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THE BUILDING OF THE MOLDAVIAN-WALLACHIAN FRONTIER

c. 1350 – c. 1450

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THE BUILDING OF THE MOLDAVIAN-WALLACHIAN FRONTIER

c. 1350 – c. 1450

by

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List of Abbreviations

AIA Anuarul Institutului de Istorie si Arheologie "A. D. Xenopol"

DRH-A Documenta Romaniae Historica. A. Moldova (Romanian Historical Documents. Series A. Moldavia). Vol. 1 (1384-1448), ed. Constantin Cihodaru, Ioan Caproșu and Leon Șimanschi and Vol. 2 (1449-1486), ed. Leon Șimanschi. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1975 and 1976.

DRH-B Documenta Romaniae Historica. B. Țara Românească (Romanian Historical Documents. Series B. Wallachia). Vol. 1 (1247-1500), ed. Petre P. Panaitescu and Damaschin Mioc and vol. 2 (1500-1525), ed. Ștefan Ștefănescu and Olimpia Diaconescu. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1966 and 1972.

DRH-D Documenta Romaniae Historica. D. Relațiile dintre Țările (Romanian Historical Documents. Series D. The relationships between Romanian principalities). Vol. 1 (1222-1456). Ed. Constantin Cihodaru and Ștefan Pascu. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1977.

CEV Prochaska, Antonius, ed. *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi*. Krakow: Academiae Litterarum Cracoviae, 1882.

Hurmuzaki Documente privitoare la istoria românilor (Documents concerning the history of Romanians). Series I, vol. 1 (1199-1345) and vol. 2 (1346-1500), ed. Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki and Nicolae Densușianu. Bucharest: Socecu & Teclu, 1889,1900.

RdI Revista de istorie

RI Revista istorică

RRH Revue Roumaine d'Histoire

SAI Studii și articole de istorie

SMIM Studii și materiale de istorie medie

SRI Studii. Revistă de istorie

List of Maps

1. Wallachian settlements mentioned in internal documents
(c. 1350-1450)
2. Southwestern Moldavian settlements mentioned in internal documents (1384-1448)
3. Map of the main archaeological findings in Moldavia
(c. 1250-c. 1350)

Introduction

Also, the above mentioned Wallachs and the notary of the king of the Romans brought to us a description of the boundaries and places that, as they say, were occupied and wrested by the Moldavian voievod from the Wallachians.

This is the only extant known piece of information concerning the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier for the period between 1350 and 1450. An attempt to write on this topic, based on such flimsy evidence may appear rather foolish. And, indeed, such seems to have been the opinion of previous Romanian scholars, who have rarely addressed this topic during the last 150 years. Even when they did so, they usually dismissed it in just a few lines. In my opinion their verdict was hasty and incorrect, and the following pages are present a long overdue reconsideration of the problem.

The glimpse that the above quoted source offers us represents only the tip of the iceberg. Beneath it lays a complex process through which the two expanding societies, Moldavian and Wallachian, met and interacted. My purpose here is to reconstruct the expansion of the two principalities up to the moment of their first overlap, which determined the first settlement of the frontier. Since I base my reconstruction mainly on indirect sources, the succession of hypotheses, inferences and deductions might sometimes appear purely speculative. Due to the specific nature and scarcity of the sources, this is a risk that any scholar who deals with early Moldavian and Wallachian history must assume. I attempt to overcome it by using exhaustively the relevant sources and avoiding over-interpreting them. This inevitably leaves a number of problems unanswered or with just sketchy answers. Despite all this, I propose a coherent reconstruction of the process by which the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier was built.

Chapter 1. The Moldavian-Wallachian medieval frontier: different approaches.

A perfect example of the impact that national ideology had on the concept of ‘frontier’ is illustrated by the successive re-interpretations of the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier in historical scholarship. During the past two centuries Romanian scholarship dealt with this topic in two different ways. The problem of the Moldavian-Wallachian border was either analyzed from a perspective that postulated too many axioms derived from the present-day ideologies, without any consideration for the sources, or simply as a taboo topic. My main intention in this thesis is not to deal with the various ideological premises of the previous analyses of this topic, but rather to apply a different methodology. The following short review of the historiography is, therefore, intended to reveal the benefits of a new perspective on the topic.

1.1 Interpretative paradigms

Together, the medieval and early modern perception of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier differs substantially from the modern one. Viewed simply as a frontier like all others in the medieval period, the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier is placed in an ambiguous position by national bias. Although it is still recognized as a historical frontier, it is also, from a national perspective, a pseudo-frontier, since the Wallachians and the Moldavians were regarded as part of the same nation. To solve this contradiction between medieval reality and modern interpretative frame, historians have proposed a variety of solutions.

1.1.1 A frontier like all the others

The non-national image of the Wallachian-Moldavian medieval frontier, dominant in medieval and early modern sources, is built around two key elements. These were the similarity between all the frontiers of the two principalities and their fluctuating nature.

In the fifteenth century, when trying to describe Wallachia's expanse, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini remarked: "et ipsarum provinciarum limites pro dominantium autoritate ac potentia saepenumero commutati."¹ Three centuries later Dimitrie Cantemir made the same observation, this time concerning Moldavia: "Moldavia non eosdem semper agnovit limites, sed mox ampliores, mox strictiores, pro ratione incrementi et decrementi reipublicae."² The seventeenth century chronicles, both Wallachian and Moldavian simply treat the frontier between the two principalities as any other frontier which had been settled, according to Ureche's chronicle, during the fights of Stephen the Great with the Wallachian Voievod.³ This perception of the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier continued in the early modern period, and is attested even in the beginning of the nineteenth century when Moldavian boyars were proposing a territorial expansion of the state up to the river Ialomița to the detriment of Wallachia.⁴

1.1.2 A "special" frontier

¹ *Călători străini în Țările Române* (Foreign travellers about Romanian lands), vol.1, ed. Maria Holban, Maria M. Alexandrescu and Paul Cernovodeanu (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1968), 473.

² Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descriptio antiqui et hodierni status Moldaviae*, ed. and tr. Gheorghe Guțu (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei, 1973), 58.

³ This fragment from Ureche's chronicle is in fact an interpolation of Misail Călugărul; see Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei* (The chronicle of Moldavia), 2d. ed. P. P. Panaitescu (Bucharest: Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă, 1958), 101.

⁴ Moldavian boyars wanted this extension as compensation for their lost properties in Bessarabia, which became a territory of the Russian Empire after the Bucharest peace treaty of 1812. The text of the boyars' resolution was edited under the title "Anaforaua din 1812 Oct. 11, către Alexandru

Perceiving medieval Wallachians and Moldavians as one nation radically changed the interpretation of the frontier between the two principalities. The first significant change was the petrifying of the frontiers, which from mobile and changeable, as they were previously perceived, became fixed and immobile. Since national ideology introduced the concept of the “true frontiers,” any change of this status was perceived as abnormal, and the frontiers were classified into good and bad frontiers. The new paradigm was not, as I said, unitary, and the difficult task of fitting the sources into the interpretative framework was differently fulfilled by different historians. However, in my opinion, the various interpretations can eventually be grouped around two main solutions.

The first solution, and the most often used, was to ignore the problem.⁵ By ignoring the existence of a frontier between medieval Wallachia and Moldavia, the historian could easily avoid uncomfortable questions. For example, in a study on the organization of the frontier guard in Wallachia, N. Stoicescu constantly avoided

Calimach, domnul Moldovei” (The resolution from 11th of October for Alexander Calimach, the ruler of Moldavia), *Analele Academiei Române. Seria II* 23 (1900), 144.

⁵ This stance explains why there are extremely few articles or chapters in modern Romanian scholarship that address this topic. The following is an exhaustive list, with contributions mentioned in chronological order: 1905 - Nicolae Iorga, “Dezvoltarea hotarului Țării Românești și Moldovei” (The development of the border of Wallachia and Moldavia) in Idem, *Istoria românilor în chipuri și icoane* (The history of Romanians in images and icons), 2d edition (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 190-202; 1911 - Cristofor Mironescu, “Hotarul între Moldova și Muntenia” (The boundary between Moldavia and Wallachia), *Anuar de geografie și antropogeografie* 2 (1911): 87-122; 1924 – Radu Rosetti, “Hotarele Moldovei la Sud, sub Ștefan cel Mare” (The southern boundaries of Moldavia under Stephen the Great), *Revista istorică* 10 (1924):186-190; 1944 – Petre P. Panaitescu, “Hotarul dintre Moldova și Țara Românească” (The boundary between Moldavia and Wallachia) in Idem, *Mircea cel Bătrân* (Mircea the Old), 2d edition (Bucharest: Corint, 2000), 275-279; 1965 - C. Constantinescu-Mircești and Ion Dragomirescu, “Contribuții cu privire la cunoașterea hotarului dintre Moldova și Țara Românească de la întemeierea Principatelor până la Unire” (Contributions to the research of the boundary between Moldova and Wallachia from the foundation of the Principalities until the Union), *SAI* 6 (1965): 61-91; 1967 – C. Constantinescu-Mircești and Ion Dragomirescu, “Marginea țării. Aspecte caracteristice în zona hotarului dintre Moldova și Țara Românească” (The border of the country. Particular features in the borderland between Moldavia and Wallachia), *SAI* 9 (1967): 81-121; 1982 - Constantin Cihodaru “Formarea hotarului dintre Moldova și Țara Românească în secolul al XV-lea” (The formation of the Moldavian-Wallachian border in the fifteenth century) in *Stat. Societate. Națiune. Interpretări istorice* (State, society, nation, historical interpretation) (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1982), 80-92; 1996 – Ștefan Gorovei, “Formation et évolution de la frontière de la Moldavie médiévale,” *RRH* 35 (1996): 131-136.

mentioning the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier, and, consequently, the reader is left with the impression that this was the only unguarded frontier of the principality.⁶

The second solution was to emphasize the fact that this frontier is a special one with particular features. For example, P. P. Panaitescu emphasized its extraordinary stability, underlining the peaceful evolution of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier: “A fact must be underlined, that the border between the two states of the same language did not change in this epoch, therefore there were no territorial rivalries between them, it is situated from the beginning on [the rivers] Milcov, Prut and Siret, and it remains like this for centuries, until the Union from 1859. *This is a rare case of stability between two neighboring countries* [emphasis mine].”⁷ The view of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier as a “special frontier” is an apriori premise for Cristofor Mironescu, who began his study on this topic with these words: “For us especially, the study of this ancient border has a special interest, because it was the frontier that separated for more than six centuries populations of the same origin.”⁸ A different variant of this solution was to accept that changes of the frontier did occur; however, it had to be emphasized that these were made in perfect agreement between the two principalities. For example, Constantin Cihodaru considered that Mircea, the voievod of Wallachia simply offered Alexander, the Moldavian voievod, a part of his territory, namely the city of Kilia and its hinterland.⁹

A very important thesis, which does not analyze directly the evolution of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier, but nevertheless comprises it, is that of the “historical

⁶ However, a very attentive reader will detect some elements that refer to this frontier, as for example the mention of a boundary captaincy in the city Focșani; see N. Stoicescu, “Despre organizarea pazei hotarelor în Țara Românească în secolele XV-XVII” (About the organization of the frontier guard in Wallachia between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries), *SMIM* 4 (1960): 191-222.

⁷ Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 275. For the same opinion see also Constantinescu-Mircești, “Contribuții,” 64.

⁸ Mironescu, “Hotarul,” 87.

⁹ Cihodaru, “Formarea hotarului,” 89-90.

unity of the Romanian land.” The elaboration of a geographical mythology¹⁰ had a decisive influence over the concept of frontier. The historical frontiers became irrelevant, being regarded as false frontiers by comparison with the trans-historical “Romanian frontiers.” This dualism between the authentic, eternal, and implicitly ‘good’ frontiers and the pseudo, temporary, ‘evil’ frontiers is perfectly illustrated by the recent book of Grigore Stamate in which the historical maps always contain double frontiers: the historical ones and, as an absolute reference, the authentic, eternal ones.¹¹

This interpretation was particularly emphasized in moments of crisis for the national state. Any change of the frontiers of the Romanian state in the twentieth century caused the historians to react by demonstrating the “historical rights” over the region concerned by these changes and its place within the “Romanian land.” In 1912, a hundred years after the Bucharest peace treaty, which modified the frontiers of Moldavia in favor of Russia, Iorga published a book entitled *Our Bessarabia* stating from the first phrase that “the historical life of the so-called Bessarabia starts with the Moldavian voievodship.”¹² The Second World War and the border changes that took place in 1940 provoked another wave of historical writings. In 1940, Gh. Brătianu wrote and published a book entitled *La Moldavie et ses frontières historiques* the purpose of which was, as the author clearly stated, “to exactly explain the geographical and historical meaning of the name Moldavia.”¹³ Two years later, in 1942, the geographer V. Mihăilescu published an article entitled “The Unity of the

¹⁰ For the geographical mythology as it was used by Romanian historians, see Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2001), 132-133.

¹¹ Although the book of Grigore Stamate is a juridical approach to the problem of the frontiers, he dedicated an entire chapter to the historical evolution of the frontiers of Romania. The chapter contains six maps that present a comparative view on the absolute frontiers of Romania, and the frontiers from a particular historical moment; see Grigore Stamate, *Frontiera de stat a României* (The state frontier of Romania) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1997), 29-50.

¹² Nicolae Iorga, *Basarabia noastră* (Our Bessarabia) (Vălenii de Munte: Neamul Românesc, 1912), 1.

Romanian Land and People,” in which he tried to demonstrate the impossible, namely that Romania (Greater Romania) was geographically unitary.¹⁴ In his demonstration, which was to be taken over during the period of national communism, he introduced the concept of “complex unity” for the purpose of stressing that the unity between different geographical regions consists, paradoxically, in their diversity, and in a hypothetical complementarity.¹⁵

These are the main interpretations proposed in Romanian scholarship, and, although sometimes historians contested these interpretations on various individual points, by insisting that the sources clearly contradict them, a different, coherent interpretation is still outstanding.

1.2. Imagining frontiers: terms and approaches

The intellectual re-construction of a historic reality starts with the words. Therefore, before analyzing the most important theories and approaches to the topic, I think it necessary to define the terms that designate the frontier, both medieval and modern, which I will use in this thesis.

1.2.1 Terms and concepts

The Latin words used in documents for naming a frontier area are *finis* and *confinium*, both referring rather to borderland regions than to precise borders, and

¹³ Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *La Moldavie et ses frontières historiques*, 2d. edition (Bucharest: Editura Semne, 1995), 89.

¹⁴ Mihăilescu emphasized this, insisting that the “Romanian land” must be considered a “real physical unity.” For better understanding his position it must be taken into account that two years before publishing this article he was forced to leave Cluj, where he was professor at the University, because the city was incorporated into Hungary; see Vintilă Mihăilescu, “Unitatea pământului și poporului românesc” (The unity of the Romanian land and people), *Lucrările Institutului de Geografie al Universității Regale Ferdinand I din Cluj* 7 (1942): 3-9.

¹⁵ Mihăilescu structured his demonstration along six points, four of them representing “complex units”, i.e. climatic, hydrographic, bio-geographical, economic and two of them representing mere units, i.e. ethnic and geopolitical; see *Ibid.*, 6-7.

implying a view from the centre towards the periphery. The same meaning was preserved by the French word *frontière* (Eng. *frontier*, Rom. *frontieră*) which etymologically implies a confrontation and an anthropocentric standpoint view.¹⁶ With a similar meaning the word *ñòðàíà* was used in Slavonic documents. Much later, a Romanian word *marginie*, with exactly the same meaning, replaced them.¹⁷ For designating the linear boundary the word *meta* was usually used in the Latin documents and in the Slavonic ones the word *õîòàð* (Rom. *hotar*). The only two direct references to the borderline between Wallachia and Moldavia from the fifteenth century, both occurring in Latin documents, use the terms *meta* and *granica*.¹⁸ *Granica*, which is in fact of Slavonic origin, entered Romanian vocabulary, as *graniță*, with the meaning of boundary.

1.2.2 Theories about the frontier and methodological approaches.

The two major theories on which the science of the human geography was based, namely Friederich Ratzel's interpretation that insists on the molding power of the environment, and that of Vidal de la Blanche, which stresses society's role in modifying nature,¹⁹ had a considerable impact on historians. In his book, *A Geographical Introduction to History*, published in 1924, Lucien Fèbvre applied the principles of Vidal and strongly criticized the "old fashioned" thesis of the natural frontiers: "still the idea persists that a stream of water, even a tiny stream of water

¹⁶ The French historian Lucien Fèbvre considered that the meaning of the word *frontière* changed in the sixteenth century from designating the front of an army to the front of a state. In the eighteenth century the military connotation of the word disappeared; see Lucien Fèbvre, "Frontière: le mot et la notion" in Idem, *Pour une histoire à part entière*, 2d edition (Paris: Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1982), 11-24.

¹⁷ From the seventeenth century the word is constantly used both in chronicles and documents. For an analysis of its usage and meaning see C. Constantinescu-Mircești, "Marginea țării," 81-81.

¹⁸ See below, chapter 5, footnotes 282 and 287.

easy to cross, is a boundary.”²⁰ For Fèbvre, the evolution of the frontier from “the broad, sterile and separating zone to the simple non-substantial line of demarcation” is determined by human societies and not by natural determination.²¹ Romanian scholars were much closer to Ratzel’s view, and the frequent use they made of the concept “natural boundaries” clearly expresses this.²² Illustrating both the concept of “natural boundaries” and the myth of the “geographical unity” V. Mihăilescu concluded: “Between Dniester, the Black Sea, the Danube and the Tisa, there is a naturally built country. This is the Romanian Carpathian Land.”²³ The most interesting application of Ratzel’s interpretation to Romanian history is a study of Cristofor Mironescu published in 1911 precisely on the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier.²⁴ His conclusion that this frontier was established by Moldavian interests and was determined by the geographical contours fully confirms the Ratzelian thesis of the *Lebensraum*.

This dispute between the “natural frontier” and “man-made frontier” was replaced in the last decades by a more complex view, less interested in the causes and more interested in the very process of building a frontier. Many of the concepts introduced by medievalists, as for example, “closed” and “open” frontier are indebted to Frederick Jackson Turner’s thesis about the American frontier.²⁵ His definition of the frontier as “the meeting point between savagery and civilization” seemed to

¹⁹ For details on these two theories see David Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 266-268.

²⁰ Lucien Fèbvre, *A Geographical Introduction to History*, translated by E.G. Mountford and J. H. Paxton (London: Kegan, 1924; reprint Routledge, 1996), 299 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

²¹ One subchapter of Fèbvre’s book is suggestively entitled “The State is never Natural, but Man-made.” *Ibid.*, 309-314.

²² I quote here, as the most concise and clear, the words which Radu Rosetti put as a conclusion to one his articles: “From all we have mentioned it is clear that the frontiers of Moldavia, during Stephan the Great’s reign, were the natural and normal frontiers” R. Rosetti, “Granițele Moldovei pe vremea lui Ștefan cel Mare” (The frontiers of Moldavia under Stephen the Great’s reign), *Academia Română. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice. Seria III* 15 (1934), 10.

²³ Mihăilescu, “Unitatea pământului,” 5.

²⁴ Mironescu was familiar with Ratzel’s works and he quoted his most important book *Politische Geographie, Die Grenze*; see Mironescu, “Hotarul,” 89.

²⁵ Frederick Jackson Turner, “The significance of the frontier in American history” (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1893turner.html>). July 1998. Accessed on 10 November 2001.

describe better the medieval realities than the modern European interpretation of frontiers as sharp boundaries between different political entities. The first to observe the similarity of the two processes, namely that of medieval European expansion and that of American modern expansion, was the follower of Turner, Ray Allen Billington, who considered the two expansions as different phases of the same historical process.²⁶ The first who emphasized the benefits of applying the Turnerian frontier to medieval Europe was Charles Julian Bishko, in 1955.²⁷ Three years later, Archibald Lewis published an article entitled “The Closing of the Medieval Frontier.”²⁸ Using the Turnerian concepts for analyzing the evolution of the medieval frontier, Lewis considered that from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards the open frontiers of settlements, which represented a continual colonization in nature, were gradually closed. However, although the Turnerian concepts and meaning of the frontier were accepted by almost all medievalists as a proper frame of reference, the Turnerian thesis it-self was criticized.²⁹ Recent case studies questioned whether the premise of the Turnerian theory, that postulates a determinative relationship between settlements and a frontier, is valid for the medieval history. For example, Geoffrey Barrow, after an analysis on the Anglo-Scottish border, concluded: “border and

²⁶ Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion: A history of the American Frontier* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), as quoted by Robert I. Burns, “The Significance of the Frontier in the Middle Ages,” in *Medieval frontier societies*, ed. by Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 312.

²⁷ Bishko presented his paper 29 December 1955 at a medieval history session of the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association. For a version of his paper see <http://www.ku.edu/kansas/aarhms/bishko.html>. However, Bishko was not the first who applied the Turnerian thesis to the medieval frontier; see James Westfall Thompson preceded him with forty years (1913); see Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and ‘Pagans’ in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000- c. 1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7.

²⁸ Archibald Lewis, “The closing of the Medieval Frontier (1250-1350),” *Speculum* 33 (1958): 475-483.

²⁹ See Burns, “The Significance,” 307-330.

settlement throughout the region through which that border ran coexisted without either of them exerting much influence upon the other.”³⁰

This problem of the relationship between settlements and a frontier represents the starting point of my analysis. As the main instrument in this analysis, I constructed the catalogues and maps of the Wallachian and southwestern Moldavian settlements (c.1350- c.1450),³¹ which are appended to the thesis.

The main goal of my thesis is to analyse the role played by different aspects - landscape features, population movements, political actions, economic interests - in the process of building the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier. The main difficulty consists in the scarcity of the sources, which I tried to overcome by making use of different types of sources: archaeological; diplomatic, both internal and external; narrative, domestic and foreign; linguistic and cartographic. Chronologically, the period from c. 1350 to c. 1450 represents the temporal frame in which this process took place, and can be considered the prehistory and the early history of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier. I identify three stages of the process on which I structure my thesis: the vacuum left by the Mongol retreat, the expansion of Moldavia and Wallachia, and the first settlement of the frontier, with the subsequent dispute.

Both the Wallachian and the Moldavian societies were demographically and politically expanding towards the northeast and southwest, respectively. As a result of the meeting of these two expansions, the frontier between the two principalities started to be built in a process that continued long after the time frame of my research.

³⁰ Geoffrey Barrow, “Frontier and Settlement: Which Influenced Which? England and Scotland, 1100-1300” in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, 21.

³¹ I limited my inventory of the Moldavian settlements to those from the borderland with Wallachia due to the enormous quantity of extant Moldavian charters, by comparison with the Wallachian ones.

Chapter 2. From an open to a closed frontier.

Understanding the Wallachian-Moldavian medieval frontier as a Turnerian one implies that, in the final phase, its development represents a process of “closing,” which concludes a geographical expansion of population. Thus, before becoming a political issue, the settlement of a frontier is a matter of human geography; therefore, the first question to be raised is not where the frontier was, but rather what its nature was. Since there is no description of the frontier from this period, the only possible approach is a comparative study, based on the other frontiers of the two medieval states, Wallachia and Moldavia, better attested by documents. An analysis of the types of boundaries, but also of the reasons for and means of their “closing” reveals that the key problem is indeed the intimate relation between the frontier and population density. A demographic study of the area between Wallachia and Moldavia, using both written and archaeological sources, indicates the main features of the frontier.

2.1. Natural and artificial boundaries

The strict delimitation that a linear border implies is the most visible sign of an already closed frontier, which does not, however, exclude the existence of open internal frontiers. The boundary can be marked either by a natural element, like a river or a mountain range, or by artificial signs; both cases are documented for medieval Moldavia and Wallachia.

A clear example of a natural “barrier” that became a political frontier is the case of the Dniester River, separating Moldavia and Lithuania. The travel account of a Russian pilgrim, deacon Zosima, who crossed the river around 1419 on his way to Constantinople, allows us to observe the mechanism of this transformation:

Then we set out for the Tatar steppe and went fifty miles along a Tatar road which is called “To the Great Valley”, and we came to a large river, below Miterevye Kyshina,³² which is called the Dniester. There was a ferry there, and it was the Wallachian³³ border. On the far side the Wallachians take a ferry [charge], and on this side Grand Prince Vitovt’s men take a tax; thus they both do [the same thing]. It is three days from there through the Wallachian land to Belgorod.³⁴

This short account provides some hints as to the process of development of a feature of landscape into a political frontier. Willing to exploit the source of revenues represented by the medieval tax³⁵ on crossing rivers, the Lithuanian prince and the Moldavian voievod were interested in controlling the crossing points over the Dniester. Due to its dimensions, the river limited the possibilities for crossing, and by its location on an important commercial route³⁶ provided significant tax incomes. Although this is a sketchy presentation of the process, it nevertheless contains its principal elements: motivation (economic benefits), and means (controlling the river fords).³⁷ A similar situation, albeit less clearly documented, is probable in the case of the Danube, when a traveller crossing the big river knew that he had entered

³² The name of the place where Zosima crossed the Dniester is *Miterevye Kyshina* – The stones of the customs. The place is probably in front of today’s Soroca; see George P. Majeska, *Russian Travellers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1984), 180, footnote 16. Giurescu identified the place with Tighina; see C. C. Giurescu, *Târguri sau orașe și cetăți moldovene din secolul al X-lea până la mijlocul secolului al XVI-lea* (Moldavian boroughs or cities and citadels from the tenth century to the middle of the sixteenth) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1967), 293.

³³ The name Wallachian is used here as an ethnic determinative. Moldavians were often named Wallachians in the medieval sources, both Western and Eastern.

³⁴ Zosima’s account is edited, both in Russian and English translation, in Majeska, *Russian Travellers*, 178-180. The fragment regarding Moldavia is edited in Romanian translation in the first volume of *Călători străini*, 43-44.

³⁵ Panaitescu considered that in medieval Wallachia there were three types of customs: at a market town, at a mountain and at a ford; see Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 150.

³⁶ It is worth noting that Zosima traveled from Kiev with *merchants and great magnates* (И поидох от Киева с купцы и велможами с великими). The editor of the text believes that this “Tartar road” was probably the standard route taken by merchants going between Kiev and Belgorod; see Majeska, *Russian Travellers*, 178, footnote 14.

³⁷ Miron Costin mentions, among the duties of the *vornic*, that of organising “the guards of the fords and borders,” see Miron Costin, “Poema Polonă” (Polish Poem), in *Opere* (Works), ed. P. P. Panaitescu (Bucharest, Ed. pentru Literatură, 1965), 238. This illustrates the connected development of the military control on fords and borders.

Wallachia: “From Târnovo we arrived in a city named Șiştov. Here we crossed the Danube. Then, we arrived in Wallachia.”³⁸

The Carpathians are another case of a natural borderline which was transformed into a political frontier. Fortunately, one document mentioning the end of the process survives.³⁹ In 1520 the Wallachian and Transylvanian voievods, Neagoe Basarab and Ioan Zapolya, established the frontier between the river Olt and the city of Râşova.⁴⁰ The frontier was drawn along the peaks of the mountains, which are its distinguishing features,⁴¹ although this did not exclude the use of artificial signs.⁴² From a comparative perspective, there are three relevant aspects to this document: the place where the frontier was drawn, the actors, and the motivation. The area delimited is not by chance in the western part of Wallachia, which had the highest population density from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries onwards.⁴³ The two voievodes entrusted the task of settling the frontier to the nobles and boyars that had properties in that area for two reasons: they knew best the places and their lands were directly involved.⁴⁴ The motivation for this action is not clearly specified in the document, but

³⁸ This is the account of the German pilgrims Peter Sparnau and Ulrich von Tennstadt; see *Călători străini*, vol.1, 19.

³⁹ Document no. 194, *DRH-B*, vol.2, 375. The manner in which the document was elaborated, namely the lack of any reference to a previous settlement of the frontier, indicates that this was probably the first in this area.

⁴⁰ *Òææá, òíããà uòàèìèøá è õìòàðàì wââì äãà çàìèè wò ìëàìéìè, èèîæá àà ñá çìáãò: wò êîèà Wèòuèîâ äàæá àì Ðúøààà, wò éú Àðããèñîþ çàìèè è wò éú Âèàøéîþ Çàìèè.*

⁴¹ I give an excerpt from the document to illustrate the settlement of the border on peaks: *è wò òuãã àãñ ïî àðúõ àì ìëàìéì Èðàèuè ìèõîèîâ è ìëàìéì Èuîáíuè è wò òíà àãñ, u äãã çìáã ñá ìëàìéì Èðãpwàà è ìëàìéì çìáã ìà Áããã è ìëàìéì Wîãøàðàè.*

⁴² The boundary signs are explicitly mentioned: *è ááèh¾è ïw ìëàìéìè.*

⁴³ See the map of Wallachian settlements in the Appendix.

⁴⁴ The Haşeg nobles were from Răchitova, Mujina, Măţeşti, Sătcili and Râul Bărbat. The Wallachian boyars were from Crasna, Borăşti, Româneşti, Baia, and Polovragi.

it can be presumed that it was in the economic interest of the local lords, who were the ones who actually made the decision.⁴⁵

Returning to our case study, a simple view of a map shows that these examples cannot be extrapolated to the situation of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier, for the simple reason that between the two states there is no obvious natural barrier. If one wants to find one, this is the river Siret, placed between the Moldavian Plateau, the Romanian Plain and the Sub-Carpathians, rather than the stream Milcov, traditionally considered the border between Moldavia and Wallachia.⁴⁶ Therefore, the lack of any significant natural barrier is the first defining feature of the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier.

However, this does not necessarily imply the absence of a linear boundary. Since artificial signs were used for marking the boundaries of individual estates, as is abundantly attested especially in Moldavia,⁴⁷ these could be also used for marking the borders of the states.⁴⁸ In the charters, both natural references and artificial signs, such as mounds of earth (*meta terrea*, ìãèèè àîîàîà),⁴⁹ pillars,⁵⁰ scratches on trees (Rom. *cioplej*),⁵¹ boundary-crosses,⁵² are mentioned as delimiting the boundaries of an

⁴⁵ The local lords were not just emissaries, but decision-makers acting under the authority of the voievod, and in the assembly held at Morişor they took the decisions and settled the frontier. The oath taken by both parts, not to steal or plunder, supports the idea of an economically determined agreement.

⁴⁶ *Geografia României* (Geography of Romania), ed. Lucian Badea (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1984), vol.1 *Geografia fizica* (Physical geography), 632 and 645.

⁴⁷ Of the 755 villages mentioned in documents in Moldavia prior to 1449, 525 have old boundaries. See Henri H. Stahl, *Contribuții la studiul satelor devălmășe românești* (Contributions to the study of Romanian village communities), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1958), 105.

⁴⁸ Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between these two types of boundaries: state and estate. Two documents from 1366 describe the procedure of delimiting the estates of a Hungarian subject, Peter of Cisnădie, from the land of Vladislav, voievod of Wallachia (*a terra seu tenutis magnifici viri, domini Ladislai, vaivode Transalpini*). *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 84. On the one hand this could be a local affair, between estates in Făgăraș; on the other, since King Louis did not make any distinction between the “Făgăraș feuds” and Wallachia –(*terra nostra Transalpina*), this procedure could be regarded as similar to that used for the Wallachian-Hungarian border.

⁴⁹ ìãèèè àîîàîà. *DRH-A*, vol. 1, doc. 38, from 1414, 53.

⁵⁰ àî ñòîèîî; àî òîòàðh Õâðîèè-âmâîú. *DRH-A*, vol.1, doc. 79 form 1428, 116.

⁵¹ äää ðîuáhæîä îà äðhâ@. *DRH-A*, vol.1, doc. 264 from 1446, 373

estate. Mentioned later, although probably in use from the period under discussion here, are the aurochs (Rom. *bouri*), blocks of stone or sometimes trees on which an aurochs was inscribed.⁵³ In Wallachia boundary signs, although probably in use in that period, are attested only in a later period.⁵⁴

More important than the existence of a technical means for artificially delimiting a linear frontier is the motivation, which, in the absence of a modern conception of territoriality, can be best determined economically.⁵⁵ Different types of economic interests in a geographic area, in the routes (the commercial one), or in the land itself (the agricultural case) determine different models of frontier. In the first, the accent is put on controlling the key points and this is the model that can be applied to the frontier area between Wallachia and Moldavia for a long period. The second case requires a clear delimitation of the land; the border between states being in fact the boundaries of individual estates, clearly delimited due to a decrease in the ratio between available agricultural land and the size of the population. This second stage is attested in an extremely late period for the Moldavian-Wallachian study case: the first known accord concerning the frontier that settled the usage of the land by the inhabitants of the two sides of the border dates only from 1706.⁵⁶

⁵² N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor prin călători* (History of Romanians through travellers) (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1981), 167-168.

⁵³ The aurochs was the medieval symbol of Moldavia. From here the Romanian expression “s-au mutat bourii” (literally: moving the aurochs) which in fact means to “move the boundary.” Ibid., 168.

⁵⁴ For example, a document from 1495 of Vlad Călugărul (1481-1495) mentions the use of boundary signs: *DRH-B*, vol. 1., 415-416. Mentions of Wallachian estates' boundaries are not only later but also scarcer than the Moldavian ones. On a sample of 100 documents, corresponding for Wallachia to the period 1352-1450 and for Moldavia to 1384-1430, only three Wallachian documents depict the boundaries of the donation (two of them for Făgăraș donations being probable later interpolations) against 34 Moldavian documents. It is possible that the different chancellery practices originated from different realities of human geography.

⁵⁵ The theory of human territoriality based on an economic model that emphasised the relationship between the resources and the costs of use/defense of an area, was contested by a model stressing ecological variables as major factors determining territoriality. Rada Dyson-Hudson and Eric Alden Smith, “Human territoriality: an ecological reassessment,” *American Anthropologist* 80 (1978): 21-41.

2.2. An overview of the landscape

The region through the middle of which the future Moldavian-Wallachian boundary was to be drawn, from west towards east, is composed by two main geographic units disposed on a north-south direction. The sub-Carpathians hills and the Carpathians Mountains are located in present day departments of Buzău, in Wallachia, and Vrancea, in Moldavia. Towards the east the Wallachian plain and the southern Moldavian plain are also a geographic unit. The rivers Putna, Milcov, Siret, Bârlad in Moldavia and the river Buzău in Wallachia formed an alluvial plain easily to be flooded with unstable riverbeds until the modern period⁵⁷. Paradoxically, the frontier was to be eventually established through the middle of these geographic units, dividing them.

The two geographic areas, the plains on one hand and the mountains and hills on the other, are also differentiated by the types of soil. In the sub-Carpathians hills the type of soil suggest that these were probably forested areas for a long period.⁵⁸ This is confirmed by the numerous clearance areas attested here in the sixteenth and the seventeenth century.⁵⁹ The soil of this plains region, the levigate chernozem, is different, specific to unforrested areas and excellent for agricultural activities.⁶⁰ These unforrested plain regions⁶¹ represented a perfect corridor for the steppe people coming

⁵⁶ C. Constantinescu-Mircești, "Marginea țării," 85.

⁵⁷ For a discussion on the frontier dispute provoked by the change of the Siret riverbed in the eighteenth century see C. Constantinescu-Mircești, "Contribuții," 65-70.

⁵⁸ N. Florea, I. Munteanu, C. Rapaport, *Geografia solurilor României* (The geography of the soils of Romania) (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1968), 61.

⁵⁹ For a discussion on the sixteenth-seventeenth century modifications of the landscape in the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier region see C. Constantinescu-Mircești, "Marginea țării," 81-121.

⁶⁰ N. Florea, *Geografia*, 466.

⁶¹ In his monograph on the medieval forest, Giurescu does not mention any important forest in the frontier area of Moldavia - Wallachia. C. C. Giurescu, *A History of the Romanian Forest* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1980). If we take as a comparative base the nineteenth century realities, it is clear that the area between the rivers Siret and Ialomița is the most unforrested region from the entire territory of Wallachia and Moldavia.

from the eastern steppes. This gave the region its paradoxical status: a good land for agriculture, but in the same time an open space, communicating directly with the eastern steppes through Bugeac, and therefore it was exposed to recurrent incursions, which had a significant demographic impact.

2.3. Demographic realities of the borderland

The number of inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia, especially during the first century of their existence, remains a disputed matter in historiography, mainly due to the lack of sources. For Wallachia, a figure between 266,000 and 700,000 inhabitants was proposed, with variations determined by the source chosen for estimate and by ideological factors.⁶² Ioan Bogdan, who used a regressive reckoning, estimated the populations of Wallachia and Moldavia in the fifteenth century to have been 266,000 and 415,625 inhabitants, respectively.⁶³ P. P. Panaitescu based his evaluation on the size of the army and, by assuming a ratio of 1:10 between the army and the general population, he estimated that Wallachia was inhabited by 400,000-500,000 people.⁶⁴ The discovery of two fiscal references allowed Louis Roman to propose an even higher number, of approximately 700,000.⁶⁵ For Moldavia historians estimated approximately 400,000 inhabitants at the time of Stephen the Great (1457-

⁶² These estimates were ideologically influenced by the nationalist attitude that requires the emphasis of present Romania as a land inhabited during history by Romanians, in large number and in all regions.

⁶³ Ioan Bogdan starts with the census from 1885-1886, and projects his estimation into the past for four centuries; therefore his results are questionable; see Louis Roman, "Populația Țării Românești în secolele XIV-XV" (Wallachian population in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries), *RdI* 39(1986): 669.

⁶⁴ According to some Venetian sources, the army in the time of Vlad Țepeș (1556-1562, 1566-1567) had 30,000-40,000 soldiers. Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 74-75. Ștefan Ștefănescu, by a different estimation, arrived at the same number. Ștefan Ștefănescu, "La situation démographique de la Valachie aux XIV^e, XV^e et XVI^e siècles d'après les conjonctures socio-politiques," *Nouvelles Études d'Histoire* 4 (1970) 47-61.

⁶⁵ Louis Roman uses the two accounts discovered and edited by Șerban Papacostea, both using Hungarian sources, which give for Wallachia an amount of 60,000 families (in the sense of fiscal units). See Șerban Papacostea, "Populație și fiscalitate în Țara Românească în secolul al XV-lea: un nou izvor" (Population and fiscality in fifteenth-century Wallachia: a new source), *RdI* 33 (1980): 1179-1786. However, Roman's estimation is unconvincing, and shows a clear tendency of arriving to higher numbers. Roman, "Populația," 669-684.

1504); while this is generally accepted, that does not mean it is more certain. Louis Roman estimated the evolution of the number of the Moldavian villages as follows: 1000, around the year 1241, 850 at the middle of the fourteenth century and 1500-1600, one century later.⁶⁶ Based on these data, the average population density in Wallachia and Moldova is estimated for the middle of the fourteenth century, taking into account their entire future territory, at 4 and respectively 3 inhabitants per square kilometres.⁶⁷ I hope that this short review has determined some limits necessary for our approach and also showed the difficulties and the uncertainty of demographic studies for medieval Wallachia and Moldavia.

The distribution of population is an even more difficult matter, due especially to the lack of studies on this topic.⁶⁸ However, an approach based on three different categories of sources, namely narrative, diplomatic, and archaeological, can offer a reasonably accurate picture, with special regard to the frontier zone of Moldavia and Wallachia.⁶⁹

The few narrative sources from this period that contain references to the population agree that medieval Moldavia and Wallachia were, by contemporary standards, sparsely inhabited. The chronicler of King Louis of Hungary, John of Küküllő, describes Moldavia as a “land subject to the Hungarian Crown but for a long

⁶⁶ Louis Roman, “Toponimia și demografia istorică” (Toponymy and historical demography), *RI* 8 (1997): 432.

⁶⁷ See a comparative table of population density in Bogdan Murgescu, *Istorie românească, istorie universală* (Romanian history, universal history) (Bucharest: Editura Teora, 2000) 22. For Transylvania the estimate is 7 inhabitants/km², for Poland 10 inhabitants/km², and for Italy 33 inhabitants/km².

⁶⁸ A notable exception is represented by the study of Robin Baker, “Magyars, Mongols, Romanians and Saxons: Population Mix and Density in Moldavia, from 1230 to 1365,” *Balkan Studies* 37 (1996): 63-76.

⁶⁹ Some historians remarked that this region had a low density of population: “In the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the density of the population appears to have been relatively uniform in the centre and north of Moldavia, on the other hand in the steppes north of the mouth of the Danube, the population was sparse because of the incursions of tribes of Turkish and Mongol horsemen,” Victor Spinei, *Moldavia in the 11th-14th Centuries* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1986), 137-138.

time empty of inhabitants owing to the proximity of the Tatars.”⁷⁰ Ghillebert of Lanoy, a messenger of the Duke of Burgundy, travelling in 1421 in the hinterland of Cetatea Albă and Kilia in southern Moldavia, speaks of great deserted regions.⁷¹ In the Lublau treaty (1412) the expression *campis desertis* is used, referring to the same territories.⁷² Another Burgundian, the crusader Walerand of Wavrin, gives a similar account, this time for Wallachia, around 1445: “la Vallaquie...ung grant et spacieux pays, mal peuple en aulcunes marches.”⁷³ The most interesting demographic aspect accounted by Wavrin regards the uneven distribution of population in Wallachia and the attempts of the voievod, at that time Vlad Dracul, to colonise the marginal regions - towards Moldavia? – with people from south of the Danube.⁷⁴ Although geographically imprecise, these accounts paint an image of a scarcely populated territory. However, this information has been questioned by historians, with solid arguments, such as the purpose of the authors,⁷⁵ their comparative view,⁷⁶ and the image reflected by other sources;⁷⁷ therefore the narrative sources cannot constitute, at least not only by themselves, a reliable basis for historical reconstruction.

⁷⁰ See Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica Hungarorum*, vol.1, ed. E. Galántai and J. Kristó (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985), 185.

⁷¹ “En m’en allay par grans desers, de plus de quatre lieues, en laditte Wallachie.” *Călători străini*, vol. 1, 50.

⁷² *CEV*, 230.

⁷³ Jehan de Wauvrin, *Croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grant Bretagne, a present nomme Engleterre*, vol. 5, ed. William Hardy and Edward L. C. P. Hardy. (London, 1891. Reprint, Nendeln: Kraus, 1967), 104.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 105

⁷⁵ Probably John of Küküllo intention is to play down the significance of the loss of Moldavia to Hungary; see criticism by Spinei, *Moldavia*, 206.

⁷⁶ The Burgundians came from a highly inhabited region of Europe, and therefore the subjective nature of their view, with its implicit comparison to their country, must be taken into account. See P.P.Panaitescu remarks on Wavrin in *Mircea*, 74, and the analyses of the significance of the word “desert” by Lanoy in *Călători străini*, vol. 1, 61.

⁷⁷ The most often quoted for a positive demographic image is the patriarchal document by which the second metropolitan see of Wallachia was founded at Severin. The Patriarch of Constantinople justifies this act by the great amount of population. Hurmuzaki, I/1, 8-9. Another positive account is that of the archbishop John of Sultanieh, who appreciates that the two Wallachias *non habent civitates magnas sed villas multas*. A. Kern, “Der ‘Libellus de notitia orbis’ Johannes III O. P. Erzbischofs von Sultanieh,” *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 7 (1938): 103.

A second category of sources that can be used for analysing the distribution of population in Wallachia and Moldavia is represented by internal documents, mainly donation charters. The 100 preserved Wallachian documents from 1352-1450 contain references to 163 settlements, as compared with more than 750 in the 298 Moldavian documents.⁷⁸ Most of them, thanks to the geographical references contained in the documents, can be located. Maps of Wallachian and southwestern Moldavian settlements mentioned in internal documents are appended to this thesis. The attested settlements represent, of course, the lower limit; in reality their number must have been much higher.⁷⁹ For our approach, more important than this aspect, is whether the maps reflect a correct image of the population distribution: for this, possible distorting factors must be taken into account.

The first possible objection concerns the way in which the documents were preserved. If in Moldavia secular donations are more numerous than monastic ones, in Wallachia most of the documents represent donations to monasteries, and were preserved by these.⁸⁰ Therefore, one could argue that the Wallachian map of settlements is rather a map of monasteries' possessions, with the settlements concentrated around the monastic sites of Vodița, Tismana, Cotmeana, Glavacioc, and Snagov. The counter-argument is that there was no strict geographical connection between a monastery and its possessions. It was not mandatory for these to be circumscribed to an area around the monastery and sometimes they can be located at a

⁷⁸ The documents are published in *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, A series for Moldavia and B series for Wallachia.

⁷⁹ In his analyses for the period between 1352-1625, Ion Donat appreciates the number of Wallachian settlements at 3.220. Ion Donat, "Așezările omenești în Țara Românească în secolele XIV-XVII" (Human settlements in Wallachia from fourteenth to seventeenth century), *SRI* 9 (1956): 75-95. Lia Lehr contested the result with strong arguments - Donat includes in his list toponimes that probably do not represent settlements - and proposed the amount of 2.100. L. Lehr, "Factori determinanți în evoluția demografică a Țării Românești în secolul al XVII-lea" (Determinant factors in the demographic evolution of Wallachia in the seventeenth century), *SMIM* 7 (1974): 161-205.

⁸⁰ Almost 2/3 of Wallachian documents represents charters for monasteries and less than 1/3 of the Moldavians.

great distance from it. This is the case for the village situated at the mouth of river Ialomița given by Mircea to the Cozia monastery.⁸¹

The second possible distorting factor regards the nature of the documents. In these charters only the villages in which a change in the property system took place are mentioned, as the settlement was usually transferred from the ruler's domain into monastic or boyar property. Therefore, the villages inhabited by free peasants are not attested in documents. This could explain the blank spots on the maps, especially those from the region that interests us directly. Indeed, in the region of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier the so-called "Republic of Vrancea" is attested,⁸² where the percentage of free villages was substantial.⁸³ However, the existence of these villages of free peasants could be due to a later peopling of the area after the emergence of medieval states.

The third factor refers to the issuers of these documents. Since the charters were written by the chancelleries of Wallachia and Moldavia, they refer only to the territories within these states; thus, it is possible that the "blank spots" represent areas outside the control of the two voievodes. This would also explain why the settlements from the frontier area are mentioned only in a later period.⁸⁴ Analyses of the political events will demonstrate that this is the case at least for the beginning of the period studied.

⁸¹ *DRH-B*, vol.1, 65-66.

⁸² The name of Republic is given by Dimitrie Cantemir to three Moldavian regions: Câmpulung, Tigheciu and Vrancea. Cantemir, *Descriptio*, 303. This denomination is taken over by H.H. Stahl who assumes that this represents an archaic form (pre-state) of social organisation. Henri H. Stahl, *Les anciennes communautés villageoises roumaines* (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1969), 37.

⁸³ See Stahl's maps and estimations in *Ibid.*, 25-32.

⁸⁴ See the appendix.

However, the use of the third, independent,⁸⁵ source, archaeological evidence, reinforces the image of population distribution with a low density in the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier zone, reflected by the maps of settlements. In Wallachia's case, a map of the fourteenth-century settlements attested by archaeological sites reveals almost deserted regions in eastern Wallachia.⁸⁶ For Moldavia, an archaeological survey revealed 135 locations with evidence from the second half of the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth.⁸⁷ Of these, 117 are in the northern part of Moldavia, the rest in the Central Plateau and the Huși-Elan-Horinceu depression and none in the plain of Siret or in the southern part of the Sub-Carpathian region.⁸⁸ Another cartography of archaeologically attested settlements from the tenth to the fourteenth century, started this time from a different base,⁸⁹ again reveals blank spots in northeastern Walachia and southern Moldavia. On this map there are no settlements between Buzău and Siret in the period from the twelfth to the fourteenth century, but a concentration of settlements can be noticed in the Brăila zone, between Buzău,

⁸⁵ The archaeological investigation did not follow the written evidence. The similarity of the archaeological evidence, belonging to the same material culture, discovered on the entire surface of Moldavia and Wallachia - some sites being also documentarily attested - shows that the same type of settlement is attested by both written and archaeological sources. I appended to the thesis the map of Spinei, see map 3, because is the only one that covers the entire medieval Moldavia, not only the present day Moldova region from Romania.

⁸⁶ Panait remarks that 40 sites from this century are grouped in the northern region (Olt-Cotmeana-Târgoviște-Târgșor-Poienari), the southern (along the Danube) and in the central part (near today Bucharest, Verbicioara, Craiova). P. I. Panait, "Cercetarea arheologică a culturii materiale din Țara Românească în secolul al XIV-lea" (Archaeological research on the material culture from fourteenth-century Wallachia), *SCIVA* 22 (1971): 247-263.

⁸⁷ The authors mention in the Introduction that their repertory and map is based on a survey of the entire surface of Moldavia. However they did not include the part of Moldavia then situated in the U.S.S.R., today in Ukraine and Republic of Moldova). N. Zaharia, M. Petrescu-Dâmbovița and Em. Zaharia, *Așezările din Moldova. De la paleolitic până în secolul al XVIII-lea* (Moldavian settlements. From Palaeolithic until the eighteenth century) (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei, 1970), 12-17.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁸⁹ Olteanu, contrary to Zaharia and Petrescu-Dâmbovița, takes into account only the sites which reveal settlements (cemeteries, dwellings) and refuses to identify as settlements any discoveries of ceramic and coins. Ștefan Olteanu, "Evoluția procesului de organizare statală la est și la sud de Carpați în secolele IX-XIV" (The evolution of the process of state organisation east and south of the Carpathians from the ninth to the fourteenth century), *SRI* 23 (1971), 759.

Călmățui and the Danube.⁹⁰ This set of maps based on archaeological evidence must also be analysed taking into account two possible distorting factors: the non-uniformity of archaeological investigation and the conservation of material evidence of settlements.⁹¹

The correlation of written sources with the archaeological evidence - each of them projecting problematic images but whose overlap shows an image close to medieval reality – strongly suggests that the future Moldavian-Wallachian frontier area was poorly inhabited in the fourteenth century, even compared with the other Wallachian and Moldavian regions. The population of this frontier region progressively increased from the last decades of the fourteenth century, and part of its growth was due to the population movements.

2.4. Population movements

Most of the scholars consider, although in different degrees,⁹² that the main reason for the depopulation of Wallachia and Moldavia, and especially of the future frontier areas, was the Mongol invasion from 1241-1242. The Mongols' demographic impact is difficult to estimate, due to the lack of sources both before and after the invasion, but I think there are two factors that have to be considered. First, probably only a small number of people inhabited the Moldavian and Wallachian regions before the invasions. Second, the Mongol rulership had not only negative

⁹⁰ The few archaeological discoveries in Buzău - Siret area revealing human settlements from this region are from the period from the tenth to the twelfth century: Dragoslaveni, Pietroasa, Balotesti, Milcovia (sic), Malu, Oituz, Adjudul Vechi, Ibrianu. Olteanu believes that Brăila zone, which in his opinion was a pre-state formation, was incorporated by Wallachia in a later period. *Ibid.*, 766.

⁹¹ The dwellings from the Sub-Carpathians, built from wood and the topsoil, are less well conserved than the hovels from the plains and plateaux. *Ibid.*, 761.

⁹² One of the most radical is Robin Baker who considers that Moldavia after the Mongol invasion had become a wasteland with sparse settlement of marauding groups of Tatars. Robin Baker, "Magyar, mongols," 69. However, the archaeological evidence contradicts his thesis.

demographic consequences, but also a positive impact.⁹³ To my mind, the Mongol invasion had two main demographic consequences over Moldavia and Wallachia. First, a shift in the population distribution took place. A comparative view of the archaeological maps, especially those of Moldavia,⁹⁴ shows a major change between the tenth-eleventh and the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. During these three centuries numerous settlements from the plain, unforested zones disappeared, and the density of settlements in the hilly, forested areas increased. This shift was caused, at least partially, by the Mongols.⁹⁵ Second, the impact of the Mongol invasion from 1241 was not a massive depopulation, but rather a delay in the demographic growth of an area scarcely inhabited.⁹⁶

The end of the Mongol domination over the future Moldavian-Wallachian frontier areas marked the beginning of population movements into these regions. The prolonged Tatar control over these areas would explain why the southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia were untouched by the population movements that had a major impact over the neighbouring regions. If we accept that the settlement of the csángós in Moldavia took place in the fourteenth century,⁹⁷ then the

⁹³ The temporary presence of the Alans in the future Moldavia is attested both by written and cartographic sources; see Victor Spinei, “Coexistența populației locale din Moldova cu grupurile etnice alogene în secolele XII-XIV” (The coexistence of the local population from Moldavia with the foreign ethnic groups in the 13th and 14th centuries), *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis* 2 (1986): 157-176, here 164.

⁹⁴ For such maps see Zaharia, “Așezările,” or more recently Dan Gh. Teodor, *Descoperiri arheologice și numismatice la Est de Carpați în secolele V-XI* (Archaeological and numismatic findings eastwards the Carpathians from the 5th to the 11th century) (Bucharest: Muzeul Național de Istorie, 1997).

⁹⁵ Spinei suggested that this shift began already in the eleventh-twelfth centuries, and was caused also by the Turanic migrations; see Victor Spinei, “Restructurări etnice la nordul gurilor Dunării în secolele XIII-XIV” (Ethnic reshaping at the North of the mouth of the Danube in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), *Carpica* 24 (1993): 37-65, here 39.

⁹⁶ In this sense the attempts of installing the Teutonic Order and the missionary bishopric of the Cumans illustrate the early thirteenth century attempts of the Hungarian kingdom to extend, and to some degree, to colonise the regions beyond the Carpathians.

⁹⁷ Robin Baker suggested this period in his article “On the Origin of the Moldavian Csángós,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 75 (1997): 658-680. He supported his hypothesis by two arguments. The political aspect emphasises the decline of the Tatar rulership over Moldova during the reign of Louis I. The linguistic argument notes that the Moldavian villages with Hungarian name contain the suffix element –falva or –vasara (village and market) and there were probably founded not earlier than in the fourteenth century, see also Baker, “Magyar, Mongols,” 72-73.

only possible explanation for the fact that they did not settle in the southern Moldavian regions is that these areas were still controlled by the Tatars.⁹⁸ Therefore, significant population movements into southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia began only in the last decades of the fourteenth century.

Although the scarcity of both archaeological and written sources makes it impossible to follow these movements in details, some of them can still be identified. Few scholars attempted to use the archaeological evidence in order to identify the population movements from the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries.⁹⁹ A notable exception is the study of Maria Comşa on the Wallachian types of dwellings,¹⁰⁰ in which, by analysing the evolution of the rural habitation, she identifies two major stages of population movements: from plains areas towards the hilly and mountainous regions - at the middle of the thirteenth century, and a reverse movement - from the beginning of the fourteenth century. The direct written evidence is rather unclear, and refers only to isolated population movements. There are two terms which appear in Wallachian and Moldavian charters that suggest such population movements: ‘silişte’¹⁰¹ (abandoned village) and ‘slobozie’¹⁰² (freedom). However this mentions are too few to allow us to reconstruct a general image of the main directions of these movements.

Since the available archaeological and direct written evidence cannot be used for identifying population movements into the future frontier region between

⁹⁸ See below, chapter 3.

⁹⁹ The main reason is that the archaeology was developed in Romanian scholarship mainly for searching for proofs of the Romanian continuity.

¹⁰⁰ Maria Comşa, “Types d’habitations de caractère rural de la région comprise entre les Carpates Méridionales et le Danube aux XIIIe-XVIIe siècles,” *Dacia* 21 (1977): 299-317.

¹⁰¹ Such ‘Silişti’ are mentioned in Wallachian documents in the years: 1374, 1385, 1387. For the meaning of the word see Iorgu Iordan, *Toponimie românească* (Romanian toponimy) (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei, 1963), 257-258.

¹⁰² The word *slobozie* designates the special statute of the village, which reveals the conditions of its colonisation. Ion Donat, although it includes a much longer period, until the nineteenth century, emphasised the fact that the villages named from the word *slobozia* are extremely numerous towards the frontier with Moldavia, but most probably they date from the seventeenth century; see Ion Donat,

Wallachia and Moldavia, the main source for this purpose is constituted by indirect written evidence, namely the toponyms. There are some names of villages from the region, attested before 1450, that suggest a colonisation:¹⁰³ Borodicieni, Săseni, Spineni, Stănigeni.¹⁰⁴ The ‘eni’ suffix shows the provenance of the people who settled in the new villages.¹⁰⁵ One of them, Săs, shows that these settlers were Germans, who probably came from Transylvania. Another toponym, this time referring to a region not to a singular settlement, that implies a colonisation is ‘Olteni’.¹⁰⁶ The name implies a colonisation with people from around the river Olt, which crosses Transylvania and Western Wallachia.¹⁰⁷ First mentioned in a charter from 1435, issued by Iliiaș, the voievod of Moldavia,¹⁰⁸ the dimensions of the region Olteni are unclear. Nevertheless, the appearance of the region in the oldest maps of Moldavia, that of Reichersdorf,¹⁰⁹ Jacob Castaldo,¹¹⁰ and Mercator,¹¹¹ shows that it was an important region of southern Moldavia. Some others name of villages, such as Muntenii-Puțeni, Muntenii, could also be interpreted as a proof of a Wallachian

“Câteva aspecte geografice ale toponimiei din Tara Românească” (Some geographical aspects of Wallachian toponymy), *Fonetică și dialectologie* 4 (1962): 101-131.

¹⁰³ By the use of the word ‘colonisation’ I do not automatically imply the existence of a coherent policy of population settlement from a political authority.

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix 1.

¹⁰⁵ For the relationship of subordination expressed by the suffix *-eni* or *-ani* see Iordan, *Toponimie*, 404 and Gh. Bolocan, “Structura numelor de sate românești” (The structure of Romanian names of villages), *Limba Română* 25 (1976): 593-609.

¹⁰⁶ C. C. Giurescu, “Oltenii și Basarabia. Colonizări muntene în sudul Moldovei în veacurile XIV-XV” (Olteni and Basarabia. Wallachian colonisation in southern Moldavia in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) *Revista istorică română* 10 (1940): 130-140.

¹⁰⁷ C. C. Giurescu assumed that the name of the region came from the Wallachian colonists from Oltenia settled here by the Wallachian voievod in order to assure a closer contact with his lands from Bessarabia; see Giurescu, “Olteni,” 138. The first who suggested that the name of the regions could come from the Transylvanian settlers is Gh. Brătianu; see “În jurul întemeierii statelor românești” (Concerning the foundation of the Romanian states), *RI* 4 (1993): 372.

¹⁰⁸ Wëöhíû, see Mihai Costăchescu, ed., *Documente moldovenești înainte de Ștefan cel Mare* (Moldavian charters before Stephen the Great) (Iași: Viața Românească, 1931), vol. 2, 682.

¹⁰⁹ M. Popescu-Spineni, *România în istoria cartografiei până la 1600* (Romania in the history of cartography until 1600), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Imprimeria Națională, 1938), map no. 43.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, map no. 46.

¹¹¹ The map is reproduced in *Atlas Hungaricus: Magyarország nyomtatott térképei, 1528-1850* (Printed maps of Hungary 1528-1850), ed. Szantai Lajos, (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1996), 384-385.

colonisation into southern Moldavia.¹¹² The only way to date these movements is by correlating the demographic data with the political evolution. Taken into account the Wallachian-Moldavian political relationships,¹¹³ probably the Wallachians settled in this area at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Summarising, there are two elements that allow us to date with relative certainty the moment when the population movements affected this frontier area: it was in the last decade of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century. First, the previous population movements, especially with settlers coming from Transylvania, did not affect this region. Second, the people coming from Wallachia settled here most probably at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Therefore, the demographic evolution from this time frame (c. 1350- c. 1450) shows that the borderland between Wallachia and Moldavia was still an open frontier. To the population growth from the end of the fourteenth century, it corresponds a specific political evolution by which the Mongol legacy was claimed by Moldavia and Wallachia. As a result of the territorial expansion of the two principalities the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier was settled for the first time. An analysis of the political events will reinforce this hypothesis, and will allow us to identify the successive phases of the process.

¹¹² Giurescu, "Oltenii," 136.

¹¹³ See below, chapter 5.

Chapter 3. The Mongol legacy

The end of the Golden Horde's domination over southern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia represents the starting point of a process that was ended by the first settlement of the frontier between Wallachia and Moldavia. Traditionally, this process has been regarded exclusively from a political perspective, as a power struggle to control this region involving the Hungarian kingdom, Moldavia, and Wallachia. A more detailed view of the economic features of the region, correlated with the demographic realities analysed in the previous chapter, contradicts this opinion. As a steppe zone controlled by the Mongols for a longer period than the neighbouring areas, scarcely inhabited, not crossed by important trade routes, the region had little to offer. It was only after the zone was made secure from Mongol raids that population movement into this fertile area of frontier could intensify and determine a first settling of the border zone.

3.1. The Golden Horde's domination

Mongol control over the trans-Carpathian regions was a direct consequence of the 1241 invasion. Although there are still discussions on the exact moment when this domination began, immediately after the invasion of 1241¹¹⁴ or a few years later,¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ The opinion of a Mongol rule established immediately after the invasion of 1241, is expressed by Aurel Decei, and supported by Oriental sources. Aurel Decei, "L'invasion des Tatars de 1241/1242 dans nos regions selon la Djami ot-Tevarikh de Fazl ol-Lah Rasis od-Din," *RRH* 12 (1973): 120-121.

¹¹⁵ Sergiu Iosipescu argues that Mongol control over the south Carpathian region was established after 1247, when the Hungarian king gave possessions in this region to the military order of Hospitalers. He considers that the river Olt was the frontier between Mongol and Hungarian rule over this region; see Sergiu Iosipescu, "Românii din Carpații Meridionali la Dunărea de Jos de la invazia mongolă (1241-1243) până la consolidarea domniei a toată țara Românească. Războiul victorios purtat la 1330 împotriva cotoșirii ungare" (The Romanians from the South Carpathians to the Lower Danube from the Mongol invasion [1241-1243] to the consolidation of their reign over the entire Wallachia. The

Mongol control over the regions outside of the Carpathian arc is certain for the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth.¹¹⁶ Latin sources, especially Hungarian and papal, suggest directly¹¹⁷ and indirectly¹¹⁸ that the entire Carpathian-Danubian region had been pulled into the Mongol sphere of hegemony. Italian nautical maps show that the Mongols ruled over the region, but, as is the case with any medieval map, it is difficult to discern what is copied from other maps and what is newly introduced; therefore any chronology based on them is uncertain.¹¹⁹ Egyptian¹²⁰ and Arab sources are more detailed,¹²¹ confirming that in the first decades of the fourteenth century the Mongols controlled the regions between the Danube and the Carpathians as far as the Iron Gates.

Mongol dominance over the region did not imply direct rule. The distinction between the regions directly ruled by the Mongols and those that kept their own political structures, although submitting to Mongol dominance, is difficult to make,

victorious war from 1330 against the Hungarian invasion), 41-95, in *Constituirea statelor feudale românești* (The making of the medieval Romanian states), ed. Nicolae Stoicescu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1980), especially page 46.

¹¹⁶ However, T. R. Rjaboj held a different opinion, that the Mongols extended their domination over the southern part of Moldavia only to the middle of the fourteenth century. T. R. Rjaboj, *Šechr-al Džedid-zolotoordynskij gorod Dnestrovsko-Prutkogo meždureč ja*, as quoted by Victor Spinei, “Comerțul și geneza orașelor din sud-estul Moldovei (secolele XIII-XIV)” (Trade and the genesis of southeastern Moldavian towns [13th-14th centuries]), *Analele Brăilei* 1 (1993), 177.

¹¹⁷ A papal bull of John XXII from 1318, delimits the domains of the bishop of Caffa *ad partes Tatarorum*, his diocese including the territories “*a villa de Varia (-Varna) in Bulgaria usque Saray inclusive in longitudine et a mari Pontico usque ad terram Ruthenorum in latitudine.*” Also, successive charters of the Hungarian kings, from 1264, 1270, 1275, mention the Tatars from the borderland of the kingdom. Hurmuzaki I/1: 323, 347-348, 403-404.

¹¹⁸ Such indirect evidence is the disappearance of the title of ban of Severin from the Hungarian chancellery documents, which suggests Mongol control over the course of the Danube from the sea to the Iron Gates. Șerban Papacostea, *Between the Crusade and the Mongol Empire* (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1998), 193.

¹¹⁹ The nautical maps drawn by Petrus Vesconte around 1320 show that the Golden Horde held southern Moldavia. However, the Mongol dominance over southern Moldavia is reflected in Italian nautical maps even in the first half of the 15th century, which is evidently an anachronism. Spinei, *Moldavia*, 165.

¹²⁰ The Egyptian chroniclers Baibars and an-Nuwairi mentions that Toqtai (Tukal Buga) controlled the Western territories of the Golden Horde as far as the Iron Gates. Virgil Ciocâltan, “Alanii și începuturile statelor românești” (The Alans and the beginnings of the Romanian states), *Revista istorică* 6 (1995), 936.

¹²¹ In 1320-1321 the Arab chronicle Mufaddal stated : “sultan Ozbag-Khan reigns from the Iron Gates as far as Khorezm and Sudak and from Bulgar to the margins of Constantinople.” Virgil Ciocâltan,

especially because the border between the two regions did not remain the same for the entire period. For the eastern Carpathian regions, Victor Spinei tried to separate the two zones on the basis of the differences in the material culture reflected by the archaeological findings. Ceramics made of reddish-yellow clay, specific to the centres of production under the Horde's control, were discovered in southern Moldavia bordered by the Dniester to the east, Siret to the west, and the lower basin of the Răut and Bahlui to the north.¹²² Moreover, according to Spinei, the spread of this ceramic type coincides with the area in which Mongol coins circulated;¹²³ therefore, it can be assumed that southeastern Moldavia was an area directly administered by the Mongols. In my opinion, a different criterion for identifying the regions directly administered by the Mongols could be the landscape.¹²⁴ As steppe people, the Mongols preferred to control rather than to administer directly such regions as forested areas with a landscape unsuitable for their way of life. Applying this criterion to Moldavia, direct Mongol control would have been limited to the entire southern Moldavian region, both the southeast and the southwest, as well as northeastern and eastern Wallachia.¹²⁵

The end of the Golden Horde's control over this region is debated. Historians propose different explanations both for the causes that determined it and for the date when it took place.¹²⁶ Three dates have been proposed as marking the end of the

Mongolii și Marea Neagră în secolele XIII-XIV (The Mongols and the Black Sea in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries) (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1998), 236.

¹²² Spinei, *Moldavia*, 137.

¹²³ In the northwest half of the eastern - Carpathian region the coins recovered are especially Hungarian and Czech. *Ibid.*, 137.

¹²⁴ This idea was firstly suggested by Iorga who considered that: "the Tatars stopped at the forest and mountain wall of Carpathians." Iorga, *Basarabia*, 37.

¹²⁵ For an attempt at reconstructing the medieval landscape of the region see above the subchapter 2.2.

¹²⁶ Some historians emphasise the importance of the Hungarian and Lithuanian attacks. Others identify the cause of the decline as internal evolution of the Horde, with civil wars almost continuously after the death of Jani-Bag died in 1357. More than 20 khans claimed his succession in the next twenty years. Spinei, *Moldavia*, 186. Another factor invoked is the plague, the effects of which on the Golden Horde cannot be measured due to the scarcity of sources. Extremely interesting is the interpretation that tries

Golden Horde's domination over the region between the Carpathians and the Danube: 1345, 1362/1363, and 1368/1369. The first date is related to the Hungarian expedition of 1345, although the interpretation of the pertinent written sources is contradicted by the archaeological findings from southeastern Moldavia.¹²⁷ It is possible, however, that, as a consequence of the expedition of Lackfi, a Hungarian outpost was established in what was to become the state of Moldavia,¹²⁸ but certainly the southern regions were outside its influence. Another date proposed for the elimination of the Mongols' control over south-eastern Moldavia was that of the Lithuanian victory at Sinie Vody in 1362/1363.¹²⁹ The effects of this Tatar defeat are disputed among scholars, some considering it an isolated event, some suggesting a Lithuanian domination of the Black Sea coast between the Dnieper and the Dniester,¹³⁰ and others even speculating about an extension of Moldavia, inferring a dynastic alliance between the Grand Duke of Lithuanian and the Voievod of Moldavia.¹³¹ However, archaeological evidence contradicts this last hypothesis, revealing an untroubled life in the towns of the area such as Orheiul Vechi and Costești, and the continued circulation of the Horde's coins up to the end of the 1370s.¹³² Based mainly on this

to place the decline of the Golden Horde in the general context of Mongol policy. The disappearance of the Ilhanate in 1335 made the alliance between the Mongols and Mameluk Egypt useless and caused the fall of Black Sea commerce, see Ciocâltan, *Mongolii*, 186.

¹²⁷ For the archaeological findings that contradict this hypothesis, see Spinei, *Moldavia*, 202.

¹²⁸ Some historians consider that the "mark" of Dragoș was the direct consequence of the victory of Andrew Lackfi over the Mongols, see Șt. S. Gorovei, "L'Etat roumain de l'est des Carpates: la succession et la chronologie des princes de Moldavie au XIVe siècle," *RRH* 18 (1979), 488.

¹²⁹ At Sinie Vody in 1363 Olgierd, the Grand Duke, defeated a modest Mongol army led by three local leaders. Historians that argue for a disappearance of the Golden Horde's authority over the region north of the Danube mouth are Feodorov-Davadov and V.L.Egorov, quoted in Spinei, "Comerțul și geneza," 211.

¹³⁰ This is the opinion of R. Batura, *Lietuva tautu kovoje pries. Aukso Orda. Nuo Batu antpludzio iki musio prie Melynuju Vandenu*, (Lithuania in the popular struggle against the Golden Horde. From the invasion of Batu's hordes to the battle of Siniye Vody) as quoted by Dennis Deletant, "Genoese, Tatars and Rumanians at the Mouth of the Danube in the Fourteenth Century," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 62 (1984), 524-525.

¹³¹ See Constantin Cihodaru, "Observații cu privire la procesul de formare și de consolidare a statului feudal Moldova în secolele XI-XIV," (Remarks on the foundation and consolidation process of the medieval state of Moldavia, between the 11th and 14th centuries), *AIIA* 17 (1980): 131.

¹³² Spinei, *Moldavia*, 190.

archaeological evidence, Victor Spinei argued that the Mongols' retreat from southeastern Moldavia took place in 1368/1369.¹³³ These are the years when the prosperous urban centres of Orheiul Vechi and Costești were abandoned and the last Mongol coins in the region were minted.

The lack of unequivocal written sources and archaeological findings in southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia make it impossible to determine precisely how long these regions remained under the rule of the Golden Horde. Was it until the end of the 1360s, as was the case for southeastern Moldavia, or did it end earlier, as probably in northern Moldavia and western Wallachia. However, I think that considering the zone as a continuation of the eastern steppe from north of the mouth of the Danube, which remained longer under the Horde's control, the first hypothesis seems more probable.

3.2. From a pastoral to an agricultural landscape. The economic features of the region.

The frontier region between the two emerging medieval states, Wallachia and Moldavia, was not directly crossed by the main trade roads, although these were located in its immediate vicinity. Moreover, the local commercial activities increased progressively only after the first half of the fifteenth century onwards. With a low population density and a steppe landscape, the region offered perfect conditions for Mongol pasturage. Only after the Mongols' retreat and the increase in population did agriculture become an important part of the economy of the region.

3.2.1. Commercial activities in the region

¹³³ Spinei, "Coexistența," 163.

For a long time, in Romanian historiography the creation of the states was related to trade routes, in an equivocal relationship in which each was in turn the cause or the effect.¹³⁴ My purpose here is not to re-open this chicken-and-egg debate, but rather to discern whether the region of the future Wallachian–Moldavian frontier was of any interest from a commercial point of view.

Two categories of trade routes, long-distance and local, crossed medieval Wallachia and Moldavia. The long-distance trade routes that linked the Black Sea and Central Europe, either through Wallachia and Hungary or through Moldavia and Poland, existed by the end of the fourteenth century.¹³⁵ The existence of a trade route from the Black Sea through the Baltic Sea to Flanders is attested as early as the first half of the fourteenth century in the *portulan* of Dulcert.¹³⁶ Probably the connection was made through the “Tatar road” (Caffa-Tana-Lviv), and only in the last years of the fourteenth century did the “Moldavian road” (from Cetatea Albă to Lviv along on the Dniester valley) replace it.¹³⁷ The oldest preserved privilege issued by a Moldavian Voievod, in favour of Lviv merchants, dates from 1408, and it was

¹³⁴ Although he was not the first to underline the political consequences of the trade routes, P.P. Panaitescu used this thesis in a seductive demonstration of medieval political Romanian dualism, see P. P. Panaitescu, “De ce au fost Tara Românească și Moldova țări separate” (Why Wallachia and Moldavia have been separated states), 99-110, in *Interpretări românești* (Romanian interpretations), (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1997). For a criticism of this connection, state-trade route, from a Marxist position, see Barbu T. Câmpina, “Despre rolul genovezilor la gurile Dunării în secolele XIII-XV” (On the role of the Genoese at the mouths of the Danube in the 13th and 14th centuries), *SRI* 6 (1953): 191-236. For a more nuanced interpretation of the theory see Șerban Papacostea, “Inceputurile politicii comerciale a Țării Românești și Moldovei (secolele XIV-XVI). Drum și stat” (The beginnings of the commercial policy of Wallachia and Moldavia [13th and 14th centuries]. Road and state), 163-220, in Ș. Papacostea, *Geneza statului în Evul Mediu românesc* (The genesis of the state in the Romanian Middle Ages) (Bucharest: Corint, 1999).

¹³⁵ Șerban Papacostea, “Genovezii din Marea Neagră și integrarea Europei Centrale în comerțul intercontinental” (The Genoese from the Black Sea and the integration of Central Europe in intercontinental trade), *RI* 7 (1996), 481.

¹³⁶ In the portulan of Angelino Dulcert from 1339 there is a note about Lviv: *ad civitatem istam vadunt mercatores, et postea vadunt per mare gothalandie ad partes fiandres specialiter in bruges*. The portulan is reproduced in Spineni, *România*, map 27. For trade activities in Moldavia during Golden Horde domination see Constantin C. Giurescu, “Le commerce sur le territoire de la Moldavie pendant la domination Tatare (1241-1352),” *Nouvelles Études d’Histoire* 3 (1963): 55-60.

¹³⁷ Papacostea, “Genovezii din Marea Neagră,” 479. The first mention of the “Moldavian road” in the documents of Lviv dates from 1382. P.P. Panaitescu, “La route commerciale,” 173.

renewed in 1434, 1456 and 1460.¹³⁸ Another trade route of Levantine commerce between the Black Sea and Central Europe passed through Wallachia, Transylvania and Hungary.¹³⁹ As attested by commercial privileges from 1358 and 1368, this route led from Braşov, in Transylvania, via the land route along the rivers Buzău or Ialomiţa to Brăila, and onwards on the Danube to Kilia and the Black Sea.¹⁴⁰

The degree of development of the trade routes of local importance is even more difficult to estimate for this period because of the lack of sources, which are limited to commercial privileges. For northeastern Wallachia and southwestern Moldavia there are two main routes: (1) the Moldavian-Wallachian road from Bacău to Adjud along the Siret valley to Galaţi;¹⁴¹ and (2) the Moldavian-Transylvanian road from Adjud to Troţuş along the valley of the Troţuş River. I think that a good indicator, although not incontestable, for estimating the development of these trade routes is the degree of urban development. Those southwestern Moldavian cities located on secondary commercial routes, such as Troţuş and Adjud,¹⁴² seem to have developed rather later, long after Cetatea Albă, Kilia and Brăila. This hypothesis is sustained by both archaeological results and written sources. The city of Adjud is mentioned for the first only in the commercial privilege given in 1433 by the Voievod

¹³⁸ The privileges are edited in Costăchescu, *Documente*, vol. 2, 631, 667, 788. For a short analysis see Panaitescu, "La route commerciale," 177-180.

¹³⁹ The existence of this Levantine trade route was contested at the end of the nineteenth century by Wilhelm Heyd and Dezső Csánki, but in 1976 Zsigmond Pál Pach made convincing arguments for the existence of such a route, although he accepted that it was not a main route for Levantine commerce. See Zsigmond Pál Pach, "Le commerce du Levant et la Hongrie au Moyen Age," *Annales ESC* 31 (1976), 1176-1194.

¹⁴⁰ Papacostea connects the ascension of Kilia from the middle of the fourteenth century with the opening of this branch of the Levantine trade. Şerban Papacostea, "De Vicina a Kilia. Byzantins et Genoïs aux bouches du Danube au XIVE siecle," *RESEE* 1 (1978), 77. Ernest Oberlander-Târnoveanu is of a different opinion, supported by numismatic discoveries. He suggests that this trade route was used from the end of the thirteenth century. Ernest Oberlander-Târnoveanu, "Documente numismatice privind relațiile spațiului est-Carpatic cu zona Gurilor Dunării în secolele XIII-XIV" (Numismatic material concerning the relationships of the eastern Carpathian space with the region of the mouths of the Danube in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), *AIIA* 22 (1985), 590.

¹⁴¹ Alexandru Artimon, "Considerații istorico-arheologice privind geneza și evoluția orașelor medievale din sud-vestul Moldovei" (Historical-archaeological remarks on the genesis and the evolution of medieval cities from southwestern Moldavia), *Carpica* 24 (1993), 72.

of Moldavia, Iliăș, to the German merchants from Transylvania, and Putna appears for the first time only in the privileges given to Lviv only in 1460.¹⁴³ Because of their absence from early privileges,¹⁴⁴ it can be inferred that the first period of the development of these cities was the first half of the fifteenth century. Archaeological evidence supports this. Few coins dating from the fourteenth century have been discovered in southwestern Moldavia,¹⁴⁵ and archaeological excavations in Troțuș, and Adjud revealed that the first phase of the development of these cities took place in the first half of the fifteenth century.¹⁴⁶ An advance of a few decades between the development of the two cities, for the city of Troțuș, even suggest that the Moldavian-Transylvanian trade route developed earlier than the Moldavian-Wallachian one.

3.2.2. From a pastoral to an agricultural landscape.

A comparative view of the maps of archaeological findings in Moldavia from the eleventh and twelfth centuries on the one hand, and of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries on the other, shows a massive demographic change. Settlements in the unforested plains region disappeared, and population density in the hill and forest regions increased. The region most affected by this change was southeastern Moldavia.¹⁴⁷ The demographic impact of the Turanic and Mongol invasions had

¹⁴² Troțuș was located on the road towards Transylvania and Adjud, on the one towards Wallachia.

¹⁴³ Costăchescu, *Documente*, vol. 2, 646. Ioan Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ștefan cel Mare* (The charters of Stephen the Great) (Bucharest: Socec, 1913), vol. 2, 274.

¹⁴⁴ Adjud should have been mentioned because it is placed on the trade route of Lviv merchants. In 1460 it appears in the privilege given to Lviv by Stephen.

¹⁴⁵ Alexandru Artimon, "Circulația monetară din zona de sud-est a Moldovei în epoca medievală," (Coins' circulation in southeastern Moldavia in the Middle Ages), *Carpica* 26 (1997), 43. Only two coins, one from Petru Mușat (1375-1392) and the other from Stephen I (1394-1399) were discovered in Bacău.

¹⁴⁶ Artimon, "Considerații," 67-89. According to the archaeological finds the city of Adjud emerge a few decades after that of Troțuș.

¹⁴⁷ Victor Spinei, "Restructurări etnice," 39. The demographic impact of the invasions was not limited to those killed during them; a significant number of inhabitants, unfortunately difficult to estimate,

significant consequences on the economic features of the region; the main economic activity in the steppe zone became pasturage. Although there is no direct information to support this assertion, two indirect arguments support it: the Mongol need for pasture and the excellent conditions offered by this region for animal breeding, which later sources demonstrate.

It is known from other cases, especially that of Muscovy, that the Mongols' pastoral life kept them in the steppe, preferring to control rather than to effectively occupy forested areas.¹⁴⁸ A similar situation can be inferred for Moldavia, as Victor Spinei does, where the Golden Horde occupied probably only the southern parts. Since the Mongols from the western part of the Golden Horde preserved their nomadic features, as the archaeological discoveries demonstrate,¹⁴⁹ they needed large pasture areas. Probably this was southern Moldavia, especially the Bugeac steppe, but also territories in southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia. The use of such vast lands for pasture is plausible, as recent research indicates the dimensions of the Mongol need for pastureland, each family having at least 100 sheep and 10 horses.¹⁵⁰

Later sources speak of the benefits of this area for pasturage and a long tradition of pastoral activities. In the eighteenth century, Cantemir wrote about the Vrancea region that its inhabitants lived only from pastoral activities, ignoring the plough.¹⁵¹ Also the crossing of transhumance paths in this region is attested in the nineteenth century; they probably date back to the Middle Ages.¹⁵² The region

were sold as slaves. Some Wlach slaves were sold by the Mongols, but slaves could have been from the Balkans as well as from Moldavia; see Spinei, "Comerțul și geneza," 193.

¹⁴⁸ Charles J. Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 7.

¹⁴⁹ Spinei, "Restructurari etnice," 61.

¹⁵⁰ See John Masson Smith, Jr., "Mongol Nomadism and Middle Eastern Geography: Qishlaqs and Tumens," in *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy*, ed. by Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David Morgan, 41.

¹⁵¹ Cantemir, *Descriptio*, 303.

¹⁵² The roads of transhumance followed the Ialomița, Buzău and Siret valleys. Costin Murgescu, *Drumurile unității românești* (The roads of Romanian unity) (București: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1996), 90-91. Most scholars consider that transhumance pasturage dates, in this region, from the thirteenth and

contains numerous toponyms derived from the noun *odaie* (sheepfold), related to transhumance. Although they may be more recent - from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries¹⁵³ - this reflects the importance of the region for pastoral activities.

Agricultural activity in the region became more important only after significant demographic growth, in the first half of the fifteenth century. Although direct information is missing, the grain trade through the Genoese cities of Kilia and Licostomo may be an indicator.¹⁵⁴ The data for the corn trade, extracted from the deeds of Genoese notaries, shows an increase of grain exports from the Black Sea ports of Kilia, Licostomo and Maurocastro in the second half of the fourteenth century.¹⁵⁵ The exports became even more consistent after the end of Mongol domination, especially in the fifteenth century.¹⁵⁶ Based on this, it can be assumed that the end of the Mongol rule, and the demographic growth that followed this moment, had a major impact on the economic development of these regions. The pastoral activities, dominant during the Mongol period, gradually became less important and, concomitantly, the agricultural activity developed.

3.3. “The competitors:” the Hungarian kingdom and the local Tatar rulers.

fourteenth centuries. Corneliu Bucur, “Directii ale demografiei istorice românești: transhumanța pastorală” (Directions of Romanian historical demography: pastoral transhumance), *RdI* 31 (1978), 2294.

¹⁵³ In the eighteenth century, the Ottomans organized the so-called “Odaia Vizirului” or “Câșla Vizirului” in the neighborhood of Brăila. Murgescu, *Drumurile*, 94. For a map of Wallachian toponyms derived from terms related to transhumance see I. Donat, “Păstoritul românesc și problemele sale” (Romanian pasturage and its problems), *SRI* 19 (1966), 298.

¹⁵⁴ The Genoese cities of Kilia, Licostomo and Vicina acquired grain from areas that included the Dobruđa, southeastern Wallachia, and southern Moldavia. Radu Manolescu, “Comerțul și transportul produselor economiei agrare la Dunărea de Jos și pe Marea Neagră în secolele XIII-XV,” (The trade and the transportation of agrarian products on the Lower Danube and on the Black Sea 13th-15th centuries), *RI* 1 (1990), 548.

¹⁵⁵ Genoese records for the year 1358 show that of 867,000 kilograms of grain imported from Pera to Genoa, 674,000 had originated from Licostomo. Deletant, “Genoese, Tatars and Rumanians,” 523.

¹⁵⁶ It is difficult to estimate how much this image has been altered by the uneven preservation of the sources. Manolescu, “Comerțul și transportul,” 555-556.

The end of the Golden Horde's rule over southern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia was a condition, necessary but not sufficient, for unleashing a kind of competition in order to control or occupy the area. The other condition was the existence of a motivation for such rivalry. The lack of possible economic benefits from the area, demonstrated in the previous subchapter, implies the lack of any economic motivation. However, other reasons, historical claims or strategic interests, could have been decisive.

3.3.1. The kingdom of Hungary

The relationships between Wallachia and Moldavia and the Hungarian kingdom in the fourteenth century have been the subject of numerous disputes, but here I will limit the discussion only to those elements connected with northeastern Wallachia and southwestern Moldavia, that is, the future Wallachian-Moldavian borderland area.

The Hungarians kept the memory of having ruled over areas beyond the Carpathians, and in a charter from 1360, King Louis states that “our country, Moldavia, was restored.”¹⁵⁷ The historical claims were reinforced by the strategic interests of the kingdom, southeastern Moldavia offering access to the Black Sea and to the mouth of the Danube, and to Cetatea Albă, a port of European importance. Hungarian influence in the eastern Carpathian area can be divided into four categories: direct military actions, commercial privileges, subordinated Catholic dioceses and influx of population.

The diploma awarded to the Saxons of Kronstadt and its surroundings on March 28, 1353 is evidence of the interest of Hungary in the country east of the

¹⁵⁷ The charter was given by Louis to Dragoş of Giuleşti. *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 41.

Carpathians. For a campaign in the eastern parts of the kingdom, the Saxons had to participate with all their available forces, although if the campaign were in the western parts they would only have to send 50 men.¹⁵⁸ Eight years earlier, the first successful expedition in “the country of the Tatars” was mentioned, Andrew Lackfi defeating the Tatars of Athlamos somewhere in the eastern Carpathian area.¹⁵⁹ Many historians¹⁶⁰ consider that most of Moldavia was freed from Mongol rule after the Hungarian expedition in 1345; however, as I already mentioned, according to the archaeological evidence, the Mongols controlled the southeastern parts for another quarter of a century.¹⁶¹ It is difficult to estimate the impact, if any, that this expedition had on the future borderland region. The impact of the expedition against Wallachia in 1368 seems clearer. As the chronicler John of Küküllő relates, one part of the Hungarian army attacked Wallachia from the northeast and was defeated on the river Ialomița.¹⁶² This reference can be interpreted as an argument that the eastern boundaries of Wallachia in that period were on the Ialomița river. Moreover, as suggested by Papacostea, the unfavourable conditions accepted by the Wallachian voievod in the privilege issued later in the same year (1368) in favour of Kronstadt merchants for the trade on the road of Brăila, suggest that control over the region had been installed shortly before.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 54.

¹⁵⁹ Johannes de Thurocz, *Cronica*, 175.

¹⁶⁰ The most representative supporters of this thesis are C. C. Giurescu, P. P. Panaitescu, Gh. Brătianu and B. Spuler.

¹⁶¹ Spinei, *Moldavia*, 177.

¹⁶² “Qui quidem Nicolaus wayuoda cum exercitu predicto fluvium Jlumcza, ubi fortalitia et propugnacula erant per Olachos firmata, potenter expugnando pertransiens cum exercitu ipsius Laiik wayuode copioso, cuius capitaneus erat comes Dragmer Olachus castellanus eius de Domboiika, bello inchoato et certamine fortissimo commisso victoriam obtinuit.” Johannes de Thurocz, *Cronica*, 181.

¹⁶³ Șerban Papacostea, “Inceputurile politicii,” 201. On the other hand, Maria Holban believes that these conditions were accepted by the Wallachian voievod under the military pressure of Hungary, see Maria Holban, “Contribuții la studiul raporturilor dintre Țara Românească și Ungaria Angevină – Problema stăpânirii efective a Severinului și a suzeranității în legătură cu drumul Brăilei” (Contributions to the study of the relationships between Wallachia and Angevin Hungary – The problem of the effective domination of Severin and of the suzerainty related to the Brăila road) in Idem,

The most solid argument for effective Hungarian rule outside the Carpathians in the time of King Louis is the privilege given to the Kronstadt merchants in 1358, by which he allowed them to circulate freely to the Danube in a region between the Buzău and Ialomița rivers.¹⁶⁴ This privilege has been interpreted as an attempt of the king to encourage an alternative trade route through Wallachia, Transylvania and Hungary, in the context of the war with Venice, which blocked the traffic through Dalmatia.¹⁶⁵ The policy of the king to support the Genoese, as the treaty from 1378 and the privilege from 24 June 1379¹⁶⁶ show, was considered to be the counterpart of the privilege for the kingdom's merchants in order to invigorate this commercial route.

The privilege from 1358 has been used by some historians in arguing for the existence of Hungarian control of the region between Buzău and Ialomița, the so-called “Hungarian corridor.”¹⁶⁷ The dispute can be divided into two hypotheses, which in my opinion are not necessarily connected. The first concerns a hypothetical Hungarian control over the region, and here, I think, the dispute is rather semantic. The use of the word “control” or “rule” for a frontier area, as this region was, is

Din cronica relațiilor româno-ungare în secolele XIII-XIV (From the Chronicle of Romanian-Hungarian relationships in the 13th and 14th century), 153.

¹⁶⁴ “ut vos cum vestris mercimoniis et quibuslibet rebus inter Bozam et Prahow, a loco videlicet ubi fluvius Iloncha vocatus in Danobium usque locum ubi fluvius Zereth nominatus similiter in ipsum Danobium cadunt, transire possitis libere et secure, nec vos aliquis in ipso vestro transitu indebite valeat impedire.” *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 72.

¹⁶⁵ Papacostea, “Genovezii,” 478-479. The peace of Zara, in 1358 between the Kingdom and Venice did not mean the end of the commercial dispute, which reached its climax in the 1380s when Venice installed a successful commercial embargo against Ragus (Dubrovnik) (1372-1373), Cattar (1372-1374) and even against all Dalmatia (1378). Pach, “Le commerce,” 1184-1185.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 1184.

¹⁶⁷ The idea of the “Hungarian corridor” was firstly suggested by N. Iorga, see in *Istoria românilor*, (History of Romanians), vol. 3 (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1988). The theory was developed by E. C. Lăzărescu in his unpublished doctoral thesis defended at Bucharest in 1946: *Români, Unguri și tătari în vremea întemeierii domniilor românești* (Romanians, Hungarians and Tatars in the time of foundation of Romanian reigns). Lăzărescu considers that this “corridor” continued to exist until 1382, when Wallachia was included in its boundaries in the context of the internal disputes in the Hungarian kingdom, as quoted by Gh. Brătianu, “Les rois de Hongrie et les Principautés roumaines au XIV^e siècle,” *Bulletin de la section historique de l'Académie Roumaine* 28 (1947), 86. The theory was contested especially by P. P. Panaitescu and M. Holban. See Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 115 and Holban, “Contribuții,” 325.

improper. In a scarcely inhabited area, as northeastern Wallachia was, with no towns,¹⁶⁸ the distinction between a nominal claim and effective control is difficult, if not impossible.¹⁶⁹ The second hypothesis concerns the location of the eastern boundary of Wallachia in 1358. The privilege of Louis does not mention the Wallachian voievod at all. If, as Brătianu did first, we correlate this with other information, the fact that in 1368 the Wallachians defended themselves from a Hungarian attack coming from the east on the banks of Ialomița,¹⁷⁰ it seems to me more than probable that in this period Wallachia's eastern border was the river Ialomița.¹⁷¹ In summary, in my opinion, the privilege from 1358 should be interpreted as indicating the eastern limits of the Wallachian state, without automatically implying effective Hungarian control over those regions.

The successive attempts of the Hungarian kingdom to revive the bishopric of Milcovia can be also interpreted as evidence of its interest in southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia.¹⁷² Although the sources concerning this bishopric are

¹⁶⁸ The document uses rivers for delimiting the territory, the confluence of the Ialomița with the Danube and the Siret with the Danube. As N. Iorga observed, the omission of the cities of Brăila and Floci, the towns situated exactly at these confluences, means that they were underdeveloped at that time. N. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc. Drumuri, mărfuri, negustori, orașe* (The history of Romanian trade. Roads, goods, merchants, cities) vol 1 (Vălenii de Munte: Neamul Românesc, 1915), 40. The written sources, especially the notaries' deeds from Licostomo, and the archeological finds support the idea that the city of Brăila developed afterwards, and in consequence, of the privilege of 1358. See Ionel Căndea, "Geneza orașului Brăila" (The genesis of the town of Brăila), *Analele Brăilei* 1 (1993): 19-30.

¹⁶⁹ M. Holban suggests that the privilege of 1358 was issued at a time of conflict between the Wallachian voievod and the Hungarian king, the king trying, only nominally, to usurp Wallachia's rule over the region, see Holban, "Contribuții," 342. However, her argument, that Louis used a commercial privilege for expressing political claims, does not take into account the character of the document. Requested by the merchants, the document was meant to be a useful instrument for them.

¹⁷⁰ The first interpretation in this sense of John's information is that of Brătianu, "Les rois de Hongrie," 87-88.

¹⁷¹ As counter-argument to this interpretation, Panaitescu mentions the renewal of the privilege in 1395 by Sigismund of Luxemburg, when certainly Wallachia ruled over this area. Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 115. However, a parallel between the privileges from 1358 and 1395 cannot be drawn, because in 1358 the act of Louis was a response to a current situation, while in 1395 Sigismund simply renewed mechanically a large number of Kronstandt privileges, among them act of 1358.

¹⁷² The most flat interpretation of this relationship is that of Sergiu Iosipescu, who suggested a direct connection between the "Hungarian corridor" and the bishopric of Milcovia, however, to my mind was unconvincingly argued. Sergiu Iosipescu, "Drumuri comerciale în Europa Centrală și Sud-Estică și

vague,¹⁷³ most probably the centre of the bishopric was in southwestern Moldavia, where the river of Milcov, from which the name of the bishopric derived, flows. In 1347, a letter of Louis I addressed to Pope Clement VI mentions a new attempt¹⁷⁴ to revive the bishopric¹⁷⁵ by the appointment as Thomas of Nympti as bishop,¹⁷⁶ but the restoration seems to have been only nominal.¹⁷⁷ The same is the case with his successors, Bernard, Albert of Usk, and Nicolas of Buda,¹⁷⁸ who did not reside in their bishopric. The failure of this revival was acknowledged even by the papal curia and from 1375 Milcovia was not mentioned any more in sources, and the sea remained vacant for six decades.¹⁷⁹ Most historians connect this failure with the inability of the Hungarian kingdom to rule directly the outside Carpathian region, but I think that another factor could also be taken into account. Perhaps the foundation in 1371 of the Catholic Siret bishopric, in northern Moldavia, and the disappearance of Milcovia bishopric a few years later can be interpreted not only as a consequence of the political shift,¹⁸⁰ but also as a late response to the demographic changes that had taken place outside the Carpathians in favour of the northern regions.

însemnătatea lor politică (secolele XIV-XVI)” (The trade roads in Central and South-Eastern Europe and their political significance [13th-14th centuries]), *AIIA* 29 (1982), 272.

¹⁷³ In the papal acts from 1332 and 1347 the geographical location of the bishopric is vague: “in regno Ungarie, in finibus videlicet Tartarorum.” *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 63-64.

¹⁷⁴ A previous attempt took place in 1332; see C. Auner, “Episcopia Milcoviei în veacul al XIV-lea” (The bishopric of Milcovia in the fourteenth century), *Revista Catolică* 3 (1914): 60-80.

¹⁷⁵ In 1332 Pope John XXII asked the archbishop of Strigoniu to appoint a Franciscan as bishop in the bishopric of Milcovia, destroyed by the Tatars. Hurmuzaki I/1: 622-623

¹⁷⁶ The letter of Clement VI was edited in Hurmuzaki I/2: 4-5.

¹⁷⁷ I agree with most of the historians who interpret this revival as nominal, C. Auner, N. Iorga and M. Holban, but Gh. I. Brătianu and Ș. Papacostea consider it real. C. Cihodaru, who contests the authenticity of this act, takes a singular position. Cihodaru, “Observații,” 129.

¹⁷⁸ Hurmuzaki I/2: 174-175.

¹⁷⁹ Papacostea suggests that this disappearance can be connected with a possible extension of Wallachia into the eastern parts in the context of the Hungarian defeat of 1375, see Papacostea, “Domni români și regi angevini,” 132.

¹⁸⁰ As Gheorghe Moisescu demonstrated the ascension of the Siret bishopric is directly connected with Moldavia’s coming under Polish hegemony. See Gheorghe I. Moisescu, *Catholicismul în Moldova până la sfârșitul veacului XIV* (Catholicism in Moldavia until the end of the 14th century) (Bucharest: Tipografia cărților bisericești, 1942), 50.

Population movements were the most visible sign of the Hungarian kingdom's expansion beyond the Carpathians in the second half of the fourteenth century, which, however, can hardly be interpreted as the effect of a coherent policy.¹⁸¹ It is generally accepted that an impetus to migration in the Middle Ages was from the interior of the Carpathian arc towards the exterior, affecting Romanian, Hungarian, and German ethnic groups.¹⁸² Geographically, there was a significant difference between the population movements from the kingdom of Hungary into the eastern Carpathian region in the thirteenth century, before the Mongol invasion, and those in the fourteenth. The first was mainly oriented to the southwestern region, the area of the bishopric of Milcovia, the second to the northwestern region.¹⁸³ Southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia seem to have been peripheral regions for population movements in the fourteenth century, although some toponyms suggest that they were also affected by them.¹⁸⁴ I think that this can be explained by a longer Mongol domination of the region, even after the Golden Horde had ceased to control it.

3.3.2. *Demetrius princeps Tartarorum*

The end of the Golden Horde's domination did not mean the end of all Mongol control over southern Moldavia and eastern Wallachia. Local Tatar potentates replaced the Horde in exercising control over the region, the last of them being a certain Demetrius, *princeps Tartarorum*. This local Tatar ruler is known from a Hungarian royal charter, issued by Louis I in 1368, exempting the merchants of Demetrius from paying duty on their goods when travelling to Hungary in return for

¹⁸¹ Baker suggested that the Hungarian king, Louis I, tried to fill the power vacuum east of the Carpathians by encouraging the settlers to move into this regions. Baker, "On the Origin," 679.

¹⁸² See a longer discussion on the demographic movements in the area in the previous chapter.

¹⁸³ As shown by Spinei, "Coexistența," 168.

¹⁸⁴ I can quote, for example, the village Săseni from southwestern Moldavia. See the appendix.

the same concessions for the Kronstadt merchants *in terra ipsius Domini Demetrii*.¹⁸⁵ Demetrius' centre of power of has been variable identified as Cetatea Albă,¹⁸⁶ Orheiul Vechi,¹⁸⁷ and Brăila.¹⁸⁸ In a special study dedicated to this topic, Gheorghe Brătianu considered that Demetrius ruled over the territory between the mouths of the rivers Prut and Bug between 1360 and 1380, having his residence at Cetatea Albă.¹⁸⁹

Besides the document issued by Louis, there is little other information that could help towards a better localisation, both temporal and spatial, of Demetrius. The identification of this Demetrius with one of the three Tatar chiefs defeated by the Grand Duke Olgierd at the battle of Sinie Vody¹⁹⁰ is another element accepted by most historians.¹⁹¹ Recently, Octavian Iliescu identified Demetrius with the Tatar prince whose *tamgha* is represented on coins; and since most of these coins were discovered in northern Dobrujda, he suggested that his residence was either Enisala or Babadag.¹⁹² His interpretation is supported by another document, issued in the same

¹⁸⁵ “quam marcatores domini Demetrii, principis Tartarorum, de suis rebus mercimonialibus in regno nostro solvere deberent, non faciemus recipi, ita, ut et vos in terra ipsius domini Demetrii secure et libere positos transire sine solutione tricesime cum rebus vestris et bonis mercimonialibus.” Hurmuzaki, I/2, 144 and *DRH-D*, vol.1, 90.

¹⁸⁶ Iorga believes that Demetrius was probably based in Catatea-Alba, a prince, probably Christianised, who ruled southern Moldavia on both sides of the river Prut. Iorga, *Basarabia*, 6. Ciocâltan placed him in the Bugeac region. Ciocâltan, *Mongolii*, 259.

¹⁸⁷ Spinei, *Moldavia*, 190.

¹⁸⁸ An original hypothesis for locating Demetrius' residence was advanced by Al I. Gonța who proposed the city of Brăila. Al. I. Gonța, *Legăturile economice dintre Moldova și Transilvania în secolele XII-XVII* (The economic relationships between Moldavia and Transylvania between the 12th and the 17th centuries) quoted by Spinei, “Comerțul și geneza,” 201.

¹⁸⁹ Gh. I. Brătianu, “Deux études historiques. II. Demetrius Princeps Tartarorum (ca. 1360-1380),” *Revue des Etudes Roumaines* 9-10 (1965): 39-46.

¹⁹⁰ According to the Lithuanian-Ruthenian chronicle (in the English translation of Paul Knoll): “When Grand Prince Olgierd was Lord of the Ruthenian land, he went into the steppes with the Lithuanian army, and at the Blue Waters he defeated the Tatars, which included three brothers, Chaczibej, Kotlobug and Demetrius. These three brothers were the heirs of the land of Podolia.” Paul Knoll, *The rise of the Polish monarchy: Piast Poland in East Central Europe, 1320-1370* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 246.

¹⁹¹ Vasiliev assumed that the defeat of Dimitrie at the Sinie Vody battle can be identified with a dignitary from Theodoro-Magup. Based on a Greek inscription that mentions a Mongol name, Huitani, and Saint Demetrius, Vasiliev argued that the christianised Mongol Huitani bore the name Dimitrie. This argument is unconvincing, because a Tatar could have venerated a warrior saint such as Demetrius without bearing his name. V. Vasiliev, *The Goths in the Crimea* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1936), 184-187.

¹⁹² Octavian Iliescu, “Génois et Tatars en Dobroudja au XIVe siècle: l'apport de la numismatique,” *Etudes Byzantines et Post-Byzantines* 3 (1997): 161-178.

year (1368) nominally by the Wallachian voievod, but actually drawn up by the Hungarian chancellery, a privilege for the Kronstadt merchants for the road to Brăila.¹⁹³ This document mentions *regna extranea*, which could be the territories of Demetrius, beyond the frontier of Wallachia from Brăila to the Black Sea. If we accept this interpretation, then the two documents from 1368 are complementary, assuring the commerce of the Hungarian kingdom's (mainly German) merchants to the Black Sea through the territories both of Vladislav, the Wallachian Voievod (1364-1377), and Demetrius. However, both of these theses, which locate the residence of Demetrius either in southwestern Moldavia or in northern Dobroudja, imply a strong Tatar influence, if not an effective control, over the steppes from southeastern Moldavia.

In conclusion, I think that the previous argumentation has shown that that after the Golden Horde lost this region, southeastern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia remained under the control of local Tatar Lords for one or two decades. This persistence of Tatar control manifested itself not only politically, but also in the demographic and economic realities of the region, by delaying their development in rapport with the other Wallachian and Moldavian regions. This is precisely why the frontier between Moldavia and Wallachia was to be developed in this area so late, only at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

¹⁹³ This is supported by the diplomatic analysis of Radu Manolescu, see Idem, *Comerțul Țării Românești cu Brașovul* (The trade between Wallachia and the city of Brașov) (Bucharest: Ed. Științifică, 1965), 25-27.

Chapter 4. The territorial expansion of the Wallachian and Moldavian principalities

Southern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachian regions, subjected to a prolonged Mongol control, remained outside the two Romanian medieval states in the moment of their emergence. The pre-history of the building of the common frontier is represented by the gradual extension of Moldavia towards the south and of Wallachia towards the northeast. This extension of the two principalities represents the political counterpart of the demographic expansion process analyzed in the second chapter. The two features, political and demographic, constitute the two sides of the same expansion process, although it would be hard to tell which of these appeared first or which determined the other.

4.1. Territorial aspects of their emergence

The sources available for analyzing the territorial extent of Wallachia and Moldavia during the process of their emergence are extremely few and ambiguous. Since there are no internal documents contemporary to the events, the first internal chronicles appear at least a century after the foundation - in the case of Wallachia three centuries thereafter – and the external sources, both diplomatic and narrative, only offer disparate information, the entire process is a puzzle with many missing pieces.

4.1.1. Wallachia

The two theories concerning the emergence of Wallachia,¹⁹⁴ namely that of the internal crystallization of the state and that of the so-called “dismounting”,¹⁹⁵ share, as probably their only common point, the same conception about the territorial evolution of the new state. The followers of both theories consider that Wallachia gradually expanded its boundaries through an evolution process, although the temporal and spatial phases of this expansion are heavily disputed. The memory of this expanding process can be found centuries later, in the Wallachian chronicles of the Cantacuzines and of Radu Popescu. Both chroniclers narrate that the founder of the state, one Radu Negru, dismounted from Făgăraș and founded successively the cities of Câmpulung and Argeș. His people later expanded up to the Siret River and the city Brăila in the East, and to the Danube in the South.¹⁹⁶ This historical tradition, although relevant, offers just a general picture of the extension of Wallachia with some hints for the directions but without any concrete information concerning the chronology, the stages, or the concrete events. For elucidating some aspects related to these problems, an inquiry into the contemporary sources, all of them external, is mostly disappointing

¹⁹⁴ The tradition of the “dismounting” of Radu Negru from Făgăraș, who founded, Wallachia was first mentioned by the seventeenth century chronicles. Considered true by the scholars from the Romantic period, this tradition was completely rejected as pure fiction by the Positivists, especially by Dimitrie Onciul, in *Originile Principatelor Române* (The origins of Romanian Principalities) at the end of the nineteenth century. The new interpretation of the emergence of Wallachia underlined the pre-state political structures and the role played by Basarab the Voievod in their unification. In 1945 this thesis was questioned by Gheorghe Brătianu (in his book *Tradiția istorică despre întemeierea statelor românești* (The historical tradition on the foundation of the Romanian states), who argued in favor of the dismounting thesis, both from a historical point of view, by analyzing the political context, and from a methodological perspective, by reevaluating the value of the historical tradition as a source. Gheorghe Brătianu, *Tradiția istorică despre întemeierea statelor românești* (The historical tradition on the foundation of the Romanian states), 2d. ed. (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1980).

¹⁹⁵ The word “dismounting” is used by the internal chronicles for designating the foundations of both Wallachia and Moldova. The meaning medieval of this word, as it is shown by the internal charters, was “founding”, “establishing”, “reestablishing”, see Ștefan S. Gorovei, “Tradiția descălecatului: înțelesuri și confuzii” (The tradition of dismounting: meanings and confusions), *AIIA* 20 (1983): 89-105.

¹⁹⁶ Radu Popescu, *Istoriile domnilor Țării Românești* (The histories of the rulers of Wallachia), ed. Constantin Grecescu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1963), 5 and *Istoria Țării Românești (1290-1690). Letopiseșul Cantacuzinesc* (The history of Wallachia. The Cantacuzine chronicle), ed. C. Grecescu and D. Simonescu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1960), 2.

because the information offered by them is not only ambiguous, but even contradictory.

The main body of contemporary sources for the history of Wallachia in the fourteenth century is constituted by the Hungarian charters and chronicles, although, unfortunately, these are rather unhelpful for the precise territorial aspects. Starting with the first known mention of the Wallachian Voievod, Basarab,¹⁹⁷ Wallachia is simply named “Transalpina”¹⁹⁸ or, in subsequent charters, “partes transalpinæ”,¹⁹⁹ sometimes with an additional geographical explanation as “in confinia regni nostri”,²⁰⁰ which gives only a general reference for its localization and offers no further details regarding its extent. This simple denomination, constantly used by the Hungarian chancellery,²⁰¹ was taken over also by the Papacy²⁰² and by the Wallachian chancellery in the documents it issued in Latin.²⁰³ The Hungarian chronicles, for instance that of John of Küküllő and the *Chronicon Pictum*, offer a more detailed picture of the geography of Wallachia, mainly due to the descriptions of the Hungarian military expeditions, especially that of Charles Robert. However they do not contain any mention of the eastern regions for this period in which the state began. Even this element is relevant and must be taken into account, since the image of Wallachia projected by the Hungarian chronicles is that of a state, the core of which,

¹⁹⁷ Basarab is the first attested Voievod of Wallachia in a Hungarian charter from 1324. He died in 1352 as it is written on his tomb stone. His name, of Cuman origin, became the name of the Wallachian ruling dynasty.

¹⁹⁸ The first Hungarian charter that mentions Basarab as “woyuodam nostrum Transalpinum” dates from 1324. Hurmuzaki I/1, 591-592. A tempting hypothesis is that “Transalpina” represents a translation of the Hungarian “Havaselve” as opposite to “Transilvana”, “Erdély”.

¹⁹⁹ See the charter issued by Charles Robert in 1331 in Hurmuzaki I/1, 616.

²⁰⁰ See the charter of Charles Robert from 26 Nov. 1332 “confinia regni nostri, que in terra Transalpina” Hurmuzaki I/1, 625.

²⁰¹ For example the charter from 19 Mai 1335 “dictam terram nostram Transalpinam” Hurmuzaki I/2, 35.

²⁰² Pope John XXII in a letter from february 1327 called Basarab: “filio nobili viro Bazaras woyvode Transalpino.” Hurmuzaki I/1, 600-601. In fact, in a strict geographical meaning the Papal curia had used the term *Terra Transalpina* already from the thirteenth century. For this see the document issued by Pope Honorius III in 1225 Hurmuzaki, I/1, 91.

if not its entire extent, was located in northern and western areas, at the foot of the Carpathians, in the hilly regions, and eastwards up to the river Dâmbovița.

However, this image offered by the Hungarian sources is distorted by their perspective, which proceeds from the West towards the East, being inevitably more interested in the regions in their immediate vicinity. The image of Wallachia, as viewed from the opposite angle, that is from the East to the West, appears completely different. The Arab historian Abu'l-Fidā mentions that in 1321 Issaccea was a city within the “Wallachs’ country”,²⁰⁴ a piece of information that can be interpreted as documenting an early Wallachian extension eastwards. The Ottoman chronicler Enverî is more precise, and when he describes a battle in 1337/1338 at Kilia, he mentions that this city was “at the border of Wallachia”.²⁰⁵ These two sources are the main documentary support of the thesis that postulates Wallachian control of the eastern regions during Basarab’s reign. To this problem, which scholars have extensively debated, I will dedicate a separate subchapter.

The “southern perspective”, represented by Serbian and Byzantine sources, is, in its turn ambiguous. The only notable element is the close connection the sources make between Walachs and Tatars. A note in the introduction to Stephen Dušan’s *Zakonik*, which mentions the enemies of the Serbians at the Velbužd battle, specifies that Wallachia was the neighbor of the black Tatars.²⁰⁶ For the Byzantine Emperor Andronic III, the Wallachians and the Tatars are so similar that he even mistook the

²⁰³ The title used by Vladislav (1364-1377) in 1369 was “Ladislaus, Dei et regis Hungariae gratia, vajvoda Transalpinus” *DRH-B*, vol. 1, 12.

²⁰⁴ Quoted by V.Spinei, “Restructurări etnice,” 50.

²⁰⁵ The Ottoman chronicle narrates an attack of Umur bei at the border (udj) of Wallachia (Eflak). Enverî, “Dürsturname” in *Cronici turcești privind Tarile Române. Extrase* (Turkish chronicles concerning Romanian States. Extracts), ed. Mihail Guboglu and Mustafa Mehmet (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei, 1966), vol. 1, 36.

²⁰⁶ *Zakonik Stefana Dušana cara srpskog.1349 i 1353* (The Law Code of the Serbian king Stephen Dusan. 1349 and 1353), ed. Stojan Novaković (Belgrade: Zadužbina Ilije M. Kolarca, 1898), 3.

Scythians (Tatars) for the Getae (Wallachs) before a battle.²⁰⁷ The Patriarchy of Constantinople named Wallachia as “Ungrovlachia”, the Wallachia near Hungary,²⁰⁸ for the purpose of distinguishing it from the other Wallachias south of the Danube, namely those in Thessalia or Macedonia.²⁰⁹ The Wallachian chancellery took over this term and introduced it in the Voievod’s *intitulatio*.²¹⁰

From all that has been said above it appears that the image of Wallachia is differently projected from three different angles. The Latin view, from a northern and western perspective, is that of a state centered to the northwestern regions; the Islamic perspective, from the east, suggests an earlier extension of Wallachia into this direction; and the southern view perceives Wallachia as simply close to the territory dominated by the Tatars, a consequence of the more important role played by them in the region.

4.1.2. Moldavia: from defense mark to state.

In the Moldavian case, although better documented than the Wallachian one – here the Hungarian sources are more precise and the first preserved internal chronicles dates only one century later - the territorial delineations are not much clearer. It is generally accepted that Moldavia developed into a state out of a defensive mark organised under the rule of Dragoș, a nobleman from Maramureș region.²¹¹ In the

²⁰⁷ This confusion is made in 1332 before a battle with the Bulgarians and it is narrated by John Cantacuzene. The names are archaized, according to the historiographic Byzantine tradition, *Fontes ad historiam Daco-Romaniae pertinentes*, vol. 3 (Byzantine chroniclers, from the 11th to the 14th century), ed. Alexandru Elian and Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1975), 485.

²⁰⁸ The first mention of the term “Ungrovlachs” (Ουγγροβλαχοι) dates from 1323, in a passage of John Cantacuzene’s chronicle which mentions their support for Michael III Shishman (1323-1330) to become Tsar of the Bulgarians. *Ibid.*, 483.

²⁰⁹ See for example the chronicles of Georgios Akropolites; John Cantacuzene; Nikephoros Gregoras in *Ibid.*, 405, 489, 507.

²¹⁰ *Întitularea*, for example in the *intitulatio* of Dan I (1384-1386), edited in *DRH-B*, vol. 1, 19.

²¹¹ For the goals of this thesis I consider it unnecessary to establish a strict chronology for the emergence of Moldavia. Here are some of the different theses concerning the first Moldavian Voievods and their chronology. Ștefan Gorovei’s proposed chronology is the following: Dragoș (1347-1354), Sas

Hungarian sources, both diplomatic²¹² and narrative,²¹³ the new state is simply named “terra nostra molduana”, the only geographical reference being that it is located beyond the Carpathians.²¹⁴ However, I think that there are several arguments, which would allow a more precise localization, limiting the extent of the state in this early period to the northwestern Moldavian regions.²¹⁵ Even the name of the future principality, Moldavia, derives from the river Moldova, located in the northwestern region. This area is located in the immediate vicinity of Maramureș, whence Dragoș came, and there is a powerful tradition that links Dragoș especially to the Bukovina region.²¹⁶ To my mind, an even more convincing argument is that the earlier attested Moldavian cities (Siret, Baia, Suceava) were located precisely in this region, and the political core of the young state was also here. Dragoș was buried at Volovăț, Bogdan at Rădăuți, and Lațcu’s main residence was probably at Siret. All these places are circumscribed to a small area of 20-25 square kilometers in northwestern Moldavia.²¹⁷

(1354-1363), Bogdan I (1363-1367), Lațcu (1367-1375), Peter I (1375-1391), Roman I (1391-1394), Stephaen I (1394-1399), Iuga (1399-1400). See Ștefan Gorovei, “L’État roumain de l’est des Carpates: la succession et la chronologie des princes de Moldavie au XIVe siècle,” *RRH* 18 (1979): 473-506. On the other hand C. Cihodaru’s chronology is: Dragoș 1359, Balc (1359-1362), Bogdan (1362-1366), Stephen I (1366-1367), Peter I (1367-1368), Lațcu (1368-1376), Giurgiu (1376-1377), Peter I (1377-1391), Roman I (1392-1394), Stephen II (1394-1399) see Constantin Cihodaru, “Din nou despre Iurg Coriatovici și Iuga vodă” (Again about Iurg Coriatovici and Iuga the voievod), *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis* 1 (1979): 139-157. (c) Finally, Sacerdoțeanu’s chronology and list of Voievods is the following: Bogdan (1363-1369), Lațcu (1369-1377), Peter (1377-1391), Roman (1392-1394), Stephen (1394-1399), Iuga (1399-1400); Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, “Succesiunea domnilor Moldovei până la Alexandru cel Bun” (The succession of the voievods until Alexander the Kind) *Romanoslavica* 11 (1965): 219-235.

²¹² The first documentary mention of Moldavia dates from 20 March 1360, in a charter issued by Louis, king of Hungary: “terre nostre Moldouane,” see *Documenta historiam valachorum in Hungaria illustrantia: usque ad annum 1400 P. Christum*, ed. Ladislaus Makkai and Antonius Fekete Nagy (Budapest: Instituti Europae Centro-orientalis in Universitate Scientiarum Budapestinensis, 1941), 144.

²¹³ “terram Moldaviae corone regni Hungariae subiectam.” In Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica*, 185.

²¹⁴ Describing the expedition of Sigismund in Moldavia Thurocz used the formula “partes Transalpine,” *Ibid.*, 209.

²¹⁵ There are several historians who argue for a bigger defense mark, including, for strategical necessities, the entire area of the eastern Carpathians. See for example Giurescu, *Târguri și cetăți*, 62. However, I think this position is not convincingly argued.

²¹⁶ Brătianu, “In jurul întemeierii,” 375.

²¹⁷ Spinei, *Moldavia*, 212.

The controversial Polish-Moldavian battle at Plonyni, from 1359,²¹⁸ narrated by Dlugosz,²¹⁹ also took place in the northern regions, in *terra Sepeniczensi*.

The location of the early Moldavian Voievodship in the northwestern regions corresponds to a prolonged Tatar domination of the southern regions, for which I argued in the previous chapter. It is difficult to draw a demarcation line between the Tatar controlled area and those outside of their control, but, as I suggested, this probably followed the different features of the landscape, dividing forested areas from steppe zones. In support of my hypothesis I would like to quote a passage from an early Moldavian chronicle, the so-called Moldo-Russian chronicle.²²⁰ In the chronicle it is mentioned that Dragoș and his followers stopped at the boundaries of the region where “the Tatars were wandering”, between the rivers Prut and Moldova.²²¹ According to the Chronicle, Dragoș settled at the beginning by the mouth of the river Moldova, where it flows in Siret and from there he extended his territory northward, along the river Moldova. The division of Moldavia into the southern regions of control led by the Mongols and the northern ones, where the Voievodat emerged, is clearly reflected in the Chronicle. Another argument for a distinct political evolution, with different structures, of the northern and southern regions, respectively, is the

²¹⁸ Historians still debate the problem of this battle, whether it was fought in 1359 or later, or whether the Moldavians who defeated the Polish army were part of the Moldavian Voievodeship or of another local political structure. For a larger discussion see Knoll, *The Rise*, 241-245.

²¹⁹ *In terre Sepeniczensi site, quas, ut premisimus, Ploniny*; see Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, ed. S. Bukowa et al. (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1978), vol. 9 (1300-1370), 299-230.

²²⁰ Written in the sixteenth century, the Moldo-Russian Chronicle is known from sixteenth-seventeenth century Russian chronicles, in which it was inserted.

²²¹ *Âi êðàè òàòàðũñêüiõ êî+ââîèùü*; see Bogdan, *Vechile cronice*, 237. Virgil Ciocâltan proposed to identify this steppe area with southwestern Moldavia, Bugeac region. See Virgil Ciocâltan, “Alanii și începuturile statelor românești” (The Alans and the beginnings of the Romanian Principalities), *RI* 6 (1995): 935-955.

medieval administrative tradition that distinguished between the Lower and the Upper country.²²²

The political change from a defensive mark into a principality independent from the Hungarian Kingdom, due to the action of Bogdan, did not bring any territorial modifications to the south, since the Mongol domination remained intact in those regions, as shown in the previous chapter. Therefore, I think it probable that the passage from John of Küküllő, who specifies that as a consequence of Bogdan's action "illam terram in regnum est dilatata" should not be interpreted in a geographical, but rather in a political meaning.²²³

4.2. Bessarabia and Basarab.

As I mentioned above, one of the most disputed aspects from the history of the early Walachian state concerns its extension towards the east, namely to the regions from southeastern medieval Moldavia. Attested from the sixteenth century onwards by travellers²²⁴, internal documents,²²⁵ and maps,²²⁶ the area north of the mouth of the Danube, between the Rivers Prut and Dniester, was named Bessarabia. This name was certainly derived from the dynastic name of Basarab,²²⁷ and it was used already in the fourteenth and fifteenth century by different sources. It is first attested in Serbian,²²⁸

²²² From the fifteenth century Moldavia was divided in two large administrative regions, Lower and Upper country, and in each of them the Voievod was represented by a "Vornic." See D. Ciurea, "Organizarea administrativă a statului feudal Moldova" (The administrative organization of the feudal state of Moldavia), *AIIA* 2 (1965): 143-223, here 144.

²²³ "tamen crescente magna numerositate Olachorum inhabitatum illam terram, in regnum est dilatata." Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica*, 185.

²²⁴ For example see the *Cosmography* of Gian Lorenzo d'Anania; see *Călători străini*, vol. 4, 565.

²²⁵ The first internal document in which the word 'Bessarabia' designates the south-eastern Moldavian regions dates from 1469. However, the last editors of the document consider that the word 'Bessarabia' is a later interpolation. *DRH-A*, vol.2, 358.

²²⁶ See for example the map of Gastaldi printed at Venezia in 1546, *Atlas Hungaricus*, vol. 1, 190.

²²⁷ For explaining this name the seventeenth and eighteenth century Moldavian chroniclers proposed different fanciful hypotheses. Dimitrie Cantemir considered that the name of Bessarabia comes from the ancient Thracian tribe of Bessi. Cantemir, *Descriptio*, 85.

²²⁸ *Monumenta serbica*, ed. Miklosich, 146, 161 as quoted by Dimitrie Onciul, "Titlul lui Mircea cel Bătrân și posesiunile lui" (The *intitulatio* of Mircea the Old and his possessions), 19-142, in Dimitrie

and later also in Moldavian,²²⁹ Polish,²³⁰ and even Wallachian²³¹ as a term referring to Wallachia.²³² The question is when this name, used initially for the entity of Wallachia, was limited to a certain region, and especially, at what time this region was part of Wallachia. I will discuss here only the theses that place this moment during the reign of Basarab; the others will be discussed in their proper chronological context, in the next chapter.

There are two opposing theories addressing the hypothesis that during his reign the first Wallachian Voievod, Basarab, extended his territories eastwards, to include the future Bessarabia region. The first theory suggests that Basarab extended the territory of Wallachia during the Hungarian expeditions against the Golden Horde, in which he participated as an ally of the Hungarian king.²³³ However there are only three pieces of evidence to support this scenario, namely the Romanian historical tradition that recalls the participation in the wars against the Tatars under the rule of the king Laslău, hypothetically identified with the king Louis of Anjou,²³⁴ a letter of

Onciul, *Scrieri istorice* (Historical writings), ed. Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, vol. 2 (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1968), 24.

²²⁹ In 1395 Stephen, the Moldavian Voievod, in his treaty with the Polish King promised to offer help, if necessary, against the Voievod of Bessarabia. Hurmuzaki I/2, 818-819. Hurmuzaki I/2 135,136,629, 193-194, 243, 268.

²³⁰ In 1414 in a document preserved in the Lemberg archives and edited by N. Iorga, a traveller mentions his return from Wallachia: *revenit de Bessarabia*. N. Iorga, *Relațiile comerciale ale țerilor noastre cu Lembergul* (The commercial relationships of our countries with the city of Lemberg) (Bucharest: Marinescu & Șerban, 1900), 7. In 1461 a Polish envoy is sent to Wallachia, which is named in the document, *Bessarabiam*. Hurmuzaki II/2, 629. A document from 1514 is even clearer explaining that “Bessarabia, alias Valachia transalpina” Hurmuzaki II/2, 629. See also Hurmuzaki I/2 374, 824, 825.

²³¹ “Wlad woyewoda Bessarabiae” (Hurmuzaki I/2, 374-375); “Nos Ioannes Mircea, Dei gratia voyevida, magnus terrae Bassarabiae dominus” (Hurmuzaki, I/2, 824); “Ioannes Mircea, magnus voyevida et qui solus regnat totius terrae Bassarabiae” (Hurmuzaki I/2, 825).

²³² In the form *terra Basarab* the term is also used by the Hungarian and Papal chancelleries. See *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 41.

²³³ Panaitescu considered in his final works that the unification of the small voievodships under the rule of Basarab took place after the death of Noqai (1299) as the result of the fight against the Tartars. P. Panaitescu, *Introducere la istoria culturii românești* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1969), 304-314. The same opinion at Ștefan Ștefanescu, *Istoria medie a României*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Universității București, 1991), 114.

²³⁴ See the interpolation of Simion Dascălul in the Ureche’s chronicle and the *Polish Poem* of Miron Costin; see Ureche, *Letopiseșul*, 68-69 and Costin, “Poema Polonă,” 227-228. For a detailed and critical analysis of this tradition, as well for the existence of an opposing chronicle tradition, see E.

Pope John XXII in which he praised the fight of Basarab against the infidels,²³⁵ and a highly singular interpretation concerning the reason that determined Charles Robert to attack Basarab.²³⁶ To my mind, this hypothesis is completely wrong, because such an early end to the Mongol control over the region (the 1320's) is contradicted both by the written sources and the archaeological evidence.²³⁷

The second theory suggests exactly the opposite, namely that Basarab extended his domination under Tatar hegemony, in an evolution similar to the Russian model of the Muscovy Knezat.²³⁸ The hypothesis of an eastern expansion of Wallachia during the reign of the Voievod Basarab under the Golden Horde hegemony is only indirectly supported by the sources. Firstly, there is sufficient information from contemporary sources for assuming a Wallachian-Tatar cooperation or rather Mongol hegemony over Wallachia.²³⁹ To the already mentioned introductory notice to the *Zakonik* of Dušan, and John Cantacuzene's account²⁴⁰ can be added the document issued by King Louis in 1351, which mentions that Basarab was helped by

Lăzărescu, "Despre relațiile lui Nicolae-Alexandru voievod cu ungurii" (About the relationship between Nicolae-Alexandru Voievod and the Hungarians), *RI* 32 (1946) 127-130.

²³⁵ The letter of Pope John XXII from 1327 to Basarab, to the Transylvanian voievod and to the comes of Kronstadt, was interpreted in this sense: "tua laudabilia opera, que dudum devotio tua ferventer exercuit et exercere non desinit ad exterminationem infidelium nationem." Hurmuzaki I/1, 601.

²³⁶ In a charter from 1351, King Louis relates that the reasons of Charles Robert's expedition "ad recuperandum quasdam partes predicti regni Hungarie, per Bazarab wayuodam, infidelem ipsius partis nostri occupatas." Hurmuzaki I/2, 14. "Ipsius partis" is generally interpreted as referring to the Severin banat, but Ștefan Pascu and Gh. Brătianu suggest that it could refer to the eastern parts of Wallachia which, in their opinion, entered under Hungarian control after the wars against the Tatars from 1324. See Brătianu, "in jurul întemeierii," 361.

²³⁷ C. Cihodaru assumed that, as a consequence of the participation of Wallachs to the expedition from 1345 of Lackfy against the Tatars, Basarab won the control of the region north of the Danube mouth. Cihodaru, "Observații," 129. Similarly, Șt. Olteanu assumed that Wallachia included the region around Brăila in 1327. Olteanu, "Evoluția procesului," 766. These hypotheses are invalidated by the persistence of the Mongol domination. See above chapter 3.

²³⁸ This thesis was supported by scholars such as: N. Iorga (Iorga, "Imperiul cumaniilor", 70); P. P. Panaitescu (Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 346-350); Șerban Papacostea (Papacostea, "Geneza statelor românești," 29); Constantin C. Giurescu (Giurescu, *Probleme controversate*, 145); Virgil Ciocâltan (Ciocâltan, *Mongolii*, 252).

²³⁹ However, there is no consensus among scholars on this point. For criticism of this hypothesis of an alliance between Basarab and the Tatars, see Holban, "Contribuții," 325.

²⁴⁰ See above footnotes 206, 207.

the pagans in his fight against Charles Robert.²⁴¹ Secondly, the hypothesis is strengthened by the existence of a precedent: The Bulgarians ruled over a large area under Mongol hegemony²⁴² during the first two decades of the fourteenth century. This region could have been subsequently given to Basarab. The Bulgarian extension into this region, reaching up to the area north of the mouths of the Danube, is supported by numerous and different sources: the anonymous *Descriptio Europae Orientalis*,²⁴³ the geography of the Abu'l-Fidā,²⁴⁴ the portulan of Angelino Dulcert,²⁴⁵ the relation of the martyrdom of Angelo of Spoleto,²⁴⁶ and a Genoese act from 1316.²⁴⁷ Most probably the Bulgarian rule lasted only during Theodore Svetoslav's and George II's reigns. We know that their successor, Mihail Shishman received, as the Byzantine chronicle Nikefor Gregoras put it, only "the rule over the Bulgarians from *this side of the Danube*."²⁴⁸

Returning to the hypothesis of a Wallachian rule over the regions north of the mouth of the Danube, which could have replaced the Bulgarian one, the only two direct references to this, already mentioned,²⁴⁹ that could be interpreted in its favor, are also open to other interpretations, as already suggested by other historians. The

²⁴¹ The letter of Louis from April 1351 mentions that Basarab was helped by the pagans: "cum tota sua potentia et vicinorum paganorum."

²⁴² Iorga agrees with Brătianu that the Bulgarian domination of the Maurocastro was made under Mongol control Iorga, "Românii și tătarii", 73. Ciocâltan believes that the Khan decided to change the territorial repartition in order to assure a better defense of the Severin-Vidin region and gave the North-Danubian territories to Basarab. Ciocâltan, *Mongolii*, 252. P. Nikov also argued for Bulgarian control of this region, during the first two decades of the fourteenth century (as quoted by John V. A. Fine, Jr. *The late medieval Balkans*, (Michigan: University of Michigan, 1987), 228-229.

²⁴³ "Bulgaria est unum imperium magnum per se [...] per medium istius imperii transit danubius."

²⁴⁴ Quoted by Spinei, "Restructurari etnice," 50.

²⁴⁵ Marin Popescu Spineni, *România în istoria cartografiei până la 1600* (Romania in the history of cartography until 1600) (Bucharest: Imprimeria Națională, 1938), vol. 2, map 27. It is true that the *portulans* continued to show for a longer period the presence of the Bulgarians in the Bugeac but this is only an anachronism. Ciocâltan, *Mongolii*, 251.

²⁴⁶ The Franciscan friar, Angelo of Spoleto, was killed probably in 1314, in Cetatea Albă, when he was trying to convert the Bulgarians to Catholicism. "Item in Mauro Castro frater Angelus de Spoleto, tunc custos fratrum interemptus est per Bulgaros;" as quoted by Spinei, "Restructurări etnice," 49.

²⁴⁷ The act mentions the problems of the Genoese in the territories of Teodor Svetoslav, in Maurocastro and other places. For further details see Spinei, "Restructurari etnice," 49.

²⁴⁸ See *Fontes ad historiam Daco-Romaniae*, vol. 3, 508.

Ottoman chronicler Enverî wrote a hundred years after the described event, and it is possible that he was referring to a contemporary reality²⁵⁰ while the Arab geographer Abu'l-Fidâ could have been referring in his description to a different “country of Walachs” than Wallachia.²⁵¹ I think that, because the direct evidence is missing, the hypothesis of a Greater Wallachia during the reign of Basarab including the future Bessarabia region is speculative. Nevertheless, it remains an extremely tempting explanation.

4.3. Moldavian expansion towards the South in the end of the fourteenth century

As I previously tried to demonstrate, the Moldavian principality was limited in its early phase to a north-northwestern area and, as long as the power of the Golden Horde remained intact, any extension towards the southern steppes, which would have involved an open conflict, was rather improbable. On the contrary, there is evidence that suggests a close contact and friendly relationship between the young state and the Mongol world. For example, there is a large gold ring bearing the name of Allah found in Bogdan’s tomb at Rădăuți.²⁵² Therefore, Moldavia’s extension towards the south was possible only after the decline of the Tatar power in the region and the main question is when this second phase of its territorial development took place.²⁵³

²⁴⁹ See above, footnotes 204 and 205.

²⁵⁰ The rhymed chronicle of Enverî was written around 1465. An isolate interpretation is that of Petre Diaconu who suggested interpreting the city named in the chronicle, Kili, not as Kilia, but as a corrupted form from Anchio. Petre Diaconu, “Kili et l’expédition d’Umur Beg,” *RESEE* 21 (1983): 23-29.

²⁵¹ Iosipescu interpreted this mention of “a country of vlachs” as a reference to the local population in Dobruđja, of Vlach origin, and not as a proof of Wallachia’s extension to the East. Iosipescu, “Românii,” 73.

²⁵² L. Bătrâna and A. Bătrîna, “O mărturie arheologică despre relațiile internaționale ale Moldovei în vremea lui Bogdan I,” (Archeological evidence on the international relationship of Moldavia in the time of Bogdan I) *SCIVA* 34 (1983): 326-333. The two archeologists argue convincingly that the ring was a gift received by Bogdan, deducing from here the existence of a peaceful relationship between the Moldavian Voievod and the Mongols.

²⁵³ This two-step development can be identified in later Moldavian chronicles. Describing the foundation of Moldavia, Simion Dacălul, interpolator of Ureche’s chronicle, says: “and first they dismounted at the foot of the mountains, afterwards they expanded along Moldova [into the valley of

A *terminus post quem* for this extension could be the year 1380, when G. Soleri specified on his map that Cetatea Albă was under Tatar rule, but, as I said before, a chronology based on medieval maps is highly unreliable.²⁵⁴ As for a *terminus ante quem*, this is certainly the year 1392. A Russian source, the so-called list of Russian cities, elaborated probably between 1387-1392, mentions Cetatea Albă among the Moldavian cities.²⁵⁵ Also, in the same year, 1392, the Voievod Roman claimed according to his title “Voievod from the mountain to the sea,”²⁵⁶ an extension towards the southeast up to the Black Sea, which probably meant an incorporation of Cetatea Albă into Moldavia.²⁵⁷ Since the chancellery formulas were still fluid, and since this *intitulatio* did not appear constantly in documents, the year 1392 is only a *terminus ante quem* and cannot be considered the precise date of the moment when Moldavia arrived at the sea.

Some scholars placed this event before 1386, the year of a Genoese embassy to Cetatea Albă that requested from Moldavia an alliance against the Tatars.²⁵⁸ If we

the river] downwards.” Ureche, *Letopiseșul*, 71. In the scholarship the supporters of this two-step process are Victor Spinei (Spinei, *Moldavia*, 214) and Virgil Ciocâltan (Ciocâltan, “Alanii,” 949). For a different opinion, assuming an evolution in several steps see Șerban Papacostea (Papacostea, “La începuturile statului,” 120-121)

²⁵⁴ The map is reproduced in Popescu-Spineni, *România*, map 28.

²⁵⁵ This list was included in the Russian chronicles: *The first chronicle of Novgorod, Voskrenskaia, and Ermolinskaia*. Actually in the list, under the name Bulgarian and Walach cities, Belgorod (Cetatea Albă) is placed as the first Moldavian city, after Cavarna and before Cernăuți. See Alexandru Andronie, “Orașe moldovenești în secolul al XIV-lea în lumina celor mai vechi izvoare rusești” (Moldavian cities in the fourteenth century, in the light of the oldest Russian sources), *Romanoslavica* 11 (1965): 203-218.

²⁵⁶ The translation of Roman’s title is controversial. The editor, M. Costăchescu translated it as “ruler over the entire Moldavian country from the mountain to the Black Sea”. However, other scholars suggest that a more appropriate translation would be “Moldavia’s Voievod and heir of entire Wallachia from the mountain to the Black Sea.” Based on this second translation Șerban Papacostea, (Papacostea, “La începuturile statului moldovenesc,” 108-109) suggested that the possessions of Roman included two voievodships.

²⁵⁷ Iorga objected that the title does not directly imply Moldavian control over the Black Sea. Nicolae Iorga, *Studii istorice asupra Chiliei și Cetății Albe* (Historical studies on Kilia and Cetatea Albă) (Bucharest: Institutul de arte grafice Carol Göbl, 1900), 45. For a convincing answer to Iorga’s criticism see Ștefan S. Gorovei, *Intemeierea Moldovei. Probleme controversate* (The foundation of the Moldavia: disputed problems) (Iași: Editura Universitatii “Alexandru Ioan Cuza,” 1997), 201.

²⁵⁸ “ambaxiator iturus Mocastro una cum Carollo de Orto” and “ambaxiatores euntes Constantino et Petro vayvoda”. This notes from the Genoese archives are quoted by Șerban Papacostea, “La începuturile statului moldovenesc,” 106.

accept, as Spinei proposed, the identification of Costea-Constantin,²⁵⁹ which appears in the document, as a dignitary of the Moldavian Voievod to Cetatea Albă the year 1386 is a *terminus ante quem* of the Moldavian expansion into southeast.²⁶⁰ If, on the contrary, we accept the hypothesis of Șerban Papacostea, who sees in Constantin a Voievod independent of the Moldavian Voievod, ruling a political structure in the southeastern regions which includes Cetatea Albă, the year is only a *terminus post quem*.²⁶¹

Ștefan Gorovei pushed the dating of the inclusion of the southeastern regions into Moldavia even further back in time. He dated the opening of the “Moldavian road” around 1380, and therefore he suggested that Cetatea Albă was already controlled by Moldavia by that time, probably by 1377-1378.²⁶²

From this summary of the historiography of the problem, it can be concluded that Moldavia incorporated the southeastern regions, including Cetatea Albă, most probably in the ninth decade of the fourteenth century, although the circumstances in which this expansion took place, directly succeeding Tatar control, taking over from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or from a temporary local political structure, are unclear.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ The discovery of this short notice allowed the identification of a mysterious character, “Voievod Costea”, who previously was mentioned only in the List of Voievods from Bistrița.

²⁶⁰ Spinei, *Moldavia*, 219. The arguments brought by Spinei: (1) a change in the provincial organisation of the Franciscan order; (2) the nomination of Iosif, a member of the Voievod’s family and the future first Moldavian metropolitan, as bishop in Cetatea Albă; (3) some passages from the Russian chronicles.

²⁶¹ Papacostea place this moment in 1391 or 1392; see Papacostea, “La începuturile statului moldovenesc,” 111.

²⁶² Gorovei, *Intemeierea Moldovei*, 152. An even earlier date 1374 is suggested by a controversial document whose *regesta* was published by B. P. Hasdeu. Since most of the scholars, N. Iorga (Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol.3, 213), P.P.Panaiteșu, Șt. Gorovei, consider this to be a forgery, I preferred not to take it into account. For discussions on this issue see D. Deletant, “Moldavia between Hungary and Poland, 1347-1412,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (1986): 198-199.

²⁶³ The thesis of a Lithuanian domination over the region around Cetatea Albă was supported by C. Racoviță, (see C. Racoviță, “Începuturile suzeranității polone asupra Moldovei” (The beginnings of the Polish suzerainty over Moldavia), *Revista istorică română* 10 (1940): 237-332, here 317) and Ștefan S. Gorovei (see Gorovei, *Intemeierea Moldovei*, 207-209.)

Much more important for the history of Moldavian-Wallachian frontier is the expansion of the Moldavian voievodship towards the southwestern region. However due to the lack of information, the problem has generally been treated only briefly by scholars.²⁶⁴ In my opinion, the first attested event that can offer some glimpses into the evolution of this region and into its relationship with the Moldavian principality is Sigismund's campaign against Moldavia in 1395.

Sigismund's campaign against Moldavia is known from the account by Thuroczi²⁶⁵ and from some charters issued by the King for rewarding the participants of the expedition.²⁶⁶ From Sigismund's itinerary, reconstructed on the basis of the charters he issued, it seems almost certain that he entered Moldavia through the pass of Oituz in southwestern Moldavia.²⁶⁷ The strong resistance Hungarians met while crossing the pass, vividly described by Thuroczi,²⁶⁸ suggests that the principality of Moldavia already ruled over that region, especially because the Voievod himself took part in the battle.²⁶⁹ Therefore, the year of Sigismund's campaign constitutes a *terminus ante quem* for the expansion of the Moldavian principality towards the southwest up to Oituz in the Trotuș region.

²⁶⁴ For example, after discussing in four pages the hypothesis of the expansion of Moldavia towards southeast, Spinei simply states in one phrase, without any argument, that the south-western parts of Moldavia were included in the Voievodship at an earlier date, probably under Lațcu. See Spinei, *Moldavia*, 220. Of course, the main reason for this unequal analysis is the lack of the sources.

²⁶⁵ Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica*, vol. 1, 209-210.

²⁶⁶ For Stephan of Kanizsa (Hurmuzaki I/2, 362-363, 382-386, 412-417); E. Malyusz, ed., *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár* (The charters of Sigismund) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1951), vol. 1(1387-1399), 412-413.

²⁶⁷ The places from where Sigismund issued charters from Dec. 1394- Jan. 1395 are Turda (Torda)- 25 Dec.; Cristuru Secuiesc (Kerestwr) –3,4 Jan.; Odorheiul-Secuiesc (Zekeloduarhel, Székelyud-varhely) – 9 Jan.; Piatra Neamț (Piatra lui Crăciun, Karachonkw) – 30 Jan.; Neamț (Nempch) – 3 Feb.; Brașov (Brasso) – 12 Feb. See *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár*, 409-416. This itinerary was also suggested by Radu Manolescu in "Campania lui Sigismund de Luxemburg în Moldova" (Sigismund of Luxembourg's campaign in Moldavia), *Analele Universității București, Seria Științe Sociale- Istorie* 15 (1966): 59-75.

²⁶⁸ *Et cum rex insidiarum inscius alpes condescendisset, ingenti mox sagittariorum manu agreditur, tela nec minus homines equosque feriunt, et pene omnis densarum imbribus sagittarium rregalis expeditio gravatur, regii autem milites vitam in forti brachio redimere conati de equis descendunt...* Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica*, vol. 1, 209.

²⁶⁹ A charter issued in 17 Feb. 1401, for rewarding the merits of Stephan, count of the Szeklers, clearly states that the Voievod himself took part in the fighting: "Variosque conflictus in alpiibus et indaginibus

4.4. Wallachia's eastern border in the second half of the fourteenth century.

As I tried to demonstrate in the previous chapter, Wallachia's eastern border was located on the river Ialomița in 1358-1368 but later in the same year, 1368, it already included the road of Brăila, which follows the Buzău river.²⁷⁰ The letter of the Patriarch of Constantinople from 1359²⁷¹ that mentions the see of Vicina as the neighbour of the newly-founded metropolitan see of Wallachia,²⁷² cannot be interpreted as contrary proof since it certainly describes the ecclesiastical geography of the region, and not the political one. Since the internal and external chronicles do not contain any other information that could be used for analyzing the geographical evolution of the Wallachian principality, the only relevant sources are the internal charters. Although these are few, a map of the settlements mentioned in them offers at least an image of the core of the principality, and the settlements east of the river Prahova are attested only in a later period.²⁷³ This scarcity of the sources gave historians a large playground for hypotheses, most of them groundless speculations based on the political context.²⁷⁴ However, there is one element that could be used,

densis cum ipsis Olahis et Stephano voivoda eorum viriliter committendo," as quoted by the editors of Thuroczi in Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica*, vol. 2, 229.

²⁷⁰ Whether the city of Brăila itself was included in 1368 in Wallachia is not clear from the document, therefore the objection of Brătianu in this respect can not be dismissed; see Brătianu, "Les rois," 88.

²⁷¹ Hurmuzaki I/1, 2.

²⁷² The emplacement of Vicina is unclear, the main hypotheses being: Măcin, Issacea, Mahmudia.

²⁷³ See the appendix and the map.

²⁷⁴ Papacostea suggested that Wallachia expanded towards the North-East, towards the river Siret in 1375, based on the disappearance of the Milcov bishops. Papacostea, "Domni români și regi angevini," 135. N. Constantinescu considered that Wallachia's eastern frontier was established at the mouth of Siret, already in the time of Nicolae-Alexandru (1352-1364); see N. Constantinescu, *Vladislav I*, (Bucharest: Ed. Militară, 1979), 33-34. Brătianu believes that in the time of Radu, after the death of Louis, Wallachia extended its territory eastwards, Brătianu, "In jurul întemeierii," 600. Cihodaru even supposed, without any supporting evidence, a common military action undertaken by Mircea and Petru of Moldavia against the Tatars by which they occupied Kilia and respectively, Cetatea Albă. C. Cihodaru, *Alexandru cel Bun* (Iași: Editura Junimea, 1984), 83-84.

and indeed was used, for supporting an eastward expansion of Wallachia in the last decades of the fourteenth century: the *intitulatio* of the Voievods.

In a document of contested authenticity²⁷⁵ issued by Mircea in 1391, the Voievod has the title: “Nos Joannes Mircea, Dei gratia princeps et vajvoda totius regni Vallachie incipendo ab Alpibus usque ad confinia Tartariae.” The new element introduced in this moment in the *intitulatio*, “confinia Tartariae,” was regularly used in the Slavonic acts issued by Mircea only from 1404 onwards.²⁷⁶ The only certain aspect is that this designation refers to the eastern regions, but a more precise location is difficult. Probably the formula was not invented by the Wallachian chancellery, but rather imported from elsewhere. The first attested usage comes from the Papal chancellery.²⁷⁷ Four main interpretations of “confinia Tartariae” were proposed by scholars: the region between the mouths of the rivers Dniester and Prut (the so-called Bessarabia), southern Moldavia including the city of Kilia, the area around the mouth of the Siret river, and northern Dobrudja.²⁷⁸ In my opinion an exact geographical referent for this phrase does not exist, since its main feature is ambiguity. The fact that the voievod Mircea used such an ambiguous formula as “confinia Tartariae” without explicitly mentioning a city or of a region,²⁷⁹ implies a vast borderland extending towards the Tatars, and I suggest this is a semi-desert over which the Voievod exercised diffuse authority. Concerning the nominal extent of the Wallachian Voievod’s authority, there are two sources that suggest it extended across the Danube,

²⁷⁵ The charter is a donation in the Făgăraș domain, and was preserved only in a nineteenth century Latin translation. The last editors of the document considered it authentic (*DRH-B*, vol. 1, 36-39), but in the previous edition (*D.I.R.-B*, vol.1, 276-277) the document was considered false. I am using the most recent edition (*DRH* edition) of the document.

²⁷⁶ Òàòàđñêùì ñòđàíàì. *DRH –B*, vol. 1: 63,66,70,73,75,80,90.

²⁷⁷ The Papal chancellery used the same formula for describing the bishopric of Milcovia starting from the thirteenth and fourteenth century: 1278 –*confinibus Tartarorum*; 1332 – *in finibus... Tartarorum*; 1347- *in finibus... Tartarorum* (1347), *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 29,45, 63.

²⁷⁸ For the hypothesis of Bessarabia see Panaitescu, *Mircea*, 367. For the hypothesis of northern Dobrudja see Cihodaru, *Alexandru*, 230-231.

between the mouth of the Prut River and the Black Sea. First the precise formula of the *intitulatio* exists in a document issued by Mircea, approximately dated by its editors to <1404-1406>²⁸⁰ and states that Mircea ruled over “both banks of the Danube, as far as the Black Sea”. Second, there is a similar mention in a Byzantine chronicle, Chalkokondyles, who states that Wallachia, around 1396, included the region from the left of the Danube to the Black Sea.²⁸¹

In conclusion, I understand the future Wallachian-Moldavian frontier area to be situated outside of the two principalities at the time of their emergence. The end of Mongol control was followed in a first phase by the nominal extension of the two Voievods’ authorities over southern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia. At the same time the demographic growth in these regions coincided with the increasing effectivity of their authority. And, as the result of their encounter, the frontier between the two principalities was established for the first time.

²⁷⁹ This was the case for another two regions that appears in the title of Mircea: the city Dârstor and the lands of Dobrotici.

²⁸⁰ *DRH-B*, vol. 1, 63.

²⁸¹ See a discussion on this passage at Ciocâltan, “Către *părțile tătărești* din titlul voievodal al lui Mircea cel Bătrân” (Towards the ‘Tartarian parts’ in the voievodal title of Mircea the Old), *AIIA* 24 (1987): 349-355, here 353.

Chapter 5. Settlement and dispute on the frontier

There are only two explicit pieces of information concerning the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier during the first half of the fifteenth century: one mentions an agreement and the other a conflict. Neither the terms of the agreement, nor the precise disputed border regions are directly known from the sources. Nevertheless, I think that there is adequate indirect evidence to propose a hypothetical reconstruction of the early history of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier, from its first settlement to the first dispute and the subsequent reshaping.

5.1. From agreement to conflict

In the reconciliation act concluded in 1475 between Stephen the Great, the voievod of Moldavia, and Matthias, the king of Hungary, among the conditions that Stephen engaged to fulfill, there is a cryptic reference to the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier:

Super metis etiam provinciae Moldaviae cum provincia Transalpina secundum antiquos terminos et consuetudines per praedecessores vayvodas possessos et tentos utrumque vayvodam, tam scilicet Stephanum Moldaviensem quam Vlad Transalpinum, secundum privilegia Alexandri et Mirzae utriusque partis vayvodarum concordamus.²⁸²

This short notice is the only source that attests the existence of an agreement concerning the frontiers between Mircea, the Voievod of Wallachia (1386-1418), and Alexander, the Voievod of Moldavia (1400-1432). The nature of the document offers the first hint regarding the content of the agreement. This royal charter of 15 August 1475 contains the conditions that the Hungarian king imposed on Stephen and follows

²⁸² Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ștefan*, vol. 2, 334-336.

an earlier charter issued by the Moldavian voievod on 12 July 1475.²⁸³ Since the Moldavian charter contains no reference to the frontier problem, although the content of the two documents is almost identical,²⁸⁴ it can be inferred that the invoked agreement was unfavourable to the Moldavian voievodship. This hypothesis is strongly supported by the nature of the relationship between the two voievods at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Alexander was the protégé of Mircea, and he obtained the Moldavian voievodship by an armed intervention of Mircea, which removed Alexander's rival, Iuga, from the throne, as an internal chronicle simply narrates: "in that year Mircea Voievod came and took Iuga with him."²⁸⁵ This intervention probably provided the opportunity for settling the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier. However, regardless whether this settlement was made then or at a later time, most probably it was in favour of Wallachia.²⁸⁶

By 1429 the agreement had already been broken and the Wallachian voievod appealed to Sigismund, the king of Hungary, demanding some territories that had been taken over by the Moldavians. The only source from which these events are known is the correspondence between the Grand Duke Vitold and the Polish king Vladislav:

Item predicti Walachi Bessarabite et notarius domini regis Romanorum attulerunt nobis quendam descripcionem granicierum et locorum,²⁸⁷ per woyewodam Moldwanum uti asserunt occupatorum et a Bessarabitis abstractorum.²⁸⁸

²⁸³ See *Ibid.*, 330-333.

²⁸⁴ All the other conditions accepted by Stephen – to remain faithful to the Hungarian crown, to take part in the fight against the Ottomans, to militarily sustain the king against any enemy except Poland, to expel from Moldavia all the enemies of the king – are contained both in the Voievodal charter and in the Royal one.

²⁸⁵ For further details concerning the Moldavian political conflicts in which Alexander became voievod see Cihodaru, "Din nou despre Iurg," 139-157.

²⁸⁶ Without any argument Cihodaru claimed that the settlement was favourable to Moldavia, and that Mircea "offered" to Alexander Kilia and its hinterland; see Cihodaru, "Formarea," 89-90.

²⁸⁷ I think it is possible that this detailed description of the Wallachian - Moldavian boundary, brought by the Wallachians in order to justify their rights, was taken from the treaty concluded between Alexander and Mircea.

²⁸⁸ *CEV*, 836.

Therefore, sometime before 1429, probably in the turmoil that followed Mircea's death in 1418,²⁸⁹ Alexander incorporated into Moldavia some regions that were considered as belonging to Wallachia by the agreement concluded with Mircea at the beginning of his reign. The means chosen by the Wallachians for settling the conflict, i.e. an appeal to their suzerain, the king of Hungary, proved to be ineffective. The tense relationships between the Hungarian and Polish kingdoms and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania allowed Alexander to refuse any compromise,²⁹⁰ and the Moldavian-Wallachian relationship remained extremely tense. In the same year, 1429, Dan, the voievod of Wallachia, tried to seize the city of Kilia from the Moldavians, but failed.²⁹¹ As a reaction, Alexander blocked the traffic on the Lower Danube, thus damaging the Wallachian commerce, especially the port of Brăila.²⁹² In 1431 the *iudex* of Braşov, Luca Kis, was informed that rumours were circulating in Moldavia about an imminent attack against Wallachia.²⁹³ The next year, the Wallachian voievod ironically began his letter addressed to the city of Braşov with these words: "About this, you know very well what friends the Moldavians are to me."²⁹⁴ This open conflict between the two principalities determined by a dispute over the frontier continued for several decades and was definitely settled in favour of Moldavia only after Stephen the Great's military intervention against Wallachia, in 1482.

²⁸⁹ For further details see Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol. 4, 3-28.

²⁹⁰ Nos vero prout prius scripsimus, eo quod dominus Romanorum rex suos ad diem deputatum non miserat, woyewoda vero Moldwanus, etsi miserit, tamen in nos compromittere noluit, ab hac causa sumus exonerati et soluti. This intransigent position provoked an virulent reaction of Witold: Unde et quare de nobis tales oriuntur suspiciones?; see *CEV*, 835-836.

²⁹¹ Woyewoda Dan Bessarabie, adunatis sibi exercitibus gencium Bessarabicorum et nonnullorum Turcorum, invasit hostiliter terras predicti woyewode Moldavie. *CEV*, 908-910.

²⁹² Insuper, ut inducat woyewodam Moldavie, quatenus ab huiusmodi novitatibus cessat, obstacula in Danubio facta sublevet, et naves iuxta consuetudinem hactenus introductam ire permittat. *CEV*, 860.

²⁹³ Wayuoda Moldaviensis, summa cum multitudine, congregatus est, et ipse magnus provisor, cum suis multiplicibus, versus Puttnam venit. Tamen fama viget ut versus Transalpinas suos exercitus moveret. *DRH-D*, vol. 1, 282.

²⁹⁴ În ôvî àè áwáðh çîáàòá èàèîàè ñ@ò ïðìàòáèîá ìîh îîèáwâáîá. *DRH-D*, vol.1, 289.

5.2. The disputed borderlands

The frontier regions disputed by the two principalities are not explicitly mentioned in any of the sources. However, all the relevant sources together contain enough information to sketch the evolution of the extent of the territory of Moldavia and Wallachia during the first half of the fifteenth century, and therefore, to infer which were the disputed borderlands.

Most scholars, for example Papacostea²⁹⁵ and Panaitescu,²⁹⁶ assumed that the disputed frontier region between Wallachia and Moldavia mentioned in Witold's correspondence was the city of Kilia and its hinterland.²⁹⁷ However, I think that a new analysis of the sources will question this opinion. A new reading of the sources demonstrates that although Kilia was indeed disputed by the two principalities, there was another disputed borderland region as well. Moreover, the dispute over Kilia was not a frontier conflict between Wallachia and Moldavia, but rather an attempt of the Hungarian kingdom to seize control of the navigation on the Danube through an intermediary vassal, the Wallachian voievod.²⁹⁸

According to the only known source for this quarrel, Vitold's correspondence, the Moldavian voievod occupied the fortress of Kilia and other borderlands in the

²⁹⁵ Șerban Papacostea, "Kilia et la politique orientale de Sigismond de Luxembourg," *RRH* 14 (1976): 421-436.

²⁹⁶ Petre P. Panaitescu, "Legăturile moldo-polone în secolul XV și problema Chilieii" (The Moldavian-Polish relationships in the fifteenth century and the problem of Kilia), *Romanoslavica* 3 (1958), 101.

²⁹⁷ Recent editions of Genoese documents demonstrated that Kilia and Licostomo were two different cities located one on the left, the other on the right bank of the Danubian tributary of Kilia. For the historiography of the problem and a detailed analysis of written and cartographic sources, see Octavian Iliescu, "Localizarea vechiului Licostomo" (The location of ancient Licostomo), *SRI* 25 (1972): 435-462. However, in the sources of the fifteenth century, as most scholars accepted, the name Kilia was used for designating both ports and their hinterland, see Ștefan Andreescu, "Une ville disputée: Kilia pendant la première moitié du XV^e siècle," *RRH* 23 (1985), 219.

²⁹⁸ For the Hungarian commercial interest in Kilia, see Papacostea, "Kilia," 421-436. For the military, strategic interest of the Hungarian Kingdom in Kilia, see Fr. Pall, "Intervenția lui Iancu de Hunedoara în Țara Românească și Moldova în anii 1447-1448" (John Hunyadi's intervention in Wallachia and Moldavia in 1447-1448), *SRI* 16 (1963), 1064. For a short period Sigismund even hoped to install the Teutonic order at Kilia; see *CEV*, 809.

land of Wallachia (Bessarabia).²⁹⁹ The other letters of Vitold confirm the distinction, clearly emphasised in this document, between two disputed regions, i.e. the port of Kilia and other frontier areas. It is hard to believe that the above-mentioned *descriptcionem granicierum et locorum*³⁰⁰ or *limitibus Moldavie*³⁰¹ were referring to the port of Kilia; they must have concerned a large frontier region lying between the two principalities.

The evolution of the political status of Kilia during the first half of the fifteenth century supports this interpretation. An Ottoman act from 1486 mentions three successive rulerships over Kilia: Wallachian, Hungarian and Moldavian, the only chronological reference being that they succeeded each other in this order during one single generation.³⁰² There are only six explicit pieces of evidence about who controlled Kilia in the first half of the fifteenth century. According to these, Kilia was part of the Moldavian voievodship in the years 1412 (the treaty of Lublau),³⁰³ 1415 (list of Moldavian participants at the Council of Konstantz),³⁰⁴ 1429 (the failed Wallachian attack),³⁰⁵ 1435 (the agreement between Iliáš and Stephen),³⁰⁶ 1448 (when Voievod Peter II gave the city to the Hungarian kingdom).³⁰⁷ The year in which Wallachia was certainly in control of the city according to Wavrin's chronicle³⁰⁸ is

²⁹⁹ Quodam castro dicto Kylia et *aliis limitibus granicierum* (emphasis mine), que dixit fore per woyewodam a terra Bessarabia occupatas. *CEV*, 910.

³⁰⁰ See above, footnote 288.

³⁰¹ *CEV*, 830.

³⁰² The document was based on the testimony of old men who had lived under all three rulerships; for further details see Tahsin Gemil, "Quelques observations concernant la conclusion de la paix entre la Moldavie et l'Empire Ottoman (1486) et la délimitation de leur frontière," *RRH* 22 (1983): 237-238.

³⁰³ The text of the treaty is edited in Hurmuzaki I/2: 483-487 and *CEV*, 228-231. For the stipulations regarding Moldavia see the text of the treaty below in footnote 326.

³⁰⁴ In the list appears "Belgrado ac Kiryla Moldaviae." Hurmuzaki, I/2: 497.

³⁰⁵ *CEV*, 908-910.

³⁰⁶ See the text of the agreement in Costăchescu, vol. 2, 682. The rivalry between Alexander's two sons was temporarily settled by a division of the principality. For further details see Leon Șimanschi, "Criza politică din Moldova dintre anii 1432 și 1437" (The political crisis in Moldavia from 1432 to 1437), *AIIA* 32 (1996): 23-34.

³⁰⁷ *Ńú řõhääää Êëëi@ äðääü Íóãðřü*. Bogdan, *Vechile cronice*, 144.

³⁰⁸ Wavrin, *Croniques*, 67.

1445, and the Wallachian domination manifested itself in joint control with the Hungarians in the period 1448-1465.³⁰⁹ Although some scholars have used other sources for detailing this chronology, including other dates, I did not take them into account because most of them are, to my mind, groundless speculations.³¹⁰ Besides these pieces of evidence regarding the direct control over Kilia, there are numerous other sources that show Hungary's great interest in seizing the port: in a letter addressed to the Voievod of Transylvania around 1412 Sigismund revealed his intention to occupy Kilia;³¹¹ in 1429 Vladislav accepted, but later opposed, Sigismund's plan to seize the port,³¹² and for a short period Sigismund even hoped to install the Teutonic order at Kilia.³¹³ Finally, in 1448 a Hungarian garrison was installed in the city and the Moldavian voievodes had to promise that they would not try to recapture the city.³¹⁴

From all these sources, it becomes clear that the problem of Kilia was a Moldavian-Hungarian conflict, which inevitably involved also the vassal of the Hungarian king, the Wallachian voievod and the suzerain of the Moldavian voievod, the Polish king. Kilia became a city disputed directly by Wallachia and Moldavia only after the first Wallachian rulership over it, sometime after 1435.³¹⁵ Therefore, the complaint of the Voievod of Wallachia from 1429 against the Moldavian voievod,

³⁰⁹ For more details see Panaitescu, "Legăturile moldo-polone," 106-107.

³¹⁰ The best known such fragment is a passage from the Byzantine chronicle Sphrantzes, mistranslated by Iorga (see Iorga, *Chilia și Cetatea Albă*, 84). Based on Iorga's mistake Panaitescu considered that in 1424 Kilia belonged to Wallachia (see Panaitescu, "Legăturile moldo-polone," 99). For a review of the interpretations provoked by this mistranslation see V. Ciocâltan, "Chilia în primul sfert al veacului al XV-lea" (Kilia in the first quarter of the fifteenth century), *RI* 34 (1981): 2091-2096.

³¹¹ For a complex analysis of Sigismund's policy regarding Moldavia, and especially the port of Kilia, see Florin Constantiniu and Șerban Papacostea, "Tratatul de la Lublau și situația internațională a Moldovei la începutul secolului al XV-lea" (The Lublau treaty and the international position of Moldavia in the beginning of the 15th century), *SRI* 17 (1964): 1129-1140.

³¹² *CEV*, 823.

³¹³ *CEV*, 809.

³¹⁴ In 1450 Bogdan II swore to respect the status of Kilia; see Costăchescu, *Documente*, vol. 2, 755-758.

³¹⁵ For a tentative to date more precisely the beginning of the Wallachian rulership, see Ștefan Andreescu, "Une ville disputée: Kilia pendant la première moitié du XV^e siècle," *RRH* 23 (1985): 217-230, here 223.

who occupied his territories, must have regarded some borderland regions other than Kilia.

My hypothesis is that these other frontier regions disputed by Wallachia and Moldavia were the southwestern areas, located on the Lower Siret, south of the river Trotuș and of the city of Bârlad. The first source on which this hypothesis is based is the fragment from Ureche's chronicle narrating the Stephen's 1482 expedition that determined the movement of the frontier from the river Trotuș on the river Milcov.³¹⁶ This fragment was accepted literally by scholars from the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth.³¹⁷ Costăchescu, the scholar who edited the Moldavian charters of Alexander in 1931, was the first to contest this interpretation, showing that as early as from 1423 the Moldavian Voievod ruled over the Putna region.³¹⁸ Scholars fully accepted Costăchescu's argument and dismissed the passage from the chronicle as simply an invention or as an exaggeration of a minor action, finalised by the conquest of the fortress of Crăciuna.³¹⁹ In my opinion, the chronicler who wrote two centuries after the events, did not invent them but only merged the following different elements into a single story: the 1482 expedition of Stephen against Wallachia, his decisive role in settling the frontier on the Milcov, and the existence of a previous Wallachian domination over southwestern Moldavia. On this version, the action of a previous Voievod, Alexander, who had incorporated this

³¹⁶ The passage was actually written by an interpolator of Ureche's chronicle, Misail Călugărul, but his interpolation has the same historical value as the other parts of the chronicle, all being written in the second half of the seventeenth century; see Ureche, *Letopisețul*, 101. Since the expedition of Stephen is beyond the chronological limits of my research I will not discuss it here as a historical event.

³¹⁷ See B. P. Hasdeu, *Istoria critică a românilor* (Critique history of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1875), vol. 1, 10 and Mironescu, "Hotarul," 99-100. For a reevaluation of their position see Papacostea, "La începuturile statului," 113-115.

³¹⁸ Costăchescu, vol. 1, 153. The villages mentioned in the document from 1423 are Bătinești, Lupșe's village and Călimănești. See appendix and map.

³¹⁹ This is the opinion of C. C. Giurescu, see in *Tărguri și cetăți*, 63. For a discussion concerning the location of the fortress of Crăciuna, see Lucian Chițescu, "Cu privire la localizarea cetății Crăciuna" (Concerning the location of Crăciuna fortress), *SCIIVA* 18 (197): 351-359

region into the voievodship, was simply transferred to Stephen the Great, the best-known Moldavian voievod and the main character of Ureche's chronicle.

An analysis of the sources from the first half of the fifteenth century, concerning the territorial extent of Wallachia and Moldavia, supports this interpretation. In the privilege of 1408, given by the Moldavian voievod for Lviv merchants, the southern borderland customs cities are Bacău and Bârlad.³²⁰ However, this does not automatically imply that these cities were on the border, and in the same document an even southerly city, Troțuș, appears.³²¹ A literal interpretation of the document would be that Bacău and Bârlad are named borderland customs because at that date the frontier of Moldavia was on the river Troțuș and, therefore, the southwestern regions were not yet included in the Moldavian voievodship.³²² The major objection to this interpretation³²³ is that exactly the same formula appears in the renewed privileges for Lviv' merchants of 1434 and 1456, issued by Stephen I and Peter II,³²⁴ when, from other sources,³²⁵ we know for sure that Moldavia had incorporated the region south of the Troțuș river. However, in my opinion, this objection can be countered if we take into account the major difference between the privilege from 1408 and the later ones. The privilege from 1408 opened this trade route, therefore its content reflects the contemporary reality more accurately compared to subsequent privileges, which rather mechanically renewed the original one.

³²⁰ În 1408, voievodul moldavei a acordat privilegii comercianților din Lviv, în care sunt menționate orașele de frontieră Bacău și Bârlad. See Costăchescu, *Documente*, vol. 2: 630-637.

³²¹ Ôiòðóøà see Ibid., 631.

³²² This is the interpretation proposed by Hasdeu; see Hasdeu, *Istoria critică*, 3.

³²³ This objection was raised by scholars such as C. C. Giurescu (Giurescu, *Târguri și cetăți*, 179-180) and N. Iorga (Iorga, *Chilia și Cetatea Albă*, 73-74).

³²⁴ See Costăchescu, *Documente*, vol. 2: 667-673 and 788-796.

³²⁵ See footnotes: 318 and 328.

The first detailed geographical description of the Moldavian voievodship is preserved in the treaty of Lublau concluded in 1412 between Sigismund of Hungary and Vladislav of Poland. One of the articles of the treaty stipulated that the Moldavian Principality would be divided between the two kingdoms if the Voievod would not participate in the fight against the Ottomans. The hypothetical dividing line crossed Moldavia from Northwest towards Southeast, with Poland receiving the northern and western parts of the principality, including Cetatea Albă, and Hungary the other regions, including Bârlad and Kilia.³²⁶ The treaty does not contain any reference to the southwestern regions, south of Trotuș river, which could be interpreted as evidence that these regions were still outside the voievodship.

The first detailed description of these areas appears in a document of 1435, which described the division of Moldavia between Alexander's two sons, Stephen and Iliăș, and clearly shows that Moldavia had incorporated those regions by that date.³²⁷ In a letter addressed to the Polish king, voievod Iliăș listed the Moldavian regions that he gave to his brother, and among these the cities of Bârlad and Tecuci, and the regions of Covurlui, Tutova and Olteni.³²⁸

From all the above-mentioned arguments, an evolution of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier in the first half of the fifteenth century can be delineated. At the

³²⁶ Quod silue maiores Buccowyna dicte, incipiendo a montibus, sive Alpibus regni Ungarie, inter eandem terram Moldwanię, et terram Sepenicensem situate penes Sereth, protendentem se ad aliam silvam minorem Buccowynam dictam usque ad fluvium Puth, debent per medium dividi seu dimidiari, et quod forum Zasski targ, in sinistra parte situm, maneat pro eodem domino rege Polonie, forum vero vel villa Berleth in dextra parte situm, maneat domino Sigismundo regi et corone regni Ungarie. Transcensso autem flumine Pruth, residue silve, directe procedendo per campos desertos usque ad mare, pari modo cum eisdem campis desertis per medium dividuntur. Itaque Fayerwar alias Bologrod cum equali medietate pro ipso domino regi Polonie et corona regni Polonie, Kilia vero cum alia equali medietate pro domino Sigismundo regi et corona regni Ungarie maneant taliter dimidiate et divise. *CEV*, 230.

³²⁷ Rosetti suggested that this division corresponded to a fourteenth century political reality, when precisely these regions formed the state of Bârlad; see Radu Rosetti, "Statul bârlădean," *Revista nouă* 2 (1889), 467. For a similar opinion see Papacostea, "La începuturile statului," 110.

³²⁸ È äãðæãâu wò òuòîâu è òðzãú áðúéããúñêùè, ñú óñâþ âîëîñòèþ, è ièèíú êîâîðèuèñêùè è ièñòî òãèó÷ú, ñú óñâþ âîëîñòèþ, è wèòhíú. Costăchescu, *Documente*, vol. 2, 682.

beginning of the century the voievods of Wallachia and Moldavia concluded the first settlement of the frontier between the two principalities, and Wallachia was the beneficiary of this agreement. By this agreement, Moldavia recognised the Wallachian domination over the southwestern regions, including Putna, Covurlui, and Olteni. After the death of Mircea, Alexander, probably taking advantage of the internal struggles in Wallachia, modified the frontier in favour of Moldavia to include these regions. The Wallachian appeal to an external arbitration was unsuccessful and the restoration of the previous frontier was not accomplished. Moreover, from the fourth decade of the century onwards, Wallachia was involved in another territorial dispute with Moldavia, over the Danubian port of Kilia, this time as a vassal of the Hungarian Kingdom, which wanted to control the navigation on the Danube. The two disputes overlapped only for one moment, in 1429-1430, when Sigismund tried to make a global arrangement with Vladislav, the suzerain of the Moldavian voievod. This conflict over Kilia was temporally settled in 1448, when a Hungarian garrison was installed in Kilia, but the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier dispute went on for several decades, feeding the tensions between the two states. In 1475 the Hungarian king still menaced the Moldavians with the reopening of the border problem, but the armed intervention of Stephen, in 1482, settled the problem definitively.

Conclusions

Through the analysis of the building process of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier, I was able to identify three moulding factors: the landscape features, the political events and the demographic evolution. The landscape, in the absence of any natural barrier between northeastern Wallachia and southwestern Moldavia, might have forecast a common future political evolution. In spite of this, a frontier eventually developed cutting right through the middle of this geographically unitary region. The specific landscape features, namely the plains areas open to the Eurasian steppes through southeastern Moldavia (the region of Bugeac), made from this region a perfect corridor for recurrent migrations and invasions, with a major demographic impact. As I showed by corroborating the written and the archaeological evidence, the future Wallachian-Moldavian borderland area was scarcely inhabited. Moreover, the Transylvanians, who crossed the Carpathians towards Moldavia during the fourteenth century, failed to settle in this region. Later on, in the fifteenth century, the situation seemed to have changed, and Wallachian colonists gave their name to an entire region. This complex demographic evolution corresponds perfectly, as I argued, to the political evolution of the region.

In my understanding southwestern Moldavia and northeastern Wallachia was a frontier region not only from a demographic point of view, but also from a political and economic one. This frontier feature characterised by a late development, mainly caused by the Tatars' prolonged control over the area. Situated towards the border of the Tatar rulership, this steppe, unforrested region, remained under its control for a

longer period than the neighbouring regions. Even when the Golden Horde's authority diminished, it was replaced, for a short period, by that of the local Tatar rulers.

Once the Tatars' control over the region ceased, their legacy became a bone of contention between the newly emerging principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia. Before analysing the pieces of evidence describing the dispute over the borderlands, I dated more accurately the moment when these regions were incorporated by the two voievodships. By analysing the gradual extension of the authority of the voievods, first nominally and afterwards effectively, I conclude that this moment occurred in the last decade of the fourteenth century. Even if we accept the seductive but speculative hypothesis of Wallachian expansion eastward during Basarab's reign and under Mongol suzerainty, this remains an isolated event, with no consequences.

According to my interpretation, Mircea was the voievod who, most probably, used his position of protector of the Moldavian voievod, Alexander, for settling the Moldavian-Wallachian frontier for the first time, evidently with Wallachia taking the lion's share. The agreement was challenged by the Moldavians when internal rivalries and the Ottoman incursions destabilised Wallachia. To my mind, all the Wallachian efforts to recuperate the borderlands taken over by the Moldavians refer to this frontier region rather than to the city of Kilia. All Wallachian attempts were unsuccessful, and this prolonged dispute was one of the main causes of the Moldavian-Wallachian animosity during the fifteenth century.

This reconstruction of the building process of the Wallachian-Moldavian frontier deals exclusively with the concrete, territorial frontier. However, the most exciting part of the process is the building of the imaginary frontier, according to which the Moldavian and the Wallachian identities were constructed. Unfortunately, since Wallachian and Moldavian sources for this period (c. 1350-c. 1450) are

extremely few and mostly unhelpful for the study of mentalities, we can only observe the frontier once it has already been built. A small fragment from Demetrius Cantemir's *Descriptio Moldaviae* perfectly catches the interplay of the two frontiers:

Once a contest was held between Moldavians and Wallachians to see who could outdo the other in drinking. The champions, having come together on the bridge in Focșani, which marks the boundary between Moldavia and Wallachia, competed for such a long time in emptying their cups, that the Wallachian, suffocated by the wine, gave up his soul. As a reward for his victory, the Moldavian was ennobled by his voievod.

Appendix

This appendix contains inventories of Wallachian and southwestern Moldavian settlements mentioned in internal documents from around 1350 until 1450. It was the basis on which the maps included in the thesis were drawn. The five columns of the table contain:

- (1) the name of the settlement – as it was transcribed by the editors of the documents
- (2) the name as it appears in the documents themselves, without any change – sometimes the name refers to the inhabitants and not to the settlement (see for example no. 27, 134)
- (3) present day location – j. is an abbreviation from *județ* ('department')
- (4) the years in which the settlement is mentioned – using the editors' convention to put in brackets (< >) the date if that is not explicitly mentioned in a document, but assumed by the editors
- (5) A minimal bibliography containing the documents in which the settlements are mentioned and some references that helped to localise them. Although the first settlement inventories were elaborated fifty years ago by Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu,³²⁹ a general study of historical toponimy for Wallachia and Moldavia in the Middle Ages has not been produced to this date. The main references are the indexes of the two collections of documents *Documente*

³²⁹ Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, "Așezări omenești în Țara Românească până la 1418" (Human settlements in Wallachia until 1418), *Arhiva Românească* 7 (1941): 89-110 and Idem, *Așezările omenești în Moldova până la 1418* (Human settlements in Moldavia until 1418) (Bucharest: Ed. Fundației Culturale Mihail Kogălniceanu, 1944). Another inventory was published by Tr. Ionescu-Nișcov, C. Velichi and A. Constantinescu, "Toponimie istorică din perioada feudală a Țării Românești (1374-1600)" (Historical toponimy from the feudal period of Wallachia (1374-1600)), *Revista Arhivelor* 34 (1972): 25-40.

*privind istoria României*³³⁰ and *Documenta Romaniae Historica*. The authors localised most of the settlements but they did not explain the methodology or the bibliography they used. I tried to compensate for this by using nineteenth century geographical dictionaries.³³¹ In this way, I was able to localise no longer existing villages (most of them were absorbed by larger settlements, see Wallachia, no.112), and villages which changed their names (see Wallachia, no.31) or to recognise the persistence of a village's old name used for naming estates or landscape features (see Wallachia, no.76).

³³⁰ The coordinator of the index of place names of this collection was Ion Donat, the most important specialist in Wallachian historical toponymy.

³³¹ All these dictionaries are part of the first collection of regional geographical dictionaries initiated by the Romanian Academy.

Abbreviations

Antonescu = Antonescu-Remuși, P.S. *Dicționar geografic al județului Vlașca* (Geographical dictionary of Vlașca department). Bucharest: Socecu, 1891.

Condurățeanu = Condurățeanu, D.P. *Dicționar geografic al județului Dâmbovița* (Geographical dictionary of Dâmbovița department). Bucharest: Socecu, 1890.

DRH-A = *Documenta Romaniae Historica. A. Moldova* (Romanian Historical Documents. Series A. Moldavia). Vol. 1 (1384-1448). Ed. Constantin Cihodaru, Ioan Caproșu and Leon Șimanschi. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1975.

DRH-B = *Documenta Romaniae Historica. B. Țara Românească* (Romanian Historical Documents. Series B. Wallachia). Vol. 1 (1247-1500). Ed. Petre P. Panaitescu and Damaschin Mioc. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1966.

Indicele A = *Documente privind istoria României. A. Moldova, veacurile XIV-XVI. Indicele numelor de locuri* (Documents concerning Romanian history. Series A. Moldavia, from the 14th century to the 16th. The index of place names). Ed. Alexandru I. Gonța. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1990.

Indicele B = *Documente privind istoria României. B. Țara Românească, veacurile XIII-XVI. Indicele numelor de locuri* (Documents concerning Romanian history. Series B. Wallachia, from the 13th century to the 16th. The index of place names). Ed. Ion Donat, S. Caracaș, Gh. Cioran. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1956.

Lahovari = Lahovari, George Ioan. *Dicționar geografic al județului Argeș* (Geographical dictionary of Argeș department). Bucharest: Socecu & Teclu, 1888.

Provianu = Provianu, Ion I. *Dicționar geografic al județului Ialomița*. (Geographical dictionary of Ialomița department). Târgoviște: Tipografia și legătoria de cărți Viitorul, 1897.

Spineanu = Spineanu, N. D. *Dicționar geografic al județului Mehedinți* (Geographical dictionary of Mehedinți department). Bucharest: Thoma Basilescu, 1894.

Stoicescu = Stoicescu, Nicolae. *Repertoriul bibliografic al localităților și monumentelor medievale din Moldova* (Bibliographic repertory of the Moldavian medieval settlements and monuments). Bucharest: Direcția Patrimoniului Cultural Național, 1974.

14.	Bistrița	Áēñòðèèè	Bistrița, j. Mehedinți	1385, 1387, <1391-1392>, <1392>, <1400-1418>, <1421>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 19; Indicele B: 12; Spineanu: 30-31.
15.	Bârsești	Áðúñámè	Bârsești, j. Argeș	1441	DRH-B: 164; Indicele B: 9.
16.	Bogdănești	Áwāāāiāmîè	Bogdănești, j. Vâlcea	<1392>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 42, 98, 110, 138, 167. Indicele B: 14.
17.	Boilea	-	?	<1393-1394>	DRH-B: 45; Indicele B: 14. From the modern regesta, the only form in which the document is preserved, it is not clear if it is a village or just a toponym.
18.	Bolintin	Áîèèìòèì	Bolintin, j. Giurgiu	1433, 1437	DRH-B: 137, 153; Indicele B: 14. In DRH the document is published only in the regesta. The original was discovered in a monastery on Mt. Athos and was published by P. Șt. Năsturel and C. Bălan in "Hrisovul lui Alexandru Aldea pentru mănăstirea Bolintin" (The charter of Alexandru Aldea for Bolintin monastery), <i>RI</i> 3 (1992): 477-488.
19.	Boruși	Áîðuøà<íú	Independența, j. Dâmbovița	<1431-1436>	DRH-B: 131; Indicele B: 15.
20.	Brădațeani	Áðāāāöhîè	near Jiblea, j. Argeș	<1402-1403>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 58, 98, 110, 138, 167. Indicele B: 16.
21.	Brăila	Áðāèèîâî	Brăila, j. Brăila	<1424-1431>, <1431>	DRH-B: 109, 130. Indicele B: 17.
22.	Bucșani	Áuêøàîî	Bucșani, j. Giurgiu	1433, 1437	DRH-B: 137, 153. Indicele B: 19. Antonescu: 40. See the remarks from Bolintin.
23.	București	Áuêuðāmîè	Marcea, j. Vâlcea	<1392>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 42, 98, 110, 138, 167. Indicele B: 21.
24.	Budești	-	?	<1445>	DRH-B: 172. Indicele B: 21.
25.	Bujorani	Áuæîðāiā	?	<1392>, 1436	DRH-B: 42, 138. Indicele B: 22. The documents mention that the village is on the Cătului river, therefore somewhere in present day Ilfov department.
26.	Butești	-	Butești, j. Teleorman	1441	DRH-B: 162; Indicele B: 22. Antonescu: 48.
27.	Buzău	Áuç@яîî	Buzău, j. Buzău	<1431>	DRH-B: 130 ; Indicele B: 23.

28.	Calafat	Êàèàòàòú	Calafat, j.Dolj	1424	DRH-B: 104; Indicele B: 24.
29.	Călimănești	Êàèèiúíámè	Călimănești, j.Vâlcea	1388, <1392>, <1402-1403>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 25,42,58,98,110,138,167; Indicele B: 25.
30.	Cărarea	Ê@ðàðh	near Cerneți, j.Mehedinți	1436,1443	DRH-B: 138,167; Indicele B: 26. Spineanu: 70.
31.	Cărăreni	Êàðàðáiè	Hagieni, j.Ialomița	<1392>, <1404-1418> <1421>, <1424>,1435, 1436, 1443	DRH-B:42, 65,98, 110, 138, 167 ; Indicele B: 26; Provianu: 79. The old name of the village was still remembered by its inhabitants in the 19 th century (see Provianu).
32.	Cătolui	Êàòîèuè	near Căscioarele, j. Ilfov	<1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 98,110,138, 167; Indicele B: 27.
33.	Câmpulung	Ăèúăîîñèöâi	Câmpulung, j. Argeș	1351-1352, <1431>	DRH-B: 11, 130 ; Indicele B: 28.
34.	Ceauri	×àuð³è	Ceauru, j. Gorj	<1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B:52,104,154 ; Indicele B: 29.
35.	Cereășov	×åðhøwâ	Cireășov, j. Olt	<1392>, <1398>	DRH-B: 42,46; Indicele B: 33.
36.	Ciocănești	×îèàíámè	Ciocănești, j. Argeș	<1421>, <1424>,1436, 1443, <1445>	DRH-B: 98, 110,138, 167,172; Indicele B: 32.
37.	Cioruș	-	Near Plopeni, j. Prahova	1441	DRH-B: 160; Indicele B: 33.
38.	Cireșelul	×èðàðàèuè	Ploștina, j. Mehedinți	1424	DRH-B: 104; Indicele B: 33; Spineanu: 73. At the end of the nineteenth century a suburb of Ploștina village was called with this name.
39.	Ciulnița	×óèèìèöà	near Grădiștea, j.Brăila	<1407-1418>	DRH-B: 73; Indicele B: 33. See also Provianu: 93
40.	Ciurilești	×pðèèámè	Ciuri, j. Gorj	1430	DRH-B: 128; Indicele B: 33
41.	Cricov, village on	Ñăëî íà Êðèèîâh	?	1388	DRH-B: 25.

42.	Cocorești	-	Cocorâști-Mislii, j.Prahova	1441	DRH-B: 160; Indicele B: 35.
43.	Corăești	-	?	1437	DRH-B: 146; Indicele B: 37
44.	Corneni (Cornul lui Ujog)	Êîðíhiè Êîðiuë uæîãîâ	Near Lunca, j.Ialomița	<1424>, 1436	DRH-B: 110, 138; Indicele B: 38; Provianu: 86-87. An estate with this name still existed in the 19 th century.
45.	Costea's village	Êîñhòèi ñâèî	Costești, j.Mehedinți	<1374>, <1392>	DRH-B: 17,39; Indicele B: 122. Spineanu: 90.
46.	Coteana	-	Coteana, j. Olt	<1437-1438>	DRH-B: 148; Indicele B: 39.
47.	Crăpești	-	Vadul Soreștilor, j. Buzău	<1429>	DRH-B: 125; Indicele B: 42.
48.	Creața	Êðhòà	Crețulești, j. Dâmbovița	<1421>	DRH-B: 98 ; Indice: 42. Condurățeanu: 44.
49.	Crușia	Êðuøi#	?	1388	DRH-B: 25; Indicele B:43
50.	Curilo	Êuðèèî	Near Cerneți, j.Mehedinți	<1400>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 47,98, 110,138,167; Indicele B: 44; Spineanu: 70.
51.	Dăbăcești	Äúá@+åmw x	Runcu, j.Gorj	1385, 1387, <1391- 1392>, <1392>	DRH-B: 19,22, 33,39; Indicele B: 46.
52.	Dâmbova	Äîãîãà	Dâmbova, j.Gorj	1430	DRH-B: 128; Indicele B: 46.
53.	Dârstor	Äðuñòãðñè èi	Silistra, Bulgaria	<1404-1406>	DRH-B: 63; Indicele B: 47.
54.	Dobrușa	-	Dobrușa, j. Vâlcea	1437	DRH-B: 146; Indicele B: 49.
55.	Dobroșești	Äîãðuøãñè	Dobroșești, j. Ilfov	1441	DRH-B: 164; Indicele B: 49.

56.	Dușăști Dușești	Äuøúmè Äuøámè	Near Ceauru, j. Gorj	<1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 52,104,154 ; Indicele B:53
57.	Elhovița	Äëüöiäèöà	Ilovița, j. Mehedinți	<1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 52,104,154 ; Indicele B: 53; Spineanu:155-156.
58.	Floci	Ôëî÷hîî	Piua Pietrii, j.Ialomița	<1431>	DRH-B: 130; Indicele B: 56; Provianu: 129-131.
59.	Fonești	-	?	<1430-1431>	DRH-B: 128 ; Indicele B: 57.
60.	Frăsinet	Ôðãñèiãò	?	<1401-1406>	DRH-B: 56; Indicele B: 57.
61.	Fringhișești Frenghesești	Ôðãiããøãm è	Near Independența, j. Dâmbovița	1428, 1441	DRH-B: 117,164; Indicele B: 57.
62.	Găureane	Äúúðhíä	Near Negești, j.Argeș	1437	DRH-B: 150; Indicele B: 59; Lahovari: 112
63.	Genune	Äáiuíä	Câineni, j.Vâlcea	1415, <1421>, <1424>, 1436,1443	DRH-B: 78, 98,110,138,167; Indicele B: 27. Lahovari: 52.
64.	Gherghița	Äãðäè÷ãîî	Gherghița, j.Prahova	<1431>	DRH-B: 130; Indicele B: 60.
65.	Ghermănești	Äãðiãiãmè	Ghermănești, j.Ilfov	1441	DRH-B: 164; Indicele B: 60.
66.	Giurgiu	Äþðãîâh Äðãäú	Giurgiu, j. Giurgiu	<1409>	DRH-B: 75; Indicele B: 61.
67.	Giurgiu	Äþðããäú	Near Călmățui, j. Teleorman	<1392>	DRH-B: 42; Indicele B: 61.
68.	Golești	-	Golești, j.Vâlcea	1432	DRH-B: 135; Indicele B: 62
69.	Gradanovți Gărdanul	Äðuããrãðè	Near Cerneți, j. Mehedinți	<1400>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 47,98,110,138,167 ; Indicele B: 64. Spineanu: 129-130. A hill was still called Gărdanu in the 19 th century.
70.	Groșani	Äðîøãíú	Vânata, j.Gorj	<1392>	DRH-B: 39; Indicele B: 65.

71.	Hârsomuinți Hârșova	Õöüñîuèrîòè Õöüñîâà	Near Balta Bistreț, j. Dolj	1385, 1387, <1391- 1392>, <1392> <1400-1418>,1424, 1439	DRH-B: 19, 22, 33, 39, 52,104,154 ; Indicele B: 69. Donat considers that Hârsomuinți and Hârșova are the same village.
72.	Hinatești	Õèiàòâmiè	Inătești in Râmnic Vâlcea, j. Vâlcea	<1392>, <1402-1403>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 42, 58, 98, 110, 138, 167; Indicele B: 69.
73.	Ioneștii	-	Ioneștii , j. Vâlcea	1437	DRH-B:146; Indicele B:71.
74.	Izvoreanii	Ëçâîðhiè	Valea Călugărească, j.Prahova	<1429>	DRH-B:126; Indicele B:73.
75.	Izvoreani	Ëçâîðhiè	Izvorani, j.Prahova	1441	DRH-B:164 ; Indicele B: 73
76.	Jarcovți, Jarcoveț	Æèàðèiàòè Æèàðèiâàö	Breșnița-Ocol, j. Mehedinți	1387, <1391-1392>, <1392>,<1400- 1418>,1424,1439	DRH-B: 22,33,39,52,104,154 ; Indicele B: 73; Spineanu: 168. In the nineteenth century there was still a hill called Jercovățu near the village of Breșnița.
77.	Jidovștița	Æèàîîâmèö @	Jidoștița, j. Mehedinți	<1374>, 1385, 1387,<1391-1392>, <1392>,<1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B:17,19,22,33,39,52,104,154 ; Indicele B: 74; Spineanu: 169
78.	Jiblea	Æèèáè@	Jiblea, j. Argeș	1389, <1402-1403>, <1421>,<1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 28, 58,98,110,138,167; Indicele B: 74; Lahovari: 98.
79.	Jiliște	Æèèèèmä	?	1418,1441	DRH-B: 86,164; Indicele B: 74
80.	Lânjești	Ëúíæâmè	Lângești, j. Argeș	1437	DRH-B:150 ; Indicele B: 77; Lahovari: 99.
81.	Leurda	Ëâuðâà	Leurda, j. Mehedinți	1424	DRH-B: 104 ; Indicele B: 78; Spineanu: 173.
82.	Luciani	-	Lucieni, j. Argeș	1437	DRH-B: 148; Indicele B:
83.	Lumineni	Ëuîèîhiè	Hagieni, j. Ialomița	<1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 110,138,167 ; Indicele B: 79;

84.	Lunciani Lunceani	Ěuí÷áíè Ěuí÷híè	Lunca, j. Vâlcea	<1392>, <1421>, <1424>,1436, 1443	DRH-B: 42,98, 110, 138, 167; Indicele B: 80
85.	Malul de Sus	làè wò Āīð	?	1445	DRH-B: 173; Indicele B:80
86.	Mamul	-	Mamul, j. Vâlcea	1437	DRH-B:146; Indicele B:81;
87.	Maniaciul	làíèà÷ü	Măneciu,j.Prahova	<1429>	DRH-B: 126; Indicele B:84
88.	Maximean	làkñèihíè	Probable Măxineni, r. Snagov	1441	DRH-B:164 ; Indicele B:82
89.	Mănicești	lúíè÷ám ³	Mănicești, j. Argeș	1428	DRH-B: 113; Indicele B: 84. Lahovari: 105.
90.	Merișani	làðèøàíè	Merișani, j. Argeș	1428	DRH-B: 113; Indicele B: 86; Lahovari:108.
91.	Mileușevăț Micleușevți Micleușul	lèèèáóøáäö è	?	<1400>, <1421>, <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 47,98,110,138,167 ; Indicele B: 86.
92.	Mircești	lèð÷àmè	Comoara, j. Teleorman	1441	DRH-B:162 ; Indicele B: 87.
93.	Mislea	-	Mislea, J. Prahova	1441	DRH-B: 160; Indicele B: 88.
94.	Moenești	-	?	1441	DRH-B: 160 ; Indicele B: 89. It is not clear from the document if it is the name of a village.
95.	Modruzeștii	-	Vadul Soreștilor, j. Buzău	<1429>	DRH-B: 125 ; Indicele B: 89.
96.	Novoselți	ířáíñáèöè CEU eTD Collection	Near Sușița, j. Mehedinți	<1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B:52,104,154 ; Indicele B: 94.
97.	Obedin	Wááäèíü	Corzu, j. Mehedinți	<1400-1418>	DRH-B: 52; Indicele B: 95.
98.	Ocna	îèià	?	<1402-1418>	DRH-B: 62; Indicele B: 95.

99.	Ocna de Sus	Ăîđíàì Wéíu	Ocnele Mari, j. Vâlcea	<1421>	DRH-B: 98; Indicele B: 95.
100.	Ohaba	Wõááá	?	<1401-1406>	DRH-B: 56; Indicele B: 96.
101.	Olteani	Wèòhíè	Olteni, j. Vâlcea	1436	DRH-B: 138 ; Indicele B: 96.
102.	Orlea de Sus Orla de Sus	Wõèá òà Ăîđh	Orlea, j. Teleorman	<1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B:110,138,167; Indicele B: 97.
103.	Orleştii	Wõèám³è	Orleşti, j. Valcea	1388,1389	DRH-B: 25,28; Indicele B: 97.
104.	Pesticevo	İãñòè+ââî	Near Măceşul de Jos, j. Dolj	<1391-1392>, <1392>, <1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 33, 39,52, 104,154; Indicele B: 101
105.	Petroviţa	İãöđîãèö@	Near Brezniţa, j. Mehedinţi	1387, <1400-1418>	DRH-B: 22,52; Indicele B:102
106.	Piatra	İiãöđà	Petra, j. Mehedinţi	<1400-1418>	DRH-B:52 ; Indicele B:103; Spineanu: 225
107.	Piscu	-	?	1418	DRH-B: 86; Indicele B:104.
108.	Piteşti	İèòámñèîî	Piteşti, j. Argeş	1388	DRH-B: 25; Indicele B:105
109.	Plopeni	-	Plopeni, j. Prahova	1441	DRH-B: 160; Indicele B: 107
110.	Ploştina	İèwmeíà	Ploştina, j. Mehedinţi	<1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 52, 104,154 ; Indicele B: 107; Spineanu: 229
111.	Pocruia	İîèđîóè	Pocruia, j. Gorj	<1392>	DRH-B: 39; Indicele B:107
112.	Podeni	İîähíèè	Near Arjoci, j. Gorj	1424	DRH-B:104 ; Indicele B:108; Spineanu: 230. In the end of the nineteenth century the village still existed.
113.	Poenile Vârbilăului	İîáíèèá Ăđúáèèîào	Poiana Vârbilău, j. Prahova	<1429>	DRH-B:126 ; Indicele B: 109

114.	Poroiți	İřōīēīōē	Poroița, j. Mehedinți	<1392>, <1392>	DRH-B: 39,42; Indicele B: 111; Spineanu: 237
115.	Potocul	İřōīēīī	Near Breznița, j. Mehedinți	1385, 1387, <1391-1392>, <1392>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 19,22,33,39,104, 154; Indicele B: 111
116.	Preslop	İđăñēīī	Near Bala, j. Mehedinți	1415	DRH-B: 80; Indicele B: 113.
117.	Prilipeț	İđēēāīāōū	Breznița, j. Mehedinți	1387	DRH-B:22 ; Indicele B: 113.
118.	Pulcovți	İřōēēīāōē	?	<1409>	DRH-B: 75; Indicele B: 114 , N. Stoicescu considered this village to be in the region of Chilia, but his argument is unconvincing. The sturgeons mentioned in the document could be caught near Chilia, but also much farther away on the Danube. See Nicolae Stoicescu, "Organizare statală în vremea domniei lui Mircea cel Mare" (State organisation in the time of Mircea the Great rule). <i>Rdl</i> 39 (1986): 625-641.
119.	Radești	Đăăāmē	?	<1421>	DRH-B: 98; Indicele B:116. Probable the village is somewhere in Argeș department.
120.	Ratești	Đăđāmē	Near Podeni, j. Prahova	1437	DRH-B: 145; Indicele B:117.
121.	Raugul	Đăuăuē	Near Aninoasa, j. Argeș	1437	DRH-B: 150; Indicele B: 117.
122.	Râzvad	Đăçâää	Râzvad, j. Dâmbovița	1431	DRH-B: 133; Indicele B: 117; Condurățeanu: 103.
123.	Râmnic ³³³	Đēáíē+hō	Râmnicu Vâlcea, j. Vâlcea	1388, <1392>, <1421> 1440	DRH-B: 25,42,98,157; Indicele B: 118
124.	Rodulful	-	Râfov, j. Prahova	1418	DRH-B: 86; Indicele B: 119.
125.	Rucăr	Đuēāē	?	<1418-1420>, <1424-1431>, <1431>	DRH-B: 85;107,130. Indicele B: 120 r. Muscel
126.	Sagheaveț	Ñăăhâăōīī	Near Măceșul de Jos,	<1392>, <1400-1418>,	DRH-B: 39,52,104,154; Indicele B: 122

³³³ There is a document issued from Râmnic in 1389.

	Sagovăț	Ñããããüö	j.Dolj	1424, 1439	
127.	Săcuiani	Ñãëυяíî	?	<1431>	DRH-B: 130; Indicele B: ?
128.	Sărăcinești	-	Sărăcinești,j.Vâlcea	<1437>	DRH-B: 141; Indicele B: 123
129.	Săseni	-	?	<1393-1394>	DRH-B: 45; Indicele B: 124. It is not clear if this is a village.
130.	Seaca Seacani	Ñhêà Ñhêàíè	Seca, j.Argeș	<1402-1403>, <1421> <1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 58,98,110,138,167; Indicele B: 125. Lahovari: 136.
131.	Severin	Ñãããðèú	Turnu Severin, j. Mehedinți	<1424-1431>	DRH-B: 109; Indicele B: 126
132.	Slatina	Ñèàðèú	Slatina, j. Olt	<1392>, <1421>	DRH-B: 42,98; Indicele B: 128. It is not clear if this is a village.
133.	Sogoino	Ñíãíèí	Near Măceșul de Jos, j.Dolj	<1391-1392>, <1392> <1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 33, 39,52,104,154; Indicele B: 129.
134.	Spinet	Ñíèíàòà	In Pitești, j. Argeș	<1421>	DRH-B: 98; Indicele B: 130.
135.	Stancești	Ñòàí=ãmè	In Pitești, j. Argeș	<1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 110,138,167; Indicele B: 130
136.	Stanciștor Sălcișor	Ñòàí=èmiðú Ñãè=èøíðú	Near Balta Bistreț, j.Dolj	1387,<1391-1392>, <1392>, <1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 22,33,39,52,104,154; Indicele B: 130.
137.	Star Chiojdul	-	Starichiojd, j. Prahova	1418	DRH-B: 88; Indicele B: 130.
138.	Șerbănești	-	Șerbănești, j.Vâlcea	1437	DRH-B: 146; Indicele B: 136. Lahovari: 137.
139.	Șușița	Ñíóøèòà	Șușița, j. Mehedinți	<1391-1392>, <1392> <1400-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 33,39,52, 104, 154; Indicele B: 138. Spienanu: 281.
140.	Târgoviște	Òðúãíàèmã	Târgoviște,	<1417-1418>,<1421>, 1424, <1424-1431>,	DRH-B: 82,98,102,109,130; Indicele B:140.

	334		j.Dâmbovița	<1431>	
141.	Târgșor	Òðüäøîðúíî	Târgșor, j.Prahova	<1431>	DRH-B: 130; Indicele B: 141.
142.	Târgul- Jiului	ÆEuëñêîää Òðüää	Târgu-Jiu, j.Gorj	<1429-1430>	DRH-B: 124; Indicele B: 141.
143.	Topoloveni	Òîîîëîääîè	Topoloveni, j.Argeș	<1421>	DRH-B: 98; Indicele B: 144.
144.	Trufești	Òðuðâmiè	Near Corzu, j.Mehedinți	<1400-1418>	DRH-B: 52; Indicele B: 146.
145.	Turbații	Òððääöè	Turbați, j. Ilfov	1428, 1441	DRH-B: 117, 164; Indicele B: 146.
146.	Turci	Òuð÷ü	Near Zlotești, j. Teleorman	<1418-1420>, 1445	DRH-B: 85,173. Indicele B: 146.
147.	Turcinești	Òuð÷îîâmè	Near Ploștina, j.Mehedinți	1424, 1430	DRH-B: 104,128; Indicele B: 146.
148.	Țerovățul	Öäðîäöäîú	Near Breznița, j. Mehedinți	<1374>, <1440-1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B:17,52,104,154; Indicele B: 147.
149.	Ugri Ungurei	Uäðè Uäuðâè	Near Cornești, j. Gorj	<1400-1418>, 1424	DRH-B: 52;104 Indicele B: 149.
150.	Ulița	QèèöU	In Râmnicu Vâlcea, j.Vâlcea	<1392>, 1443	DRH-B: 42, 167; Indicele B: 148-149.
151.	Urbuești	-	?	1437	DRH-B: 146 ; Indicele B: 150.
152.	Vadul Cumanilor	Êqîäîñêü Áðîä	Near Golenți, j.Dolj	1385, 1387, <1391- 1392>, <1392>, <1400 -1418>, 1424, 1439	DRH-B: 19,22,33,39,52,104,154; Indicele B: 36.

³³⁴ Documents are issued from Târgoviște in 1418, 1424, <1424>, <1428-1429>, 1428, 1431, 1433, 1433, 1436, <1437>, <1437>, 1437, 1437, <1437-1438>, 1437, 1437, 1437, 1437, 1441, 1441,1441, <1445>, 1445

153.	Vădăstrița Vodăstrița	Àãããñòðèö à Âîä@ñòðèö à	Vădăstrița, j. Teleorman	<1421>,<1424>, 1436, 1443	DRH-B: 98,110,138,167; Indicele B: 155.
154.	Vărovnicele Varovnic	Âúðîáîè+â Âãðîáîèè	Near Breznița, j. Mehedinți	1387, <1400-1418>, 1424	DRH-B: 22,52,104; Indicele B: 155.
155.	Vârbovița Vârbița	Âðúáîáèö@ Âðúáèö@	Verbița, j.Dolj	1387, <1400-1418>	DRH-B: 22,52 ; Indicele B: 156.
156.	Vețiचेști	Âãöèèámè	?	<1421>	DRH-B: 98; Indicele B: 159.
157.	Vezurari	Ââçúðàðî	Probably Vârzari, j. Argeș	1428	DRH-B: 113; Indicele B: 158; Lahovari: 163.
158.	Vlădești	Âèääámè	Vlădești, j. Argeș	1437	DRH-B: 151; Indicele B: 159. Lahovari: 165.
159.	Vodița Mare	Âîèhîä Âîäèöà	Near Bahna, j. Mehedinți	1374, 1385, 1387, <1391-1392>, <1392> <1400-1418>, 1439	DRH-B: 17,19,22,33,39,52,154; Indicele B: 159.
160.	Vodnea	Âîäîh	Probably in Ialomița department.	<1421>	DRH-B: 98; Indicele B: 108.
161.	Voinejești	Âîèîáæámè	?	<1429>	DRH-B: 122; Indicele B: 160. See also Fringhișești.
162.	Vrăeștii	-	?	1428	DRH-B: 117; Indicele B: 160.
163.	Zlotești	Çèîòámè	Near Zlotești, j.Teleorman	1445	DRH-B: 173; Indicele B: 162. See also Turcii.

Southwestern Moldavian settlements mentioned in internal documents (1384-1448)

1.	Andrei's village	Ãäâ áúëú Àíäðëþ ààòàìáíú	Near Tecuci, j. Galați	1443	DRH-A: 340; Indicele A, 17;
2.	Andriaș'village	Àíäðìàøú	Sindrilari, j. Vrancea	1445	DRH-A: 362; Stoicescu, 27
3.	Andriaș Căliman's village	Îó ð@ăú Àíäðìàøú Êäëèìàìà	Vidra, j. Vrancea	1445	DRH-A: 362; Indicele A, 17
4.	Badea's village	Ãäâú	Near Cavadinești, j. Galați	1436	DRH-A: 227; Indicele A, 20
5.	Badea Brățișanul' village	-	Near Tulucești, j. Galați	1443	DRH-A: 328; Indicele A, 20
6.	Batin's village	Ãäðèíú	Bătinești, j. Vrancea	1423	DRH-A: 77; Indicele A, 23
7.	Blăjari	Ãëàæàðè	Ivești, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 35; Stoicescu, 90
8.	Blănești	-	Near Bucești, j. Galați	1430	DRH-A: 143; Indicele A, 35; Stoicescu, 90
9.	Borodiceni	-	Near Negrilești, j. Galați	1437	DRH-A: 233; Indicele A, 39;
10.	Cavadinești	Êäââæèíámè	Cavadinești, j. Galați	1436	DRH-A: 227; Indicele A, 50; Stoicescu, 159
11.	Cernătești	×ãðíúëámè	Smulți, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 51
12.	Ciunca Giurgiu's village	×víëãúÉvðæú	Near Cerțești, j. Galați	1445	DRH-A: 358; Indicele A, 62
13.	Ciunca Stan's village	×víëãúNòáíú	Near Cerțești, j. Galați	1445	DRH-A: 358; Indicele A, 62

14.	Cojoești	Êíæíámè	Near Cerțești, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 65;
15.	Cudrea's village	È áää Êuáðh	?, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 75
16.	Dragoș's village	-	Drăgușeni, j. Galați	1438,<1438-1442>	DRH-A: 262-263; Indicele A, 89
17.	Fărești	Óúðámè	Near Foltești, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 96
18.	Gârlești	Ãðúëámè	Nămoloasa, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 108; Stoicescu, 330
19.	Golâmbaie	Ãîëúíáíàíiá	Near Mărășești, j. Vrancea	1448	DRH-A: 402; Indicele A, 112
20.	Gorunești	Ãîðuíámè	?, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 113; Stoicescu, 334
21.	Grozești	Ãðîçámèè	Tecuci, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 402; Stoicescu, 337
22.	Liești	Ëèámè	Liești, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 146; Stoicescu, 537
23.	Lungul	Äëúáúíú	Lungești, j. Galați	1436	DRH-A: 211
24.	Lupșe	Ãää áúëü Ëóíøá	Near Bătinești, j. Vrancea	1423	DRH-A: 77; Indicele A, 151
25.	Marina	-	Near Putna, j. Vrancea	1424	DRH-A: 57
26.	Mealure	Ìhëúðá	?, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 402
27.	Merești	Ìáðámè	In Liești, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 159
28.	Milești	Ìèèámè	Smulți, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 162; Stoicescu, 561
29.	Mândrești	-	Near Valea Mărului, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 158; Stoicescu, 566
30.	Motoșești	Ìíóíñámè	Fundeanu, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397

31.	Neburești	Íááúðámè	Near Cosmesti, j.Galați	1448	DRH-A: 402; Indicele A, 174
32.	Oancea	Wàí÷ú	? , j.Galați	1448	DRH-A: 402; Indicele A, 177; Stoicescu, 610
33.	Oțălești	-	Corod, j.Galați	<1438-1442>	DRH-A: 263; Stoicescu, 622
34.	Pitcăești	Íúòèúámè	Near Fundeanu, j.Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397;
35.	Purcelești	-	Putna, j. Vrancea	1424	DRH-A: 57; Indicele A, 205
36.	Putna	-	Near Batinești, j. Vrancea	1424	DRH-A: 57; Indicele A, 206; Stoicescu, 671
37.	Radul's village	Èàäîóéîâî	Near Șindrilar, j. Vrancea	1445	DRH-A: 362;
38.	Radul Dumbravnic's village	-	?, j. Vrancea	1430	DRH-A: 143;
39.	Săseni	Ñăñáiè	In Tecuci, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 402; Indicele A, 225; Stoicescu, 745
40.	Sclipotești	Ñèèèîïòámè	Ionășești, j. Galați	1443	DRH-A: 317; Indicele A, 226
41.	Sârbi	Ñðúáè	Nicorești, j. Galați	1437	DRH-A: 248; Indicele A, 226; Stoicescu, 763
42.	Spineni,	-	Bucești, j. Galați	1430	DRH-A: 143; Indicele A 237; Stoicescu, 775
43.	Stan Hartagan's village	Ăää áúè ìáíú Õúöúááíú	Near Șindrilar, j. Vrancea	1445	DRH-A: 362;
44.	Stanislav Ravasa's village	-	Oancea, j. Galați	1438	DRH-A: 262; Indicele A, 239
45.	Stănigeni	Ñòúíèòhìè	Near Sârbi, j. Galați	1437	DRH-A: 176;
46.	Șuşnești	-	?	1434	DRH-A: 177;
47.	Tălăbești	Òúèúáámè	Tudor Vladimirescu, j.	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 254

			Galați		
48.	Tecuci	Òâêv÷@	Tecuci, Galați	1437, 1443,1448	DRH-A: 176,340,402; Indicele A, 256; Stoicescu, 849
49.	Toncești	Ôîî÷âmè	Near Tudor Vladimirescu, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 259
50.	Vitezești	Àèòâçâmè	Near Fundeanu, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 278
51.	Zmulți	Çiuëöè	Smulți, j. Galați	1448	DRH-A: 397; Indicele A, 286; Stoicescu, 937

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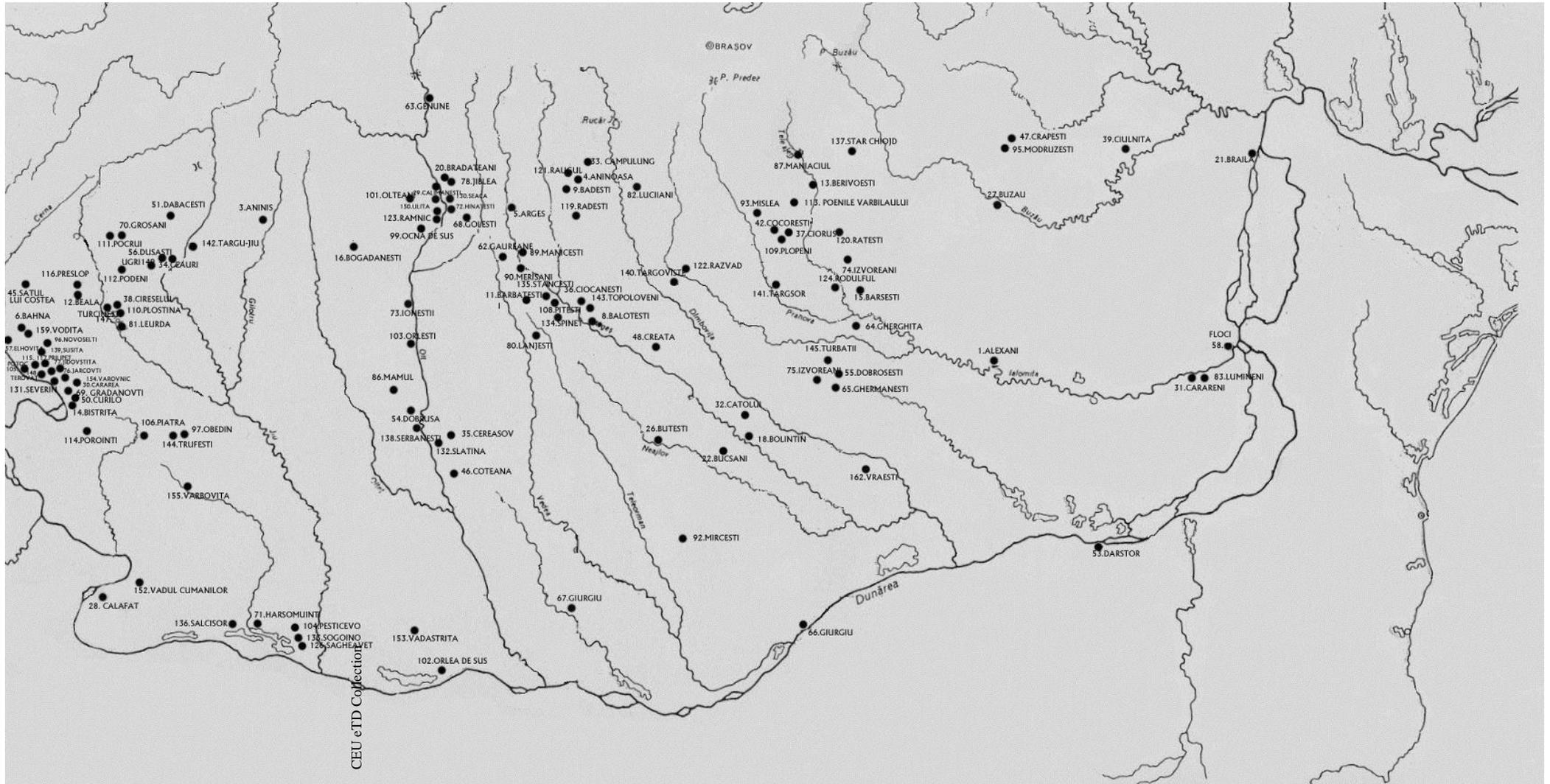
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Map 1

Wallachian settlements mentioned in internal documents (c. 1350-1450)

Map by the author

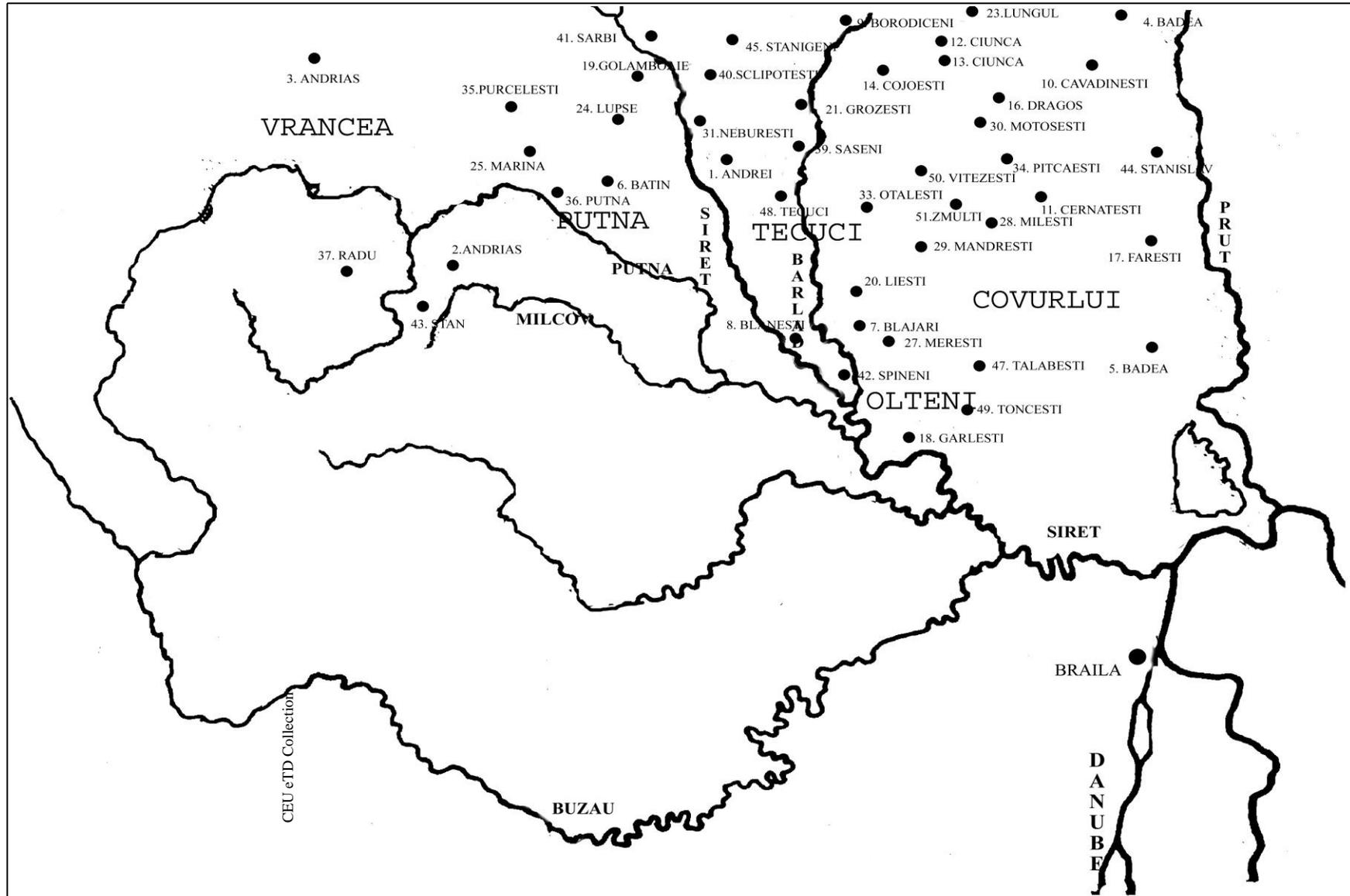


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MAP 2

Southwestern Moldavian settlements mentioned in internal documents (1384-1448)

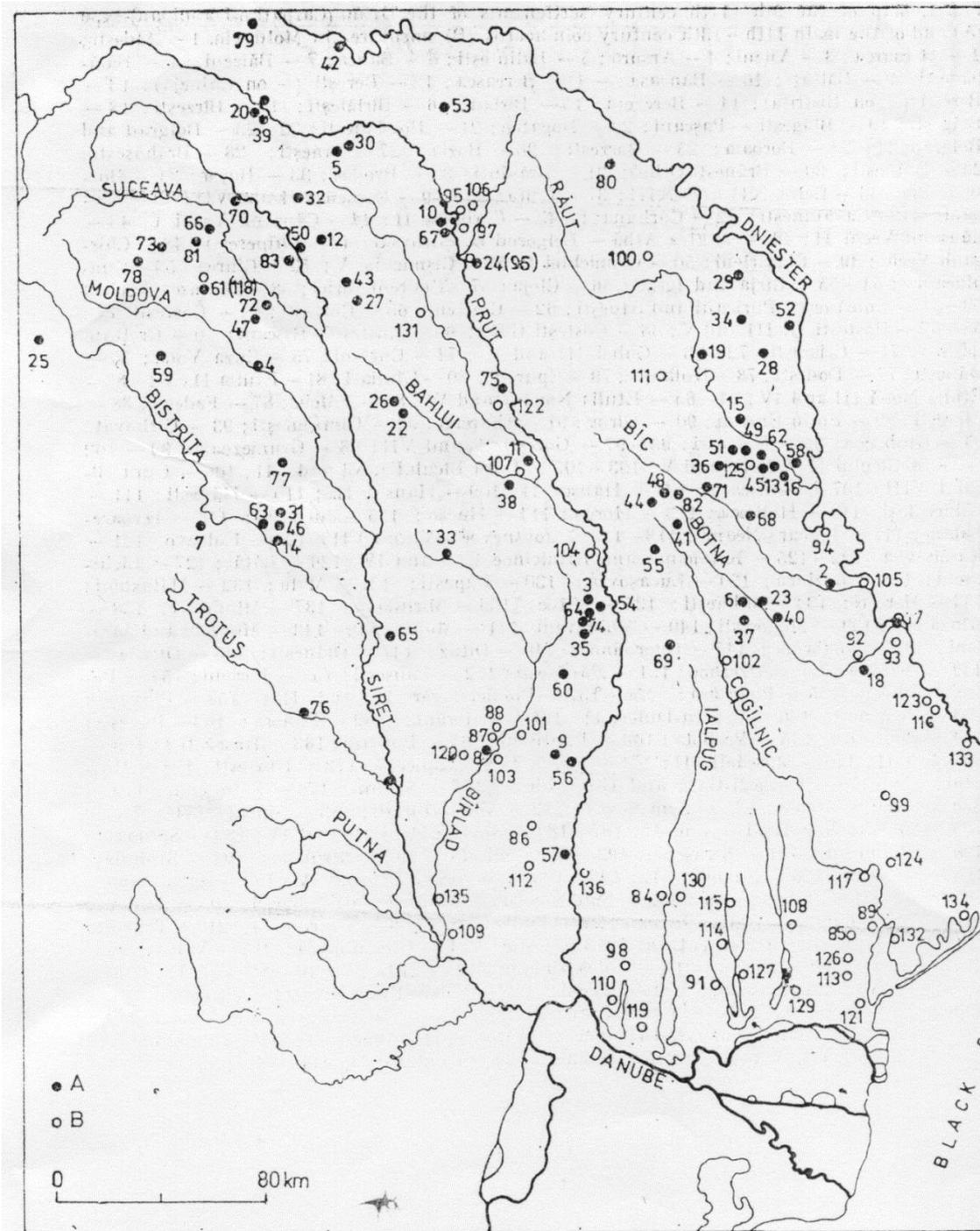
Map by the author



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MAP 3

Map of the main archaeological findings in Moldavia (c. 1250-1350)*



* Victor Spinei, *Moldavia in the 11th-14th Centuries* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1986), 226.