set of rights and obligations of slaves in this period (after 1830) does not exist. Ignoring a serious discussion on the matter is what caused the confusion around the first abolition law in Romanian history (see below). Only solid research on the system of norms that regulated slavery can clarify such matters, the kind that Florina Constantin (2018) produced in her detailed analysis of medieval Wallachia.

Slaves were usually categorized according to the different categories of owners. The "slaves of the nobility" were a category encompassing individuals owned by private individuals. Not all of their owners seem to have been of noble rank, but since

5) See the 1847 court case from Dolj County (NAR, *Fond Ministerul Justiției Civile*, file 258/1847).

6) Numerous cases can be found in archives of the former Ministries of Justice, of the Interior, and of the Office of Prisons, all held at the NAR.

most of them were, the term *boierești* (“of the nobility”) was used to describe these slaves, by contemporaries and historians alike. Institutions owned another type of slaves. The most important among these institutions was the Orthodox Church, owner of a large number of so-called “monastery slaves.” Yet, it is worth pointing out that the term was purely generic, since it was not only monasteries that owned slaves, but other religious institutions too—such as the Metropolitanate (in Bucharest) and its branch in Târgoviște, episcopates, as well as low-level establishments, such as hermitages. Lastly, the prince was another prominent slave owner, although the Crown slaves were fewer than the other two categories (for general population figures, see Achim 1998). After 1830 different laws abolished slavery for each category of slaves. In Moldavia, Crown and Church slaves were freed in 1844, and slaves of private owners in 1855. In Wallachia, the emancipation of Church slaves took place in 1847, while slaves of private owners had their freedom proclaimed in 1856.

Concerning the emancipation of Wallachian Crown slaves, different publications and unpublished sources referred to different laws or events. The emancipation is traced either to the Organic Regulations (1831), or the law allowing marriages between free people and former Crown slaves (1838), or the law of administrative reform of 1843, or the law that emancipated Church slaves in 1847, not to mention a supposed event that happened in 1837 (cited by foreign historians, most likely a confusion with the 1838 law). Today’s mainstream historiography mostly cites the 1843 law that transferred the administrative authority over the former Crown slaves from the fiscal bureau within the Office of Prisons to other offices of the Ministry of Interior. This event was treated as self-explanatory by the historians who interpreted it as an emancipatory law. By way of example, Viorel Achim writes about the Crown slaves 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” (2004: 115).

The text of the law did not touch upon the issues of freedom or slavery; the individuals themselves were not referred to as slaves or free men. Hence, from a historian’s perspective, the point is to demonstrate that it was indeed an emancipatory law, and not to simply state its bureaucratic provisions. A few obvious questions arise here: Did the Government cease to be a slave owner? Did the individuals gain any rights? What were those rights? To whom did the rights apply? The free people or the taxpayers in general? Viorel Achim did not address these questions, nor did other authors that adopted the same stance on the 1843 law. Having found no evidence that this change coincided in any way with a change of status of the individuals themselves, I opt instead for the free marriage act of 1838, the only law that proclaimed the slaves’ freedom.

As stressed previously, slavery poses the problem of not only clarifying written laws, but also how they interacted with customs. I will structure my findings so far in the form of the following marriage rules for slaves:

Owner’s consent: It was widely applied and was probably the most observed provision.

Interdiction to marry free people: It was also widely applied under both written laws and customs. A special case was that of the former Crown slaves after 1831. From 1831 to 1838, even though they were no longer considered property, there is no data on whether they could marry other free people or not. Instead we know for sure that they were forbidden to marry slaves. The interdiction was vaguely covered in the Organic Regulations (point 30 of Appendix A to article 65), but enforced more clearly through a Government Order from November 1832.⁷ Both provisions were observed in practice (for evidence, see Mateescu 2014a: 26–7, 137–9, 148–9). The consequences of a slave (illegally) marrying

7) Argeș County Archives, Fond Subocărmuirea plășii Pitești, 110(6299)/1832, 2.

a free man were another point of contention. According to the Wallachian law (Code of Caradja, chapter VII, article 10), the slave was to be set free (if the owner agreed to the marriage). Apparently, representatives of the Church, including the Metropolitanate itself, wrongfully claimed the opposite: in the case of marrying a slave, the free man was to be enslaved. While enslavement in such cases was enacted in Moldavia, it was clearly not the case in Wallachia, where the secular authorities enforced the Wallachian civil law (Mateescu 2014a: 40).

Interdiction to marry certain categories of slaves: Less visible in historical sources, absent from historiography, were practices of slave owners that limited the marital market of slaves to certain categories, defined by space and/or ownership. Such practices were not contradictory to the written law, but were judged as inhumane and were lifted following complaints from slaves. Sometimes they originated from a simple lack of knowledge of the laws or regulations. To give one example, the abbot of Sadova Monastery appears to have barred the slaves from marrying those of other owners because he was unaware that they could legally do so. I managed to document similar instances in several cases of Church establishments. Monasteries like Cozia, Govora, Dintrunlemn, Sadova, and establishments like the Târgoviște branch of the Archdiocese, all seem to have had, at certain points in time, forbidden their slaves to marry slaves of other owners (Mateescu 2014a: 47–8).

Another challenge for historians is to go beyond laws and customs (whatever form they came in) and study how these norms shaped the private life of families and individuals, and how their effects were countered or enhanced by other social and economic factors. What social and economic strategies were employed at marriage, and how flexible were they within the bounds of regulations? How did demographic, spatial, and cultural constraints act? It is more than plausible to assume that individuals often

adopted an economically oriented marital strategy, in which choosing a spouse (for oneself or one's child) meant finding the best scenario of becoming relatives to a family of wealth and power. Since marriage coincided with the transfer of wealth between generations and relatives, the social entanglements should be carefully studied.



Sources, samples and source related problems

The sources used in this research are also at the heart of my PhD dissertation (Mateescu 2017), namely the first two modern censuses in Romanian history, the 1838 census of Wallachia and the 1859 of Moldavia. In the age, official census taking was carried out in one of two instances. First, for taxation purposes, under the supervision of the Ministries of Interior and Finance, and following approval from the Legislature, which in turn followed the provisions of the Organic Regulations (and subsequent amendments). Second, official statistics existed separately from operations that involved subjecting the population to various obligations. They had the role of gathering information that was envisaged for long-term reforms or knowledge alone. The governmental body in charge of these works was Section III of the Ministry of Interior, and, since 1859, the Statistical Office subordinated to the same ministry. This arrangement existed in both principalities and led to the gathering of an enormous amount of information on population, economy, settlements, and environment. The two censuses were themselves the product of official statistics (and not of financial planning) and can be seen as high-marks of Romanian census practices of the age, since they recorded not only population but a whole array of topics, from forests and habitat to textile consumption. The Moldavian one was probably the most



detailed pre-WWI Romanian census, taken by filling thirty-two types of forms. Summing up all the columns from these forms would result in a table of hundreds of columns. So even a presentation would require a separate paper, which is why I only focus here on very general aspects. I will point out the distinction between forms and aggregate results. The latter were published in the age,⁸ but the releases exclude most of the types of recorded information. The Wallachian aggregates exclude data on property, settlements, estates, establishments (churches, taverns, distilleries, etc.), and houses, focusing only on population and agricultural yields. The same pattern can be observed in Moldavia: the official publication focuses on population figures, although in far more detail than in Wallachia; but excludes income, literacy, wealth, habitat, consumption, etc. So the published results reflect a process of aggregation that is far from complete. For historians interested in studying the data and deepening the inquiry, accessing the forms is the only option, but not lacking obstacles. For Wallachia, the amount of preserved material is enormous, covering about three-thirds of the recorded population (~1 mil. people), but the published material only covers a few urban settlements and mainly villages from Brăila.⁹

What is more concerning is the dominance of paper format over scientific databases. As far as I know, only a small sample of 20,000 individuals from this census is publicly available in the MOSAIC database (Mosaic Project 2015) at the time this paper is written. However, two databases are in the process of being constructed: the MAPROM project (Södertörns University and the Romanian Academy); and the Dem-Ist database (Romanian Academy). Both are directed towards sampling population forms from 1838, and will hopefully cancel the disbalance between paper format and digital editions. The Moldavian census, on the other hand, received far less attention. It is true that far less has been preserved,

mainly for rural Iași, but also for the town of Piatra-Neamț and the village of Bălțați (Vaslui County), totaling information on some 50,000 individuals. Not as much as for its Wallachian counterpart, but certainly not negligible and, at the same time, none of it was published.

The present research used the original forms from both censuses, by creating datasets, representing population samples. Part of my dissertation, the samples consisted of: (1) 43,224 rural inhabitants from Moldavia; (2) 38,154 rural inhabitants from Wallachia; and (3) 53,619 from urban Wallachia. This paper will analyze only the first and third samples, since research on rural Wallachia is being presented more thoroughly in a separate publication (Mateescu 2019). This being said, the Wallachian urban sample consists of 53,619 individuals from twenty settlements (towns and market towns),¹⁰ Bucharest, the capital city and the most populous urban settlement was left outside my endeavor because of its size (almost that of our current sample). I did, however, include Craiova, the second largest town, numbering 11,253 people. The Moldavian sample is composed practically of all the material accessible at the time of the research (2017–2018), for rural Iași, covering 133 villages—some three quarters of the county's recorded rural population.¹¹

The samples contain all of the information available in the historical source, referring to: socio-demographic topics (age, gender, civil state, nationality, occupation), as well as economic information (wealth and/or income), in addition to others. For 1838, presentations of the census have already been published for some time (Retegan 1965), but the same cannot be said for 1859. Unfortunately, I cannot compensate here, because of the vastness of the operations.

An essential component of my methodology is uncovering any flaws in the historical information that might affect the statistical analysis. Again, present editorial constraints do not allow me to elaborate on

8) For Wallachia, see *Almanahul Statului pe anul 1842*, as well as *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, 1898: 1163-1169. For Moldavia, *Lucrări statistice făcute în anul 1859-1860*, 1861.

9) Multiple publications exist, by Spiridon Cristoceă, Dinică Ciobotea, Gabriel Croitoru, Ion Dedu, Emanoil Barbu, Mariana Comănescu, Stanca Bounegru, Alinta Vidis, Gheorghe Iavorschi, and Cristian Filip.

10) The archival material used is held at the NAR (Central Office), *Fond Catagrafii*, as follows: Buzău: I/96; Cămpina: I/74; Caracal: I/33; Cerneți: I/8; Craiova: II/40; Filipești: I/73; Focșani: I/104; Găești: I/60; Giurgiu: I/70; Mavrodin: I/48; Mizil: I/89; Pitești: I/46; Râmnicu-Sărat: I/102; Rușii de Vede: I/52; Slănic: I/90; Slatina: I/38; Văleni: I/90; Zimnicea: I/52. For Călărași, I used the census register held at Ialomița District Archives, *Fond Prefectura Ialomița*, file 74/1837.

11) The archival material used to compile the sample is held at Iași County Archives, *Fond Isprăvnicia Iași*, under the following files numbers: for subdivision Bahlui, units: 4967, 4969-4973, 5046; for Braniștea: 5013-5022, 5025-5045, 5062; for Cărligătura: 5004, 5008-5011, 5057-5061; for Codru: 4979, 4981-4984; for Copou: 4975-4978, 5012; for Stavnic: 4958-4959, 4961-4966, 4968, 5047-5051; for Turia: 4980, 4985-5003, 5005, 5006.

the quality of the information contained in these sources, to the full extent of my findings. Nonetheless, I will point out the most important ones and provide the reader with my resolution to these problems.

Lack of uniformity: In an age of emerging modern bureaucracy, instructions on census taking could be quite general and vague, leading to a variety of interpretations of the surveyed topics, from one census taker to another. Some of them were more precise than others, while others resorted to gross approximations, general terms, or just omitting required information, thus ignoring instructions completely. Sometimes this coincided with the population's own reluctance to provide the answers needed to fill the form, out of fear of taxation or social stigma. This leads to a situation in which the same concepts can have slightly different meanings across circumscriptions. In a practical sense, it could distort statistical results to one degree or another.

Marital status: In the census instructions, the Government ordered that every individual should be marked by general labels such as "not married," "married," or "widowed." Sensitive issues like informal unions, informal separations, or divorces were not considered. As a result, such cases are either missing from the census or simply masked as a general and legitimate status. "Married" could just as well mean joined in a *de facto* union; „widow/-er" can also mean abandoned by the spouse.

Status in the household proved especially problematic since the administrations had no experience and established practices regarding residential units and groups. In Moldavia, the instructions can be interpreted as somewhat contradictory, or, in any case, difficult to apply. Census agents had to group individuals by socio-economic categories, then by fiscal category, but at the same time by house. Two or more individuals from different categories could have shared the same dwelling, but the Government did not provide exact details as to how the three criteria of recording would

apply all together. The result is that in only two of Iași's subdivisions (*ocoale*)—Codru and Stăvnic—the census agents found a way to navigate the incomplete instructions and present the Ministry of Interior with the desired result. In all other subdivisions, individuals were recorded solely by fiscal family. The instructions for Wallachia too were interpreted as contradictory by some historians, although in my view they were in fact clear in this regard: all individuals living in the same house had to be recorded together, meaning consecutively and in the same grouping unit (under the same number), regardless of fiscal or occupational differentiation. In my view some census agents failed to carry out this order out of sheer lack of discipline.

Specific information on slaves: Slavery in the Wallachian census proved especially problematic to record, as it required additional information. Namely, the census agent had to specify the slave's owner. Unfortunately, this detail is missing from many registers, and in some extreme cases, I could not even tell if the individual was a slave or not. The word "Gypsy" specified under the column *Ethnicity* had a double meaning in the age, designating both ethnicity and the status of slave. Flaws of the censuses could be blamed on different causes: the slaves' reluctance to respond or the negligence of the officer. The latter might seem more plausible, since other information was also missing, even when it was more accessible. One big problem is the absence of the slave's marital status, as well as their relation to other slaves, when living with their masters. One can sometimes infer certain relations by the order in which names are listed. A man followed by a woman of similar age, followed by small children, can be interpreted as a couple (married or not) and a nuclear family with children, in the absence of direct information. Still, information on single individuals is more difficult to process.

These were the main flaws in the sources that affected my analysis. Unfortunately,



there was not much I could do to try to correct the information, just ways to go around it and use models that would minimize the contamination with errors. I used the household analysis criteria only for Wallachia, where the overall quality of the source is much better than for Moldavia, at least in this regard. For the latter, I employed only the individuals, couples and CFUs as units of analysis. One major issue in the Wallachian sample, however, was the failure to register full information on slaves in some circumscriptions. Here I decided to filter out the material from the settlements in which coresidence was better recorded. So, I isolated a subsample that I considered to be of better quality, made up of all the individuals from: Rușii de Vede, Pitești, Giurgiu, Slatina, Alexandria, Caracal, Focșani, Râmnicu-Sărat and Văleni (in total, 24,681 individuals). I analyzed data both by total sample (henceforth abbreviated “TS”) and by subsample (“SS”). In many cases, the results were roughly the same, but I still felt I should provide the reader with the two sets of results.

Unfortunately, there was not much I could do about the relativeness of marital status, I had to analyze the information as it was.

Moreover, given the great diversity of the population from the Wallachian sample, also given the limited space of this paper, certain criteria had to be prioritized over others. Concerning ethnicity, this study focuses exclusively on ethnic Romanians and Roma. Moreover, since urban living patterns were more complex than rural ones, I considered accounting for this factor and performed the analysis by status in the household as well. In this sense, I operated with three core concepts:

- The *household*, comprising all of the individuals that in the census were enumerated under the same number, meaning that they were living in the same house.¹² In turn, this group can be composed of one or more:

- *Conjugal family units* (or CFU): A

CFU is a variant of the nuclear family concept, applied to information specific to population lists. It takes into account only individuals that were living together, and only the ties between partners and between parents and unmarried children. Therefore, there are three kinds of CFUs (Garett et al. 2006: 59): married couple without never-married children; couple with never-married children; and single parent with never-married children. Individuals that were not part of a CFU are considered and termed *single individuals*.

- *Householders*: meaning the householder (the head of the house) and the members of his CFU (if any);

- *Coresidents*: Those household members that were not part of the householder's CFU. For example, relatives (such as retired parents or parents-in-law), servants, lodgers.



1838 urban Wallachia

An additional contextual aspect I will point out is the ethnic composition of the provincial urban population. About two-thirds of individuals were recorded as Romanian, with two important minorities from a numerical point of view: South Slavs and Roma, comprising 18 percent and 9 percent of the population, respectively. Other ethnicities were represented in much smaller shares: Greeks (3 percent) and Jews (2 percent). Some barely registered, including Germans, Hungarians, Armenians, Turks, Poles. One important nuance that should be noted in breaking down this aggregate is that towns were significantly more diverse than market towns.¹³ In the latter, Romanians were the majority with a share of 80 percent, while they drop to just 61 percent in towns. In Giurgiu and Alexandria, Romanians were the minority. The vast majority of Roma inhabiting these settlements were enslaved. Even with gaps in information in both the total sample and

12) Some historical demographers, beginning with Peter Laslett, exclude lodgers from household analysis, and instead include them into a separate concept, the *houseful* (Hammel and Laslett 1974: 77–8). For the sake of simplicity, I did not follow this differentiation and referred to all co-dwellers as a household.

13) In this age, urban settlements were usually classified as towns (*orașe*) and market towns (*târguri*), but these terms were not accompanied by a legal definition. However, there are prevailing differences between them. Towns were usually larger and hosted institutions with territorial jurisdictions, such as prefectures and justice courts. Moreover, towns were ruled by a *maghiștratu*, a type of local council composed of six members, while market towns were headed by a *comisie* of two members.

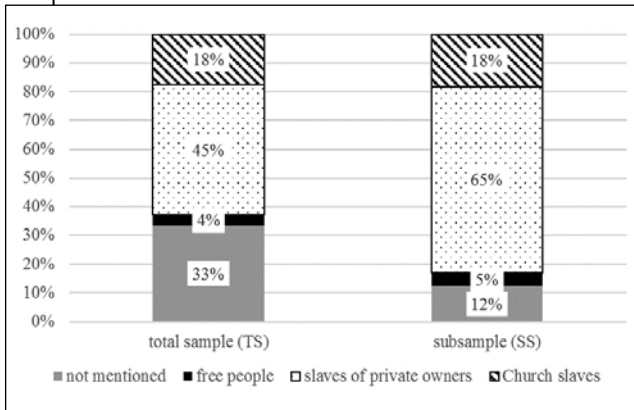


Figure 1: The share of Roma by social status; data for 6,480 individuals (4,638 in the total sample, 1,842 in the subsample), 1838 urban Wallachia.

the subsample I can tell that most of them belonged to private individuals, while the second-largest category was that of Church slaves. Roma that could be documented as free, including the former Crown slaves, were few—some 4–5 percent of the population group, as the following figure shows: (Figure 1)

Given their slave status, and given the large number of private slave owners, another important difference between Romanians and Roma is coresidence. The image of the urban slave that might transpire from traditional sources is usually

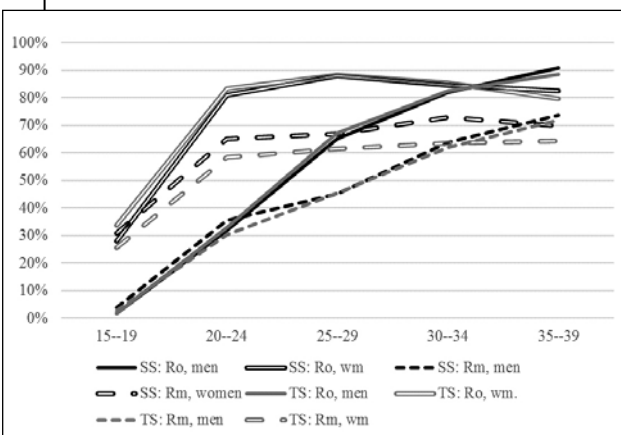


Figure 2: The share of married persons by age group, ethnicity, and sample; data for 39,781 individuals (35,226 Romanians, 4,555 Roma) in the total sample; the subsample includes 15,619 Romanians and 1,771 Roma*, 1838 urban Wallachia.

* The figures for Roma are slightly lower than those presented earlier because this analysis excludes cases where marital status was marked as unclear.

that of individuals living in the same households as their owners. I found that only half of them lived as coresidents with their owners or someone else of different ethnicity, while the other half lived alone or only with their nuclear family. However, the share of coresidents among Roma is far more significant than among Romanians, with only around 15 percent of Romanians being coresidents. Even fewer Romanians lived in a household that was headed by a non-Romanian householder. This is a clear mark of the impact that slavery had on the private lives of individuals. It is because of this special pattern of living arrangements that analysis will have to include residential status as an additional filter, since the socio-demographic profile of individuals could vary greatly according to this factor.

Regarding the timing of first marriages, I found both similarities and differences between Romanians and Roma. One behavior they shared was the age difference between genders. Women tended to marry earlier than men, again confirming what I expected from an Eastern European preindustrial society. In the age group 15–19, the share of married individuals is negligible among men, but significant among women, over 25 percent, depending on the sample ethnicity. In the total sample, early-age marriage showed to be slightly more important among Romanian women, with a level of 34 percent compared to 26 percent among Roma. But, again, the sample should be taken cautiously in this regard. When looking at the subsample—which should be considered more precise—the difference is inverted, although the gap narrows: 31 percent Roma and 28 percent Romanian. But the real differences begin in the next age groups. While the number and share of married individuals begin to rise in both populations, they rise far higher among Romanians than among Roma. In the 20–24 tier, 81–88 percent of Romanian women appear as married, compared to just 58–65 percent Roma women. In the next tier (25–29), significant differences

appear in both genders: 88 percent vs 62–67 percent for women; 67–65 percent vs 46–45 percent for men. So, at a first glance, what these basic figures suggest is that Roma men and women tended to experience a more prolonged celibacy, since the share of married persons rises slower than in the case of Romanians.

In interpreting these patterns, I once more urge caution, as I do not know the size and characteristics of the omitted population. If similar proportions of married/unmarried persons would miss from the census for both ethnicities, the variance would not affect the conclusion regarding the differences between them. Taking only what was directly available to me, excluding simulation models and/or cross-source analysis, I could formulate explanations by only further disseminating the data. I broke down marital status by residential status: the share of married individuals among those living as coresidents and among those living as householders (including their families). As expected, I found that living as coresident was associated with celibacy rather than with marriage and family life (which dominated the life of ordinary householders). However, with some exceptions, Roma men and women showed higher ages at marriage than Romanians, both as householders and as coresidents (Figures 3 and 4). These results overturn the pattern of the general population (presented in Figure 2) and might seem contradictory to the previous analysis. In fact, the two sets of results are not opposed to each other, but, combined, should be taken as a very sensitive nuance when dealing with urban society, especially during times of slavery. Roma tended to marry earlier, but because more of them were coresidents, this raises the share of unmarried individuals in the overall sample (coresidents + householders), more than it does for Romanians.

This leads me to further examine family structure based on household patterns, in order to understand better how different

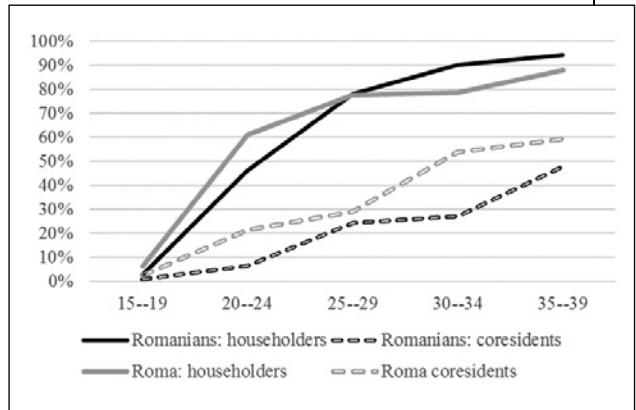


Figure 3: The share of married men by ethnicity and general residential status; data for 6,689 Romanian and 479 Roma householders and/or members of their families, as well as 1,331 Romanian and 476 Roma coresidents, 1838 urban Wallachia, subsample.

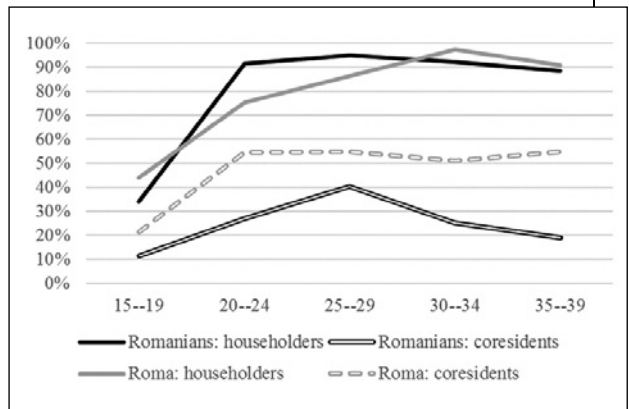


Figure 4: The share of married women by ethnicity and general residential status; data for 6,590 Romanian and 424 Roma householders and/or members of their families, as well as 1,007 Romanian and 392 Roma coresidents, 1838 urban Wallachia, subsample.

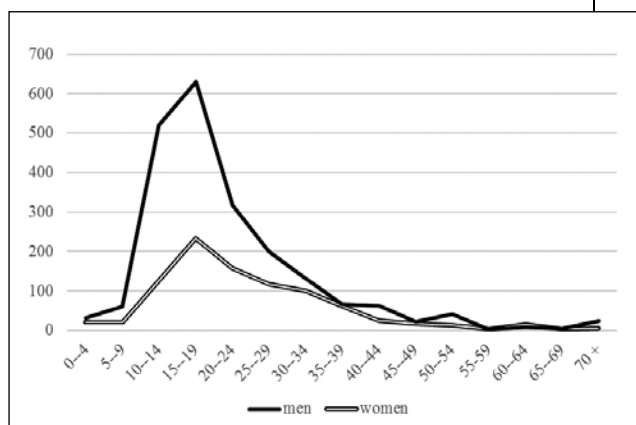


Figure 5: The number of non-Roma employees and their CFU members living as coresidents, by gender and age group; data for 3,056 individuals (2,129 men and 927 women), 1838 urban Wallachia.

functions of coresidence influenced family life. In this respect, I observed different demographic profiles of different coresidents. Non-Roma employees (servants, coachmen, workers) had the distinct characteristic of being dominated by young unmarried men, alongside fewer—but still young—women, as the following figure shows. (Figure 5)

Roma coresidents taken as a whole, on the other hand, were highlighted in my results as being more balanced both gender- and age-wise. Men among them are slightly more numerous than women, but the proportion is still closer to equality, far from the disproportion shown by non-Roma. But their demographic profile does not match that of Roma that lived independently. I already showed the lower proportions of married individuals, which are connected to fewer children, in turn translating into an abnormal age pyramid. The earliest stages (ages 0–10) are better represented than in the case of non-Roma coresidents, but are weaker when compared to the „regular” population—that of the householders.

In order to better understand this complicated demographic landscape, I can imagine a ladder composed of three steps, representing different degrees of cohesion of the nuclear family: low, medium, and high. By cohesion, I mean the degree in which individuals belonged to a CFU—a nuclear family with which they shared the

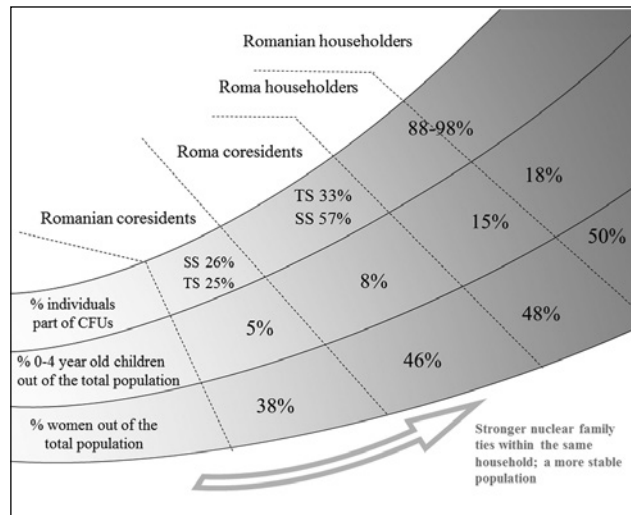


Figure 7: Approximate and mixed-scale representation of the degree to which individuals belonged to coresidential family units and to a stable population, 1838 urban Wallachia.

same living premises. The more a group or a community was organized as such, the more we would expect to find the traits of a stable population: a balanced ratio between genders and an age pyramid specific to preindustrial societies (where the young and very young outweigh the old). On such a scale, Romanian and non-Roma coresidents would occupy the lower step, as the group with the fewest nuclear families. On the highest step, we would find the population composed of householders and their families, Romanians and Roma alike. Between the two are Roma coresidents: not organized in families to the full potential of the population size, but also not scattered as single individuals.

The situation of coresidents can be framed in terms of several functions of coresidence. The most obvious would be domestic service. Like for other contemporary contexts, I can consider two main patterns in which domestic service was practiced. Both of them are the result of labor demand and supply, which in turn can be seen as a negotiation between the expectations of the employer, as well as the choices and constraints of the employed. In the first instance, I can conceptualize it as “life-cycle domestic service,” as historians

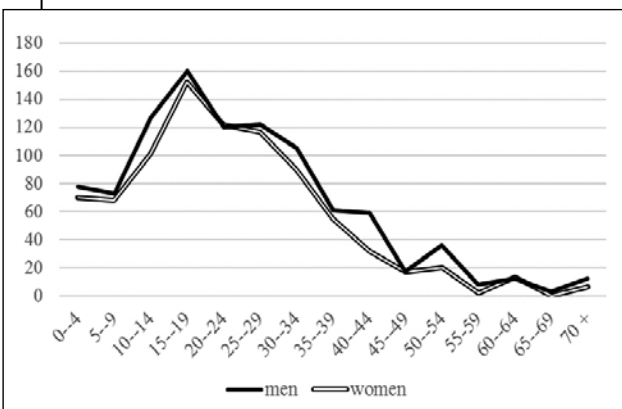


Figure 6: The number of Roma and their CFU members living as coresidents by gender and age group; data for 1858 individuals (993 men and 865 women), 1838 urban Wallachia.

and historical demographers call it (Laslett 1977, to give just one example). Individuals became servants only at certain stages of life, to compensate for low income or wealth. In the case of young people, wealth was needed when establishing a household. It both provided for the basic material needs, as well as attracted a partner. In the case of poor men and women, and/or of those deprived of endowment, working as a servant meant building up one's financial resources that were necessary for fully entering adulthood and becoming a respected family man or woman. For the employer, the presence of young unmarried servants also had its advantages: they provided higher work capacity, yet had less consumption and housing needs since spouses or children did not join them. In the case of the elderly, working as a servant could have provided shelter, food, as well as some form of caretaking or mutual assistance when family members could not play such roles. The second instance would be that of long-term domestic service: individuals working as servants over long periods of their lives, often marrying and raising a family while performing this job and sharing the same quarters, provided by the master.

In the case of urban Wallachia, coresidence involving non-Roma was dominated by the first instance. Ultimately, forming a family was the social goal, and being a servant meant only a temporary stage until one could enjoy living in one's household. From the perspective of marriage patterns, it meant postponing marriage for a great deal of young individuals, thus explaining why Wallachian towns had higher marriage rates than Wallachian villages.

For Roma coresidents, however, the demographic profile suggests a mixture of the two domestic service patterns: life-cycle and long-term. It is more than plausible to assume that these arrangements coincided with decision making that was less in the hands of the Roma, and more in those of slave owners. Given the intricacy and the intimacy of such level of planning, by

multiple actors, it is hard to reveal the full chain of causalities that led to the structure of Roma groups. Since more families were prevalent among Roma coresidents, it is evident that some owners preferred keeping or forming such families. This could have been in order to use the labor of adults and children and/or to later gain from selling the individuals; or to transmit them just like any other form of movable property (through inheritance, endowment, donation, exchange).

On the other hand, more numerous coresident groups raised the issue of quartering and feeding the slaves. Not all owners could afford to host large families. It is possible that some slave owners would have preferred maximizing the benefits from the work performed by fewer slaves, and ended by opting for non-marital arrangements between their slaves. Tackling such research perspectives by cross-checking sources was not within the possibilities of the current framework. What is sure for now is that slavery impacted the Roma population in the sense that lifelong domestic service forced families to live in non-Roma headed households; while at the same time preventing more individuals from forming families (prolonging celibacy for more individuals?).

Of course, such scenarios can be hypothesized even in the absence of current data. What I am emphasizing here is their impact on family life, as shown by the census: fewer family ties than the Roma would probably otherwise have had. At least this is what I conclude when I compare Roma coresidents (the vast majority of slaves of private owners) with Roma householders.

So far, I have presented what I considered the most important results in comparing Roma to Romanians. Others can be added. Widowhood too manifested differently according to ethnicity, gender, and residential status. As expected, widowhood was associated more with coresidence than with independent living. This was a result



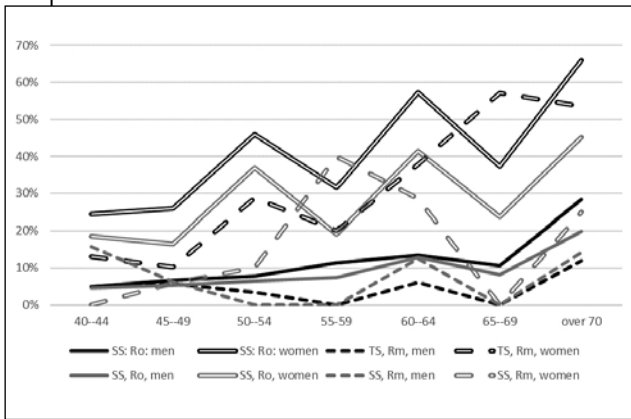


Figure 8: The share of widowed individuals over 40 years old, by ethnicity, gender and age group, and sample, 1838 urban Wallachia.

of the social role that some instances of coresidence fulfilled, that of caretaking for the elderly, especially older women. In terms of ethnicity, Roma showed far fewer widows than Romanians. If I assumed that death rates were about the same, it would mean that Roma remarried more often than Romanians.

Building on conclusions from a previous study (Mateescu 2015b), I put forth that Roma had fewer children recorded in the census. Just like for marriages, the reason becomes clearer when I refine my analysis using the same criteria. The results are shaped in the same manner: Roma show

fewer children because a greater part of them were coresidents, and coresidents in general had fewer children than householders. If I adjust the results by residential status, then they tend to even out or invert. I see that Romanian and Roma householders don't differ much; but Roma coresidents have more children than Romanian coresidents. A conclusion can be drawn along the same lines as previously: (forced) coresidence might have prevented more Roma from having children, but also meant that, as compared to Romanians, more families who had children were forced to live in non-Roma headed households.



1859 rural Moldavia

In this sample, both ethnicities held higher proportions than in the previous. Romanians were the vast majority with a share of 83 percent of the total population, while Roma were about 12 percent. Here, Roma seemed to have married earlier than Romanians, especially women, but this time this is reflected from the overall population, without being broken down by residential status (which I could not document for all of the villages). While married men ages 15–19 are extremely few, slightly over half of Roma women (54 percent) from the same age group were married. In the Romanian cohort, the share was considerably smaller: 39 percent. In the next age group (20–24), the vast majority of women were married on both sides: 94 percent Romanians and 90 percent Roma. Among men, differences were even smaller.

Widowhood followed the same pattern as in the urban sample: Roma of both genders showed levels 5–15 percent lower than Romanians, suggesting higher rates of remarriage.

The number of children was similar to that from the urban sample, with the usual nuances. Again, Romanians counted more

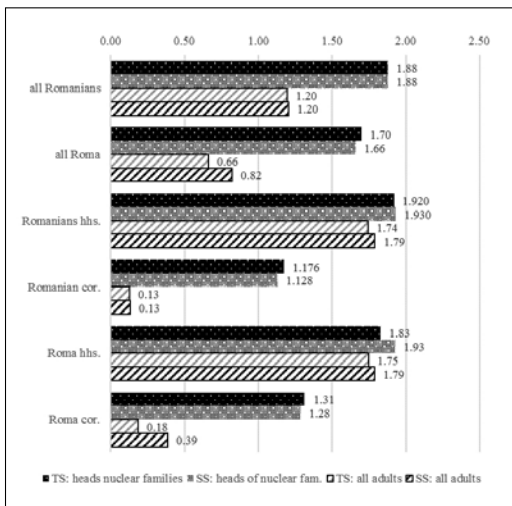


Figure 9: The average number of children per adult, by ethnicity, family status, residential status, and sample, 1838 urban Wallachia.

children than Roma, using either of the two metrics from the point of view of the adults: all adults or only heads of nuclear family. However, refining the analysis, I saw that more babies and toddlers were present in Roma families than in Romanian ones. This would suggest that, in fact, birth rates among Roma were slightly higher, and the reasons for the overall lower number lie with other factors. One would suspect earlier marriages, conclusion supported not just by results previously presented, but also by the lower number of teens in Roma families. So, depending on the age of the children, I encountered opposite situations when comparing ethnicities: Roma families have more young children (0–1; 0–5 years old) and less adolescents (over 15 years old); the opposite holds true among Romanians.



Conclusions

The results of my analysis showed both differences and similarities between the two ethnic groups. Most similarities were shown by the 1859 rural sample, from post-slavery Moldavia. Here, marriage took place at a relatively young age; in both ethnic groups, men married later and remarried more often than women, the only major difference between the two ethnicities being that Roma married slightly earlier than Romanians. The Wallachian urban sample, based on a census conducted when the vast majority of Roma were slaves, showed the most pronounced specificities. In towns and market towns, family life started later than in villages. Even though the two samples are from different principalities, my previous studies on Wallachia can confirm that this assertion can be generalized. The main explanation for this lies with a greater degree of employment in domestic service, in turn coinciding with living as coresidents. However, this acted very differently for Romanians as compared to

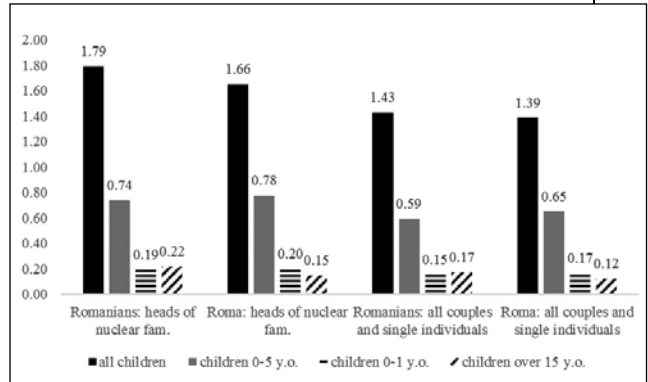


Figure 10: The average number of children in a CFU, per adult, by ethnicity, family status, and ages of children, 1859 rural Moldavia.

Roma. Most Romanians that worked as servants did so in their late teens and into their early adulthood, certainly during their pre-marital years. This was most likely the result of timing both their work and the start of their family life, in such a manner that would allow for a certain accumulation of wealth, while not postponing marriage after the age of thirty. At the same time, marriage seemed to have coincided with forming a distinct household, which in its turn can be seen as one of the social ideals of the age. For a greater part of Roma, however, domestic service was long-term, and family life often coincided with living as coresidents. Half of the Roma included in the censuses lived in a household headed by a non-Roma, most often their owner. Slaves living in such arrangements were somehow “caught between two worlds” (Roman 2014). They had more family ties among themselves than Romanian servants, but not as intense as those of Roma that lived independently from owners. Slaving for their masters seems to have loosened family relations that they otherwise would have cultivated, if they had lived separately, or had been free people.

Lastly, a few further nuances should be added, all the while maintaining caution in interpreting the results. These censuses do not capture the entire lifespan of the individuals, nor do they reveal their entire social networks. The fact that the ones alive



in 1838 were recorded in certain households doesn't mean that they lived there all of their lives, as households often changed form. A slave might have shared different houses throughout his life: living only with his family, living with his owner, living alone and only paying duties to his owner, living in the home of someone else who was not his owner, rejoining his owner and raising a family there, switching owners (hence homes) as a result of exchanges or sales—just to imagine a hypothetical life course. This is why my results should be taken as representative not for each individual case, but for wider social and demographic contexts. Slaves were indeed likely to change residence, but it still meant that

they were more likely to live as coresidents for a longer period than Romanians. Just as well, the fact that the censuses show some individuals with no spouse or child, doesn't necessarily mean that they had no family; most likely, it could mean that they did not live together. A slave that appears as a single adult serving by his master might have had his nuclear family living somewhere else, even if he was wrongly recorded as unmarried or widowed. But, again, the fact that single individuals were observed more among Roma coresidents than among Roma householders is still relevant, showing a weaker kinship network, even from a spatial point of view.



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