

RUSSIAN ICON MARKETING IN TRANSYLVANIA AS A MEANS OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DESTABILISATION

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In a watercolour illustrating a market from the late eighteenth or first years of the nineteenth century, made by the Sibiu-based painter of Austrian origin, Franz Neuhauser the Younger (1763-1836), we find the only known image of an icon pedlar in Transylvania.¹ Preserved at the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, the work enjoyed some success at the time, being lithographed by Josef Lanzedelli the Elder in 1818.² The image most likely shows the cosmopolitan society that used to gather on fair days in the Great Square of Sibiu, which was at the time the capital of Transylvania. The icon pedlar is shown in the foreground, presenting his goods on a stick, by means of which he makes them visible from a distance. Framed, of relatively small dimensions, with a rather western appearance, the icons seem to be painted on various media: wood, paper, maybe even glass – a technique that was just beginning to enjoy success among Transylvanian Romanians in those years. Unfortunately, the details do not allow for stylistic comment, nor does the appearance of the pedlar suggest anything about his ethnicity, unlike, for example, the painting's representations of a Wallachian boyar and priests talking to a Macedonian-Vlach merchant, or the figure of the blanket seller, or some of the women who populate the "Romanian corner" of the market place.³ However, given that the tailoring of his fur-edged braided coat, his blue fabric trousers and his boots do not match typical Romanian clothing of the time, the trader is, most probably, supposed to be a foreigner.

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¹ Brukenthal National Museum, *Secvențe din Transilvania secolului al XVIII-lea*. Exhibition organised at Brukenthal National Museum, 22 March - 11 June 2017 / *Siebenbürgen im 18. Jahrhundert Ausschnitte*. Ausstellung im Nationalen Brukenthalmuseum von 22. März bis 11. Juni 2017 (Sibiu / Hermannstadt: Honterus Verlag, 2017), 9-11.

² For the copy in the possession of the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest, see https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lanzedelli_-_T%C3%A2rg_%C3%AEn_Transilvania_3.jpg (accessed 18 June 2021).

³ For other identifications, especially those of Saxon and Gypsy backgrounds, see Gizella Cenner-Wilhelmb, "Künstlerische Vorbilder und Vorstudien zu den siebenbürgischen Markszenen von Franz Neuhauser dem Jüngeren," *AHA* 24 (1978): 365-371.

Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Historica 25, I (2021): 145-187;

<https://doi.org/10.29302/auash.2021.25.1.8>.

But from which foreigners would the Romanians have bought icons or, more correctly, which foreigners would have come to Transylvania just to sell icons to the Romanians – a population following the Greek rite, with a modest social condition and insignificant purchasing power?

In the absence of a sufficiently consistent documentary corpus which could offer conclusive evidence regarding the icon trade, the answer is given by the objects that have survived the course of time. Most of these are products of local workshops; the rest were either transported by pedlars in direct contact with the production workshops or imported by professional merchants – Armenians, Jews, Macedonian-Vlachs, and so on. It is no longer possible to differentiate between these two distribution methods, therefore they must be treated as a whole, resulting in the following categories of imports:

1. Icons painted on the back of glass, brought from Moravia and Bohemia, then from Galicia and Bukovina. The mastery of glass-painting techniques by Romanian Transylvanian painters meant that only a small proportion of goods that came from outside the province could find buyers amongst Romanians. Such imports have only been studied from the perspective that they could be sources of inspiration for Transylvanian iconographers;⁴ thus far, the manner in which they arrived in Transylvania has not proven of interest to historians.
2. Icons printed on paper in the territories taken over by the Habsburg Empire as a result of various divisions of Poland. After the first division, in 1772, a group of “painters who paint and print on paper” went under the protection of the Greek Catholic Diocese of Transylvania,⁵ obtaining a monopoly on the production and distribution of leaflet engravings inside the province. Concentrated in the village of Hășdate, printing was practiced until the second half of the nineteenth century.⁶ The relatively small number of printed images brought from outside the province and their stylistic similarities to locally produced ones mean that they often go unnoticed, and thus the phenomenon of their peddling has yet to become the subject of scientific research.
3. Icons printed by the Remondini Company in Bassano del Grappa,⁷ which set

⁴ Simona Teodora Roșca, *Icoana pe sticlă din Transilvania (sec. XVIII-XX)* [Glass Icon in Transylvania (18th-20th Centuries)], (Cluj-Napoca: Tradiții clujene, 2010), 13-17.

⁵ Marius Porumb, *Dicționar de pictură veche românească din Transilvania. Sec. XIII-XVIII* [Dictionary of Old Romanian Painting from Transylvania. 13th-18th Centuries] (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1998), 143.

⁶ Marika Kiss-Grigorescu, *Xilografura populară din Transilvania în sec. XVIII-XIX* [Popular Woodcut from Transylvania in the 18th-19th Centuries] (Bucharest, 1970), *passim*.

⁷ “[N]othing is more ordinary and indecent than these figures engraved on wood, blemished with large areas of colour and impressed on so-called rough paper. With these goods, they travel to Hungary, and they sell them there at a high price.” (Francesco Rota, *Estensione e reddito censuario*

up a truly international distribution network with connections from Paris to Warsaw and from London to Moscow provided by *guziravci*, Italian–Slovenian pedlars from Friuli and Venetian Slovenia.⁸ Research into the parish archives from the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region revealed information on their presence in several localities in Hungary, located today in the territory of Romania: Carei (Satu Mare County, 1790),⁹ Arad (Arad County, 1816),¹⁰ Peștere (Bihor County, 1836)¹¹ and Sighetu-Marmației (Maramureș County, 1839).¹² The oldest attestation dates from the last days of November 1784, when a “Moskal” was arrested in Sebiș (Bihor County – then in Hungary, today in Drăgănești Commune, Bihor County, Romania), on the grounds that he was a “suspicious man who sold Romanian icons.”¹³ The passport he had with him was shared with that of another companion, from whom he had been separated by thieves. His lost companion, as well as a third pedlar, were arrested a few kilometres away by the nobiliary judge Michael Papp from Beiuș, who, in his correspondence with a colleague from Beliu, called them “icon painters” and claimed that “they are not Muscovites, but Italians who showed legally compiled passports.”¹⁴ Unable to detain

nel Dipartimento di Passariano (Udine: Fratelli Pecile, 1807), apud Alba Zanini, “For Germany and Hungary. Seasonal Emigration from Venetian Schiavonia,” in *Guziranje: From Venetian Schiavonia to Hungary with the Remondini Prints* (Comune di Stregna, 2009), 85–105, here 88–89).

⁸ Peter Fuhling, “The Remondini Family,” *Print Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 4 (December 1994): 441–446; Alberto Milano, “Selling Prints for the Remondini: Italian Pedlars Travelling through Europe During the Eighteenth Century,” in Roeland Harms, Joad Raymond, and Jeroen Salman, eds., *Not Dead Things. The Dissemination of Popular Print in England and Wales, Italy, and the Low Countries, 1500–1820* (Brill, 2013), 75–96.

⁹ Certificate issued on 21 December 1790 by the Rector of the Piarist Gymnasium in Carei, referring to the death on 5 January 1790 and the inhumation in the Catholic rite of Mattheus Scrinar, *italus ex Villa de Asida* (Azzida, a settlement in the locality of San Pietro al Natisone, Friuli-Venezia Giulia region), which read “*cum sociis, imagines circumferentem ac vendentem Magno-Karolini*” (Alba Zanini, “Documents,” in *Guziranje*, 253–357, 322, no. 903, with the integral transcript of the text at p. 345).

¹⁰ Recording of August 15, 1816 on the death of Blasutig Giovanni di Stefano of Rodda “*in Banato, nell'Ospitale dei Padri dell'Ordine dei Minori Conventuali (...) del Vecchio Arradino*” (ibid., 322, no. 920); excerpt from January 19, 1843 referring to the death in Sânmartin, Catholic Diocese of Cenade, of Valerio Tomaseti (ibid., 327, no. 1021).

¹¹ Record of death, on 16 February 1836, of Caucig Antonio fu Stefano of Clastra (Friuli-Venezia Giulia region) (ibid., 326, no. 999).

¹² Certificate issued on 14 May 1839 referring to the wedding on 6 February 1837 between Simone Zuanella of Rodda (Friuli-Venezia Giulia region), *imaginum quaestor*, and Elisabeth Muhlbacher of Sighet (ibid., 326, no. 1003). A death certificate was issued on the same day for Michele Zuanella of Rodda, also *quaestor imaginum*, who died in Sighet on 8 February 1837 (ibid., 326, no. 1004). The expression *quaestor imaginum* refers to the gain (*quaestum*) obtained from selling images.

¹³ Gheorghe Gorun, ed., *Răscoala lui Horea în Comitatul Bihor. Izvoare narative* [Horea's Uprising in Bihor County. Narrative Sources], vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000), 275, no. 186.

¹⁴ Ibid., 269, no. 182.

them, all three were sent under escort to Oradea, where they were reunited and continued their activity. They sold their goods to Romanians, but not exclusively as, being Catholics, they were also looking for customers amongst the ethnic groups of their own confession. This issue also has yet to excite the interest of historians.

4. Icons painted on wood, most a result of bulk production in the workshops of Kholui, Mstera and Palekh.¹⁵ These icons were being peddled by Russian sellers as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹⁶ Although fairly common in Moldavia and Wallachia, it was a great surprise to discover that this kind of icon was quite rare in the patrimony of churches and in the domestic world of Transylvanian Romanians, whereas those in museum collections were most often acquired from people originating from other Romanian territories, usually areas with strong communities of Russian old believers.¹⁷ An explanation for the small number now known lies in the dramatic events of the peasant uprising of 1784-1785, in the context of which the only external documentary mentions¹⁸ drafted are about the trade in Russian icons in Transylvania.

¹⁵ Known in the bibliography as “folk old believers’ icons”, they were made in truly impressive quantities. According to the statistics studied by Oleg Tarasov, in the mid-nineteenth century, the workshops in Kholui alone were producing between 1.5 and 2 million icons annually, with 720 men hired just for the painting; see Oleg Yu. Tarasov, “On the 18th - 19th Century Old-Belief Icons in the Danube Principalities,” *RRHA-BA*, XXVII (1990): 70 (the study is a partial translation into English of material published in the same year in the journal *Советское Славяноведение*, no. 3 (1990), 49-70, with title “Русские иконы XVIII – начала XX в. на Балканах”). The author believed that the need for bulk production appeared by late sixteenth/ early seventeenth century, in order to support the Christianisation of the vast territories in the Urals and Siberia which had belonged to the Kazan and Astrakhan Khaganates, conquered by Moscow in 1552 and 1556 respectively (Tarasov, “On the 18th - 19th-Century Old-Belief Icons,” 72).

¹⁶ The earliest attestation dates from 1705, when ten peasants from Palekh requested permission to travel to the Romanian and Serbian territories to sell “some thousands of icons” (Tarasov, “On the 18th - 19th Century Old-Belief Icons,” 71).

¹⁷ For instance, see *Icoane din patrimoniul Muzeului Etnografic al Transilvaniei. Catalogul colecției / Icons from the Patrimony of the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania. The Collection Catalogue* (Cluj-Napoca, 2011), no. 594 (acquisition from Plenița, Dolj County), 596 (acquisition from Balș, Olt County), 597 (acquisition from Berești, Galați County), 598 (acquisition from Boteni, Argeș County), 599 (acquisition from Pâncești, Bacău County), 600, 602 (unknown origin), 601 (acquisition from Poenari, Gorj County), 603 (acquisition from Valea Seacă, Bacău County), 604 (acquisition from Voiteni, Buzău County), 606 (acquisition from Boteni, Argeș County), 607 (acquisition from Ciurești, Galați County). The only Russian icon with Transylvanian origins in the collection, no. 605, acquired from an individual in Cluj-Napoca, belongs stylistically to the group of artefacts we are trying to outline within this research associated with the “Muscovite” peddlars attested in documents from 1784-1785.

¹⁸ As for external references, for the eighteenth century, the only one known is a note from the diary of the Archpriest of Suzdal Cathedral, who noted in 1754 that “many inhabitants of Kholui and Palekh travel with sacred icons to faraway lands, id est, Poland, *the Austrian Empire* (my italics

Appreciated as the largest social movement in the Habsburg Empire and generated by Tereziano-Josephine reformism,¹⁹ the rebellion known as Horea's Uprising, named after its main leader, took place through the months of November and December 1784 and its epicentre was among the mining communities of the Western Carpathians, located in Lower Alba and Hunedoara Counties.²⁰ The area's proximity to Bihor County, which belonged to Hungary, explains why those whom the political-administrative authorities hastily identified as potential instigators were also sought in Bihor County. In 1784-85, older fears – such as emigration to Russia, enlistment in the Tsarist army, and uprising against the nobility, as ways to facilitate the conquest of the province in the event of an attack by the Tsarist army – reached a peak. Both before and after Horea's Uprising, orders were issued to track down those believed to be transmitting such dangerous ideas – a quasi-invented Count Salis,²¹ a former officer in the Russian army,²² and captives of various socio-professional backgrounds²³ – with a role of great importance being reserved for icon pedlars.

– A. D.), Slavonia, Serbia, Bulgaria and others.” The ulterior references no longer include the Habsburg Lands (Tarasov, “On the 18th - 19th Century Old-Belief Icons,” 71).

¹⁹ For a perspective on these uprisings, see Gheorghe Gorun, *Reformismul austriac și violențele sociale din Europa centrală. 1750-1800* [Austrian Reformism and Social Violence in Central Europe. 1750-1800] (Oradea: Editura Muzeului Țării Crișurilor, 1998).

²⁰ For the development of the events, see David Prodan, *Răscoala lui Horea* [Horea's Uprising], vol. I-II (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979, reprint 1984). In 1982, not long before the anniversary of the bicentenary of this peasant uprising, a substantial scientific endeavour was initiated to exhaustively publish documents referring to its causes, development and aftermath, in a series sponsored by the Romanian Academy, titled *Fontes Seditionis Horianae / Izvoarele Răscoalei lui Horea*. The project published 11 volumes, without reaching the proposed target. The documents referring to the icon pedlars were among those that remained unpublished, except for the two letters describing the apprehension of the Italian-Slovenian pedlars in Bihor County, which at that time was part of Hungary.

²¹ Order to track down, apprehend and execute Count Salis and his emissaries, under the charge of incitement to emigration – in *Fontes Seditionis Horianae / Izvoarele Răscoalei lui Horea*, series A. *Diplomataria*, vol. I (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1982), 515-516, no. 329; the same in *ibid.*, vol. V (Bucharest, 1990), 73-74, no. 75-76; note referring to the execution of 44 rebels, arrested under the decree referring to Salis – *ibid.*, vol. V, 357, no. 146; report on clashes between rebels and nobles in Deva and on the alleged appearance of Salis in the peasant encampment – *ibid.*, vol. VI (Bucharest, 1993), 174, no. 65. For his real role, presented in the wider context of the Russian-Austrian relations, see Carol Göllner, “Participarea emisarilor Mihail Popescu și Salis la revoluția lui Horea” [The Participation of Emissaries Mihail Popescu and Salis in Horea's Revolution], *AIIN* VI (1931-1935): 503-514, and, more recently, Gorun, *Reformismul austriac*, 271-274.

²² Order to apprehend the Russian officer Michael Poperski / Mihail Popescu, charged with attracting people to military service outside the country – in *Fontes Seditionis Horianae / Izvoarele Răscoalei lui Horea*, series A. *Diplomataria*, vol. V, 332-333, no. 123; the same in *ibid.*, vol. VII (Bucharest, 2001), 317, no. 163.

²³ Report of 1 December 1784 from Commissary Michael Brukenthal to Count Simon Kemény,

The first documentary mention of icon peddlars as possible agents of Russia is a letter addressed to Governor Samuel von Brukenthal from Ladislau Balo, Deputy Count (*Vicecomes*) of Lower Alba County, sent on 11 November 1784 (Annex I/a), which was only nine days after the start of the uprising (2 November 1784). Its author reports that in the first days of November, at the fair in Aiud (Hung. Nagyenyed), “some individuals – sometimes three or four in number – who are constantly wandering around here peddling Muscovite icons, chestnuts and the like.” On 8 or 9 November he arrested two of them, but had to release them because they had “free passes”. One of them, because “he was aimlessly, barely carrying a bag of chestnuts and selling them at double the price to those who wanted to buy,” was arrested again. Balo goes on to ask for instructions from the governor on what to do next.

In the reply from the Gubernium, dated 15 November 1784 and sent from Sibiu (Germ. Hermannstadt) on 16 November, the arrested person is labelled a “Muscovite” and the Deputy Count is asked to interrogate him on

where he came from; also for what purpose; what he had to do there; where he had wandered until then. And, after the interrogation is over, to submit, without delay, to the attention of the Gubernium, a statement based on all the circumstances, specifying at the same time where the others went and by whom the free passes were issued; should you find him innocent, release him (annex I/b).

These orders were carried out, but the resulting statement was not preserved. Its contents can, however, be recovered from a series of documents issued based on an order given by the Aulic Chancellery of Hungary on 31 March 1785, whereby the Gubernium in Sibiu was asked to investigate the veracity of the information according to which:

certain peddlars from Russia are traveling aimlessly through Transylvania with icons for sale and that, to be able to distribute them at a higher price, they are struggling to convince the non-uniat population that, should they not have such icons with them, they would be exposed to the danger of being killed by the Muscovites that will soon come (annex II).

Extremely concise in comparison with the gravity of the task assigned, the Aulic decree does not reveal the source from which the information reached Vienna. Clearly irritated by the fact that he had no knowledge of such a danger,

warning the latter that among those apprehended recently is one of small stature who has spread news of the coming of the Russian army (*de adventu Moscovitorum Militum*) (Prodan, *Răscoala*, 1984 edition, vol. II, 220); letter sent from Sibiu on 4 December 1784, recounting the rumour that Horea was counting on the “help of the Muscovite” (ibid., 64); Dumitru Belligrad of Braşov is also found on a list of captives from the prisons of Târnava County, caught at Nadăşul Săsesc on 13 January 1785 – he had been arrested earlier in Bukovina, suspected of bearing Russian letters (ibid., 259-260); on 15 August 1785 it was reported that Popa Matei of Sântandrei, on his return from prison, was telling the population on the streets that “Horea was not killed, he is with the Muscovite and he will soon come with such a Muscovite strength in Transylvania that no Hungarian will be left” (ibid., vol. II, 567).

the Governor felt obliged to relay once more to his superiors, as well as to his subordinate clerks, the only incident involving Russian icon pedlars – namely, the one in Aiud. Most likely wishing to prove that he was entirely in control of the situation, von Brukenthal included the result of the interrogation from the prison in Aiud both in his reply to the Chancellery (annex IV) and in the order whereby he applied the Aulic decree, sent to the supreme counts of the 11 counties and to city and town officials (annex III). In this way, we discover that the “Muscovites” arrested in November of the previous year had entered Transylvania over the Rodna Pass (indicating they came from Russia through Bukovina, which had been annexed by the Habsburg Empire in 1774), that they paid customs duty on the icons brought for sale, and that the investigation did not reveal anything suspicious against them, for which reason they were released and ordered to leave Transylvania as soon as possible. Two documents issued on 28 April 1785 addressed, in a slightly ironic tone, to the Aulic Chancellery concerned the subordinating clerks, mentioning that should such figments be spread, they will be denounced as false. Further, to discover where such a dangerous rumour had come from, the Governor ordered inquiries to establish whether such traders continued to travel throughout the Principality, the reports of which were to be sent to Sibiu by 15 June of that year.

Thirteen reports were found in the file sent to the Aulic Chancellery on 18 June 1785:

1. The mayor of Sighișoara (in the document Germ. Schässburg) reported, on 18 May 1785, that he had carried out a “proper investigation” in the assigned area, in which he found that “so far no Muscovites had been spotted wandering around with icons for sale”. He also took measures to ensure that if such inhabitants of Russia were seen wandering through the area in future, the provisions of the gubernial order of 28 April 1785 would be immediately applied (annex V/a).
2. The mayor of Bistrița transmitted, on 20 May 1785, that his faithful clerks in charge of conducting the investigation reported that:
those inhabitants of Russia who are said to cross this Great Principality with icons for sale, were also in this place last year and exhibited their icons for sale, but, among the Wallachian population, they spread no kind of invention like those mentioned in the gubernial order (annex V/b).
3. The mayor of Cluj (in the document Lat. Claudiopolis) replied on 21 May 1785 that “there are no stray Muscovites on the territory of this city, therefore I cannot report that there are still traces of false rumours spread among the (Wallachian) people” (annex V/c).
4. In a highly assertive tone, the mayor of Dumbrăveni (in the document Lat. Elisabetopolis) stated, on 23 May 1785, that:
following the ordered investigation, carried out in part by myself, in part by appropriate assessor jurors, it was noted that not only have there never been Muscovites abiding in this territory with such icons, but also that they

did not spread the rumour that has reached the ears of His Most Sacred Majesty (annex V/d).

5. The mayor of Târgu-Mureş (in the document Hung. Maros Vásárhely) replied that as a result of the investigation he ordered:

it was discovered that such Muscovites put on sale even in this place certain icons until November of the last year; indeed, these icons were even bought by some non-uniate inhabitants of Greek rite; however, the inhabitants were not exposed to the rumour according to which if any of them were not endowed with such icons, they would be exposed to danger. In fact, according to the reports of people of better condition and more skilful, due to their ignorance of the Wallachian language the Muscovites, who were speaking only in their Russian language, could not express this rumour, even if there was a person among the Wallachian population who, on the occasion of the sale of those icons, did not deny that he had learned this only from other people speaking, yet he did not dare to say that the same Muscovites had spread the respective rumour among the Wallachian population. In reality, these Muscovites have wandered too little in our land, and there is not the slightest trace or hint of such a rumour spread among the Wallachian populace in the area that is worth believing, or rather, it is now acknowledged that these are false inventions (annex V/e).

6. The mayor of Mediaş (in the document Lat. Media) wrote on 27 May 1785, that:

I did not hesitate to pursue a real investigation – only in the jurisdiction assigned to us and with all care – carried out in the City and the suburbs of the place, both by myself and by the loyal clerks capable of such a thing; however, not only have we not found any such inhabitant of Russia wandering through this land, but we have not been able to find the slightest trace or hint of such rumours spread among the population, especially the Wallachians (annex V/f).

7. The mayor of Braşov (in the document Lat. Corona) similarly stated, on 28 May 1785, that:

I found nothing but that in recent days only one Serbian arrived here with icons for sale, [and] he had tried to persuade the people to buy these icons only with the argument that anyone who professes to be a good Christian must buy those icons, and that he who did not bother to buy them was not worthy of the name of a Christian, so, in our territory, no traces and or indications were found of such harmful rumours spread among the populace other than those which had reached the ear of His Most Sacred Majesty. The fact is, however, that if such Muscovites arrive in these parts later, I will not hesitate to heed the vigilance required of me to report such endeavours, and to inform Your Excellency in great detail, in the spirit of the high instruction received (annex V/g).

8. The mayor of Gherla (in the document Lat. Armenopolis) sent his answer on 30 May 1785, announcing that

so far no Muscovite is haunting our parts with icons for sale; nor has it been noticed that such inhabitants of Russia have arrived in our parts this year; much less was something sent to us, even by means of unverified information, nor could we find out anything about the reality of that rumour, which is said to have deceived the Wallachian inhabitants by telling them that if they are not endowed with such icons, they will be wiped out by murder by the Muscovites who are about to arrive soon (annex V/h).

9. The mayor of Alba Iulia (in the document Lat. Alba Carolina) declared on 25 May 1785, that:

it was clearly found out that in the recently passed year of 1784, in September, two Muscovite icon pedlars visited here the non-uniate priest Nicolae Rusan – then alive, now deceased – and that, following a single trick according to which, if any of the Wallachian were not endowed with such icons, they would not be good Christians, some of the Wallachian bought the icons and hung them on their walls, but from that time until now no Muscovite has been found, nor could any such Muscovite be found [nor have we] found other clues or traces of the rumours spread by them; but in the event that any Muscovite is found here in the future, by virtue of my office, I will move every stone so that such persons may be caught and immediately subjected to investigation, so that I may report with the deepest reverence to the Merciful Throne of the High Imperial Gubernium (annex V/i).

10. The report from Trei Scaune County (in the document Hung. Három Szék) was written on 1 June 1785. The Deputy Count reports as follows:

The investigation related to the wandering inhabitants of Russia, who, in order to sell their icons at a better price, were trying to convince the non-uniate Wallachians that if they were not endowed with such icons, they would be exposed to the danger of being killed by the coming Muscovites; [the] investigation required of me through the Merciful Decree issued on 28 April of the current year under number 3150, was made, at my command, by some faithful commissioners, suitable for this purpose, sent by me in the assigned jurisdiction, but no Muscovites were caught wandering with icons for sale, nor did any trace or indication of the spreading of such rumours emerge; nevertheless, I will continue to watch with zeal and, in the event that I may learn something about these rumours, I will endeavour to report them to Your Excellencies (annex V/j).

11. The report of Lower Alba County, with residence in Aiud, sent on 10 June 1785, states that:

although the *Tabula Continua* reverently reported to Your Excellency and the High Imperial Gubernium that some Russians of this kind had previously wandered here and there in this County with icons for sale, however, after a serious investigation was carried out in both Districts of this County, nothing of the sort was revealed, namely that for the reason set out above, the Muscovites wandering with icons for sale would have

tried to persuade the uniate population to buy the icons because of the above-mentioned threat (annex V/k).

12. The message from Middle Solnoc County (in the document Hung.-Lat. Szolnok Mediocris), sent on 11 June 1785, has the following content:

we took care to have an investigation carried out by the District Deputy Counts on whether some inhabitants of Russia or Muscovites were seen in this County roaming the land with icons for sale and convincing the population with twisted fabrications, and each Deputy Count reported to us that there were no such people seen by the locals in the respective Districts, but nevertheless they ordered that the locals in question focus their attention on such people, and should such people be observed in the future, they should be captured (annex V/l).

13. The most interesting answer is that of Alexander Bethlen, the Supreme Count of Târnava County (in the document Hung. Küküllő), who stated on 26 June 1785 that, of the answers received as a result of the order to investigate, “four answers show the certainty of false pretences.” In addition to their transmission to the Gubernium, the senior official recalls that he had previously reported to the Gubernium that

during a riot, such inhabitants of Moscow were intercepted here and I ordered an investigation into their actions, but unfortunately I did not find anything certain, and [as] the Wallachian people, who thought that any harm would turn out to be to [their] advantage, did not want to reveal at that time the false pretences of those Muscovites, I finally set the latter free, sending them to their country (annex V/m).

The four accounts – which in the end harmonised with the denunciation sent to the Aulic Chancellery – provided the following information:

- a) The report from Biia District, Târnava County, addressed to Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen on 28 May 1785 (in the document Hung. Magyar Benye) tells of three “Moskal” riders with a wonderful carriage who, last autumn, sold many icons painted on wood – sometimes more expensive, sometimes cheaper – to Romanians in Aiud on St Gall’s Day (1 July), in Cetatea de Baltă on St King Stephen’s Day (20 August), then in the villages of Biia, Veseuş, Sânmiclăuş and Valea Sasului. According to the testimony of a Hungarian from Sânmiclăuş and two Romanians from Valea Sasului, these Russians advised people to “Buy these icons because they will be of use in the future.” In the other villages, however, they did not say such things. At Sântămărie, an older man who was a former soldier talked to them at length in their language. The Russians wore black sukman made of rough cloth and blue trousers; their sandals were tied high on their calves and their hats were very tall with a narrow brim. They did not speak Romanian well (annex V/n).
- b) The report from Delenii District, Târnava County, addressed to Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen on 31 May 1785 (in the text of the document

Hung. Kis Sáros) states that in the villages of Blăjel, Velț and Bazna icons were sold for two Maria Theresa thalers and that many people bought them. The sellers advised the people to “Buy, because whatever comes into your house will show that you are Christians” (annex V/o).

- c) The report from Band District, Târnava County, addressed to the Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen on 20 June 1785 (in the document Hung. Mező Bánd) states that ten witnesses from Band, Oroï, Berghia and Morești were examined “again” in relation to the deeds of the Russian icon pedlars. They all stated that the pedlars advised Romanians to buy these icons because they would make it possible to distinguish between the houses of Romanians and those of Hungarians, and that if the Russians came these icons would be useful (annex V/p).
- d) The report from Șincai District, Târnava County, addressed to the Deputy Count on 20 May 1785 (in the document Hung. Mező Sámsond) states that investigations were carried out in the villages visited by the wandering Russian icon pedlars. In Ceuașu de Câmpie (recorded in the document Hung. Mező Csávás), two men said that icon pedlars were in their village the previous autumn and winter and that they told the Romanian inhabitants that when the Russians attacked they would not kill those who possessed such icons. In Voiniceni (as recorded in the document Hung. Mező Szabad), a man and his wife confessed that they had heard similar statements from pedlars, adding that the reason the Russians would not harm those who own such icons was that they would consider them true Christians (annex V/r).

Let us first note that nine of the most important cities in Transylvania responded to the gubernial order. These cities regularly held important fairs which attracted many people from the surrounding areas, so disinformation could easily find its way from there to minds already disturbed by the revolt of the Romanian population in the Western Carpathians – both potential insurgents and those in charge of public order. The nine respondent cities form a natural line indicating the route the Muscovite pedlars who entered the Principality via the Rodna Pass (today Rotunda) must have followed on their way to Aiud.

The four counties which answered partially lie on the same route. However, the absence of two thirds of the 11 administrative structures resulting from the territorial reorganisation of 13 July 1784²⁴ is surprising. To some extent, information was collected by the authorities of cities located in the counties of Inner Solnoc, Turda and Odorhei. But the lack of reports from the counties of Făgăraș, Hunedoara and Sibiu is all the more difficult to understand, as these were

²⁴ Radu Săgeată, “Structuri administrativ-teritoriale în Transilvania” [Administrative-Territorial Structures in Transylvania], accessed 29 November 2021, https://www.academia.edu/16018859/Structuri_administrativ_teritoriale_in_Transilvania.

areas with a large Romanian population; Sibiu was in fact the seat of the Gubernium and Hunedoara had been severely devastated by Horea's Uprising. We can be certain that on 18 June 1785, when the Governor himself submitted his report to the Aulic Chancellery, the 13 accounts were the only ones available. But the way in which they were forwarded to superiors also refers to exceptions, that is, to "reports of the investigation of these captured men [i.e., the Muscovite icon pedlars who roamed the Principality] included in those reports which had already been submitted, as required, to the High Imperial Gubernium among the other ordinary reports."²⁵ This indicates that some respondents preferred to send cumulative reports in which they dealt with several gubernial orders, but von Brukenthal sent to Vienna only those exclusively concerned with his order of 28 April 1785. This misplacement of information is regrettable, as the text of the clerk who dealt with the expedition of the file to Vienna is enigmatic. The text speaks of the "capture of the Muscovites" when referring to the 13 documents intended to support the Governor's report, as well as mentioning the "reports of the investigation of these captured people" when referring to the documents that remained in the archive in Sibiu. However, the 13 documents resulted in the fact that arrests were made only in the city of Aiud and Târnava County, both without consequence, so it could be argued that the clerk's phrasing suffers from too much zeal. Did he do the same when he referred to the unsent documents, given that the Governor, in his summary report, only considered it worth taking the report from Târnava County into account (annex VI)?

The question is not at all rhetorical if we consider things from the perspective of the end result of this investigation, which was at exactly the opposite pole to the reassuring tone of the report Samuel von Brukenthal addressed to Vienna: the recommendation made by the Aulic Chancellery and the imperial decree issued on 28 July 1785 provided for the immediate expulsion of Russian merchants and a ban on their future entry into the country (annexes VI-VII). In order to make such a radical decision, the information gathered from the field by Baron von Brukenthal must have been understood in a completely different manner by the clerks of the Aulic Chamber. Although we do not know the full content of the imperial decree, the explanation for the different point of view can be found in the comments on the report received from Sibiu, from which we finally find out who in Vienna denounced the dangerous behaviour of Russian icon pedlars: the Deputy Count of Caraş County in the neighbouring Province of Banat.

Thus, the message with such worrying content, being proven to have spread across two border provinces, was treated with the utmost seriousness – even though it most likely originated as nothing more than a desperate attempt by merchants to sell their merchandise faster. Ultimately, there was no difference

²⁵ See annex V, text at page [8].

between the words of the Russian merchants (at least in some villages) and those of the Serbian caught in Braşov (assuming he was not also a Russian who had made a detour through Ottoman territory and arrived in Transylvania on one of the routes of the Macedonian-Vlach merchants). These pedlars were all trying to say that every good Christian should have icons in their house, just like those they were trying to sell. But the competition seems to have been quite fierce, hence the aggressiveness of the sales pitch, where it was not completely misinterpreted by the authorities, who were already on high alert following Horea's Uprising.

So far, the authorities' references to Russian icon pedlars have been categorised by historians, in the context of Horea's Uprising, simply as a desperate attempt to divert blame towards an invented enemy in the face of the heavy economic exploitation to which the Romanian peasants were subjected, and as a myth originating from the cruelty of recent events and from the clumsy methods used to settle the conflict. The investigation itself seems to have been late and unrelated to the Uprising, which can be considered to have ended with the capture of Horea and Cloşca on 27 December 1784. But the claim that the Russian pedlars' "marketing strategy" was a sign of imminent armed conflict could be made without any connection to the Uprising. The zealous informant's motivation may have been his distrustful view of foreign policy in Russia, which was constantly on a war footing with the Ottoman Empire. Their state of belligerence mandatorily implied the involvement of the Habsburg Empire to control the growth of tsarist influence in Moldavia and Wallachia.²⁶ Destabilising ideas were to come later in Transylvania, where the policy of religious tolerance, introduced by Joseph II through his Edict of 13 October 1781, had already provoked much turbulence among the Romanian population.²⁷ It is worth bearing in mind that Vienna's concern was precisely related to Russia's potential outpost among Orthodox Romanians, who had been turning to Moscow for support for decades.²⁸

²⁶ Cf. Veniamin Ciobanu, *La granița a trei imperii* [At the Border of Three Empires] (Iași: Editura Junimea, 1985), passim.

²⁷ A picture of the explosion of apostasy among the Protestants from Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox from Greek Catholicism in the first decade after the promulgation of the Edict of Tolerance is offered in the volume of documents published by Daniel Dumitran, *Sub semnul toleranței. Bisericile din Transilvania în documente inedite: 1781-1790* [Under the Sign of Tolerance. The Churches from Transylvania in Unpublished Documents: 1781-1790] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2012).

²⁸ Cf. Silviu Dragomir, *Istoria Desrobirei Religioase a Românilor din Ardeal în secolul XVIII* [The History of the Religious Emancipation of the Romanians from Transylvania in the Eighteenth Century], vol. I (Sibiu: Editura și tiparul Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, 1920), 124 sqq. (1743 journey of Protopope Eustatie Grid to the court of Tsarina Elisabeta Petrovna, to challenge the Heterodox attacks against the church in Braşov), 198 sqq. (1749 journey of Protopope Nicolae Pop of Balomir,

Could the three Russian pedlars who came to Transylvania in autumn 1784 have been spies in charge of “taking the pulse” of the Romanian Orthodox community in the event of a Russian-Austrian conflict? Although Baron Brukenthal does not seem to have taken such a possibility seriously, it should be noted that the Alba Iulia report suggests this quite explicitly when it recounts that two of the pedlars met with the priest Nicolae Rusan of Mihalt, who boldly asserted the right of the Romanian Orthodoxy to retain ownership over the churches. Rusan was known to the authorities, including the Governor, who on 6 and 22 February 1782 communicated to the Aulic Chancellery information about the riots in Mihalt in which the Orthodox followers refused to obey the order attributing their church to the Greek Catholic Church.²⁹ The boldness of this “apostate” priest remained a hot topic until his death, which took place somewhere between 17 September 1784³⁰ and 25 May 1785³¹. It is possible that Brukenthal took his death to mean that anything that might have been dangerous about his meeting with Russian pedlars ended with the demise of the Orthodox leader. In fact, no matter what the pedlars said to sell their icons, or what the Romanian buyers in the villages of Târnava County (today part of Alba and Mureş Counties) understood their words to mean, the only indication of subversive behaviour remains their contact with the priest Nicolae Rusan, mentioned in the report from the city of Alba Iulia. However, the case for which the rebellious priest fought did not die with him: on the contrary, justice followed its course and the pending trials – in which he was only one of the accused – continued for many more years.

The Governor’s lack of reaction to this detail, and his sole focus on those accounts that harmonised with the order to investigate received from the Aulic Chancellery on 31 March 1785, may have been on the grounds that those accounts never posed a real danger either, due to the vigilance of the Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen. This may have seemed strange to the officials of the Aulic Chancellery in charge of analysing the documents resulting from the investigation. For them, what happened in Târnava County was not an isolated case but a confirmation of the complaint received from the vicinity of Transylvania – a sign that the harm could have very extensive ramifications which might be difficult to control.

former Vicar of Greek Catholic Bishop Inochentie Micu); vol. II (Sibiu: Editura și tiparul Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, 1930), 107 sqq. (1757 travel of monk Nicodim), 110 sqq. (1758 journey of priest Ioan of Aciliu), 299 sqq. (The involvement of the Court of St Petersburg in the religious conflicts from the Habsburg Empire).

²⁹ Dumitran, *Sub semnul toleranței*, doc. no. 22-24.

³⁰ The date of the last document in which we find him mentioned (Dumitran, *Sub semnul toleranței*, doc. no. 179).

³¹ The date of the report sent by officials of the city of Alba Iulia regarding the Russian icon pedlars.

With the issuance of the decree of 28 July 1785 which provided for the expulsion of Russian icon pedlars and banned their entry into the country in the future, the message of the map made by Oleg Tarasov, based on information collected from Russian and South Danube archives,³² changes radically. The arrows pointing in the direction of the spread of Russian icons peddled by *ofeny* (Russian merchants specialising in the sale of cheap icons, made in bulk by Russian old believers in Palekh, Kholui and Mstera) stop at the borders of the Austrian Empire, indicating not only the limits of documentation of the author but also the limits of the territory in which the *ofeny/afenia* could operate. Also, the rarity of these icons in Transylvanian collections needs no explanation, and those that are known to have been purchased by Transylvanians should help identify chronological divisions within a bulk manufacturing process apparently so similar in style that researchers thought it all dates from the nineteenth century.

We have seen from the documentary and bibliographic references used in this article that the inclusion of the Habsburg Empire among the destinations of Russian mass icon pedlars is rather conjunctural. In fact, we have only a series of territories in 1754³³ and the documentary attestations from Transylvania and Hungary in 1784-1785. Even if the pedlars did not come annually, it is hard to believe that the three Muscovites arrested in Aiud were the only ones to try their luck among the Romanians of Transylvania. However, the number of icons that can be attributed to this type of peddling is so limited that we must assume that the passage through the Rodna Pass to the interior of the Carpathian arc was rarely used by the *ofeny/afenia*. The same conclusions arise from the statements of the respondents to the investigation requested by the Gubernium on 28 April 1785, even if their laconic answers only concerned the immediate past. In addition, the icons themselves cannot be dated much later than 1800³⁴ if we are to assume that the Habsburg territories were regularly frequented by their pedlars.

Individualised by colour, by some decorative elements and especially by their double-profiled frames – characteristics that are not found in the later *krasnushka*-type³⁵ icons – the artefacts discussed below did not come from the localities listed in the survey of 1785. Field research conducted in the churches of Biia, Cetatea de Baltă, Sânmiclăuș, Sântămărie, Valea Sasului, Veseuș (all in Alba County) and Oroiu (in Mureș County) did not identify any Russian icons.

³² Tarasov, “Русские иконы,” 54. See map 2.

³³ See above, note 18.

³⁴ Thanks to Ilya Borovikov from the Gallery “Ce Бера”. Иконы Русского Севера, Moscow (<http://www.severicon.ru/>), for his support in dating the icons referred to below.

³⁵ The name comes from the orange-reddish colour of the frame belt that surrounds the scenes, which is a strong individualising element and specific to icons bulk manufactured in the nineteenth century.

Destined primarily for domestic piety, provided that the recommendation made to buyers to keep them in the houses was respected, their discovery – as well as their chances of survival – was highly unlikely. Only a few of those given to churches have been preserved, mainly because they were collected by the ecclesiastical authorities before the construction of new churches. On the occasion of the fairs in Aiud or Alba Iulia, it was possible to buy icons that had been donated to the churches in the nearby area, that is, from Cioara de Sus,³⁶ Mogoş-Micleşti³⁷ (figs. 2-3), Teiuş³⁸ and another unknown locality from the Western Carpathians.³⁹ Similar icons were held by the churches in Geaca (in today's Cluj County)⁴⁰ (fig. 4), Huedin,⁴¹ Valea Drăganului (the historical Bihor County)⁴² (fig. 5) and Vima Mare (Chioar District, united in 1784 with Middle Solnoc County).⁴³ Four still remain in the old church in Călineşti-Căeni (Maramureş County). Indications that such icons could have also reached the south of Transylvania are offered by the collections of the Sibiu Archdiocese (figs. 6-7) and Sâmbăta Monastery (figs. 8-9). We shall, for the time being, consider these finds inconclusive, on the one hand because the last owners of some of them were prominent members of the clergy to whom they had been offered as gifts, and thus their provenance can no longer be established, and on the other hand because many Romanians from southern Transylvania who practiced transhumance (seasonal migratory herding) in Dobrogea⁴⁴ returned home with such icons both in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thus the peddling of these icons can no longer be associated with *ofeny / afenia*.

Research on representative points for collecting religious heritage south and east of the Carpathians has shown that Russian icons produced in bulk in the eighteenth century are rare in Moldavia and Wallachia, a sign that their sale became a viable business only after styles changed, moving on to the production of *krasnushka*-type artefacts.

Finally, let us try to attribute an identity to the picturesque character in the engraving by Franz Neuhauser the Younger: the pedlar who catches the eye from a distance with his huge stick on which hang icons that appear so interesting to the Romanian women gathered around him. We have already established that

³⁶ Icon kept in the Museikon collection, Alba Iulia.

³⁷ Three icons kept in the collection of the Cluj Archdiocese.

³⁸ Icon kept in the Museikon collection, Alba Iulia.

³⁹ Icon kept in the Museikon collection, Alba Iulia.

⁴⁰ Icon kept in the collection of the Cluj Archdiocese.

⁴¹ Icon kept in the collection of the Cluj Metropolitan, the only one in the group that does not have a double-profiled frame. However, we have included it in the discussion due to the chromatic particularities which bring it closer to the rest of the group than to the *krasnushka*-type icons.

⁴² Icon kept in the collection of the Cluj Archdiocese.

⁴³ Icon kept in the collection of the Cluj Archdiocese.

⁴⁴ Doina Duci, "Dobrogea şi transhumanţa transilvană" [Dobrogea and Transylvanian Transhumance], *BCŞS* 1 (1995): 151-155.

the clothes he wears are superior to the modest clothing of the Romanians. Even the Italo-Slovenes who came with similar goods to Hungary – and no doubt to Transylvania as well – were not so elegant: it is no coincidence that in their home region in the Natisone Valley they were called *guziravci* (wretched, scoundrels, poor).

We can now compare the pedlar in the painting with the Russian pedlars, whose portrayal in documents presented in this article provides a real “sketch portrait”. Their tall-pitched narrow-brimmed hats, blue trousers, sandals tied high on the leg and black sukman's impressed the officials of Sâncel District, as did their beautiful carriage, which must have also functioned as a stall and which, in the market, would have surely become a point of attraction. These details of clothing, with their ethnographic flavour, may in future help to identify the region in Tsarist Russia from which the pedlars who gave so much trouble to the Transylvanian authorities came in 1784.

For Neuhauser's character, the only other possibilities that remain are that he was a merchant from Central Europe, or a fantasy of the artist – who had perhaps been impressed at one point by such figure and, to bring him to the forefront along with the other representative figures of the time, attributed to him a confusing attire, as well as the goods proposed for sale.



Acknowledgement

This project received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme (grant agreement No. 818791).

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Franz Neuhauser the Younger, *Fair in Transylvania*. © Brukenthal National Museum.

Figs. 2-3. Russian icons given to the church in Mogoş-Micleşti (Alba County).

Figs. 4-5. Russian icons given to the churches in Geaca (Cluj County) and Valea Drăganului (Bihor County).

Figs. 6-7. Russian icons from the collection of Sibiu Archdiocese. Photo Ioan-Ovidiu Abrudan.

Figs. 8-9. Russian icons from the collection of Sâmbăta Monastery. Photo Pr. Daniel Breabăn.

Fig. 10. Franz Neuhauser the Younger, *Fair in Transylvania*, detail. © Brukenthal National Museum.

Map 1. Localities in Transylvania where Russian icon pedlars were attested in 1784.

Map 2. Routes of Russian icon pedlars in the eighteenth–twentieth centuries (according to Tarasov, “Русские иконы,” 54).

Map 3. The distance covered by Russian icon pedlars in order to reach Transylvania.

Annex I

Extracted from the report addressed to the Gubernium on 11 November 1784 by Ladislau Balo, Viscount of Lower Alba County, with regard to the apprehension of some Russian pedlars (a) and the reply received from the Gubernium, sent on 15 November (b).

a) [3r] Moscovitae imagines, castaneas et similia vendentes, nunc tres, nunc quatuor numero continuo heic ociantur, quorum duos ante triduum incaptivari jubens, cum passuales exhibuissent, illis ordinibus liberos dimisi, ut hinc illico discederent; ast, cum unus illorum usque hodiernum heic helluari, et castaneas vix in toto unum cubulum constituentes secum morae causa circumportare, et coemere volentibus duplo pretio venum exponere cernerem, rursum ergastulo mancipari feci, ultiores de hoc et similibus ordines Excelsi Regii Gubernii demisse praestolaturus. Utut enim illi passualibus provisi sint, suspecti tamen merito esse possunt. Altovolvo demise hoc momento appulas responsorias Domini Parochi ex Magyar Igen.

Humillimus Servus

Ladislaus Balo

Ordinarius ViceComes

Nagy Enyed 11^a Novembris 1784.

b) [5v] Tabulae Comitatus Albae Inferioris
Cibinii die 15 Novembris 1784

Quoad illam repraesentationis per Dominationes Vestras sub 11^{ma} currentis Mensis circa factas in ductu Ordinationum Gubernialium pro sedandis tumultuantis Plebis vilolentiis dispositiones horsum submissae partem, qua referunt Moscovitam quendam, utut passualibus munitum, suspectum tamen ex eo, quod in Oppido Nagy Enyed sub praetextu distractionis castanearum ociaretur, ergastulo inclusum fecisse, Dominationibus Vestris rescribitur, ut eundem stricto subiiciant examini super eo instituendo, unde horsum venerit, quem item in finem, quid hic ad agendum habeat, ubi hactenus moram traxerit; quo super peractum examen penes omnium circumstantiarum declarationem Regio Gubernio indilate submittant, id quoque relaturae, quorsum reliqui illorum discesserint, et a quonam passuales expeditas habuerint; si autem illum innocentem reppererint, illico libertati restituant.

Kosztá manu propria

Expedita ibidem hora 1.

Manu propria redacta eodem die Grof Carolus Teleky

Eidem ViceComiti Székelly

Expedit Orosz 16^a eiusdem.

Erdélyi Országos Kormányhatósági Levéltárak, *Gubernium Transylvanicum Levéltára*, F 46, 1784, no. 10586, Országos Levéltár, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár (hereafter *Gubernium Transylvanicum Levéltára*, F 46).⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Thanks are due to Terdik Szilveszter, who made it possible to obtain some transcripts of this set of documents.

Annex II

Preliminary recordings (a) and decree issued by the Aulic Chancellery of Hungary whereby the Gubernium of Transylvania is requested to investigate the manner in which the Russian icon pedlars are selling their merchandise (b).

a) [1/3376/1785 laufende Nummer Paß. praesentatae 18 März
Hungarische königliche: Staathalterei Protokoll der 17. Sitzung de dato 28. letzthin in
politischen – allgemeinen Polizey Staatswüthschafts – Conscriptions- und Sanitäts
Angelegenheiten

Pro Indice

Wie Oben bettlende Russische Hausierer mit Bildern in Siebenbürgen

[2/3376/1785

datum 3. März

praesentatum 18 de dato

Relatum 31 eidem

Im Hungarische Statthaterey Prothocoll über die 17^{te} in Politicis, Politziale
Staatswüthschaftliche Conscriptions, und Sanitäts Angelegenheiten abgehaltenen Sitzung

V.

ad Numerum 5426 ist dem Gubernio des Großfürstentum Siebenbürgen zu bedenken,
dass nach dem hierher berichtet worden sey, dass in Siebenbürgen gewisse Hausierern
aus Russland mit Bildern herum streifen und sich ein Absatz zu verschaffen dem
gemeinen Volk den nicht unierten beibringen, daß wenn sie mit solchen Bildern nicht
versehen sind, so stehen sie in Gefahr durch die nächst ankommende Rußen umgebracht
zu werden; so möchte dasselbe hierüber den Bericht legen ob sich dieses bestättige oder
nicht.

Magyar Kancelláriai Levéltár, Magyar Királyi Kancellária Regisztratúrája, *Acta generalia*, A 39,
1785, no. 3376, Országos Levéltár, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár.⁴⁶

b) [1/Decreto Aulico de dato 31^a Martii anni currentis Sub Numero 3376 desideratur de
eo informatio, an verum sit, quod quidam circumforanei e Moscovia icones in hoc
Principatu vendant, ac NonUnitis persuadeant, quod, nisi similibus iconibus provisi
essent, periculum internecionis a Moscovitis iisdem immineat.

1^{mo} Supremis Comitibus Comitatum et Primariis Officialibus Liberarum Civitatum

2^{do} Sacratissimae Suae Majestati

3150/1785

Relatum 28 Aprilis 1785

[2r/3376

26^{ta} Aprilis 1785

Relatum 28^{ta} ejusdem

An Das Königl(iche) Siebenbürgische Gubernium
per Ofen Hermannstadt

⁴⁶ Thanks are due to Monica Vlaicu, for her kind help in finalising the transcriptions of all the German texts.

Ex off(ici)o

[*Sigillum tondum majus in cera rubra impressum*]

Sigillum Eszterházi

[2v]/3376

An die Königlichen Siebenbürgischen Gubernio

Nachdem Seiner Majestät die Anzeige gemacht worden ist, daß im Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen gewisse Hausierern aus Rußland mit Bildern herumstreichen, und sich einen vortheilhaften Absatz ihrer Bilder zu verschaffen, dem gemeinen Volk der nicht Unierten beybringen, daß, wenn selbe mit solchen Bildern nicht würden versehen seyn, sie in Gefahr stehen würden, durch die nächstkommenden Rußen umgebracht zu werden.

So ergeth an obgedachtes Königlich Siebenbürgische Gubernium der allerhöchste Auftrag, womit selbes alsogleich eine verläßliche Auskunft erstatten solle, ob sich die Anzeige bestätige oder nicht.

Wienn den 31 Märtzen 1785

Carl Graf Palfy

Ad benignum Sacrae Cesareae et Regio
Apostolicae Majestatis Mandatum

Alexander Horváth manu propria

Gubernium Transylvanicum Levéltára, F 46, 1785, Nr. 3150.

Annex III

Order issued based on the imperial decree of 31 March 1785, intended for the supreme counts of the 11 counties and for the officials of the free royal cities and major towns, who are requested to investigate the presence of Russian icon pedlars and the alarming rumours they are suspected of spreading among the non-uniate Romanians. The copy intended for the supreme count of Middle Solnoc County (a) and proof of its implementation (b).

a) [1]/Sacrae Caesareo Regiae Apostolicae Majestatis Archi-Ducis Austriae Magni Principis Transylvaniae Siculorum Comitatus Domini Nostri Clementissimi nomine Illustrissimo Comiti Sigismundo Kornis Comitatus Szolnok Mediiocris Supremo Comiti Intimandum!

Sacratissimae Suae Majestati remonstratum est in hocce Principatu nonnullos Russiae accolae cum imaginibus venalibus circumvagari, et quo illas pretio meliori distrahere possint Populum non unitum eo persuadere conari, quod, nisi ejusmodi Imaginibus provisi fuerint, periculo sint expositi, ne per proxime advenientes Moscovitas interficiantur.

Iussit proinde Sua Maiestas Sacratissima medio Benigni sui sub 31^a Martii anni currentis emanati Decreti Aulici, quatenus fideliter, et genuine investigetur, an facta Suae Maiestati Sacratissimae remonstratio fundamento suo innitatur aut minus? Quamvis autem Gubernio Regio, quoad eiusmodi Moscovitarum in hunc Principatum adventum id solum hactenus innotuerit, quod proxime praeterlapso anno certi Moscovitae cum venalibus imaginibus isthuc venientes per Tabulam Comitatus Albae Inferioris aretati passuales ipsorum revisae ipsique iudicialiter examinati fuerint, et, quia nihil suspiciosum contra eosdem erutum fuisset, imo compertum exstisset illos per Passum Radnensem

soluta Tricesima ingressos fuisse suasque Imagines distractionis fine horum intulisse, ideo libertati quidem restituti fuerint, propter eiusdem temporis circumstantias, eo nihilominus cum mandato, quatenus ex hoc Principatu sine omni mora abire et excedere non intermittant; quamvis – inquam – haec solum, quae praemissa sunt, hactenus [*In angulo sinistro, inferius scriptum*: Collata] [2] Gubernio Regio innotuerint, quo nihilominus de facta Suae Maiestati Sacratissimae denunciatione propior notitia hauriri possit, Dominationi Vestrae comitti, quatenus per fidos et ad id aptos Officiales sub manu investigari faciat, an eiusmodi Moscovitae inpraesentiarum in suo Circulo circumvagentur; an eiusmodi figmenta, quod, nisi quis Imaginibus per ipsos allatis provisos fuerit, per adventantes Moscovitas interficiendus sit, in vulgus Valachicum sparserint; an vestigia, et indicia sparsorum fors in vulgus eiusmodi figmentorum supersint; ac in casu, quo similes Moscovitae in Circulo Dominationis Vestrae reipsa circumirent, ac in vulgus eiusmodi quidpiam realiter sparsisse deprehenderentur, eosdem intercipi, non secus in promotores similium figmentorum diligenter invigilari, ac authores exquiri faciat; sparsa vero fors in vulgus eiusmodi figmenta falsa esse populo denunciari curet; attendat autem serio, ne per suscipiendam hanc investigationem motui aliquali occasio suppedietur aut sinistris populi imaginationibus et opinionibus ansa detur. Demum Dominatio Vestra de eventu rei suam intra 15^{am} (dies) horum submittat informationem.

E Regio Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernio Cibinii die 28^{va} Aprilis Anno 1785.

Baro Samuel de Brukenthal manu propria

David Székelly manu propria

Stephanus Koszta manu propria, Secretarius

Comiti Sigismundo Kornis

[3r] [*Inferius transversae scriptum*:] 3150. Illustrissimo Comiti Sigismundo Kornis de Göntz Ruszka Incltyi Comitatus Szolnok Mediocris Supremo Comiti consignatae. Ex Officio. Urgenter. Zilah.

[*Supra positum transverse Sigillum tondum majus in cera rubra impressum*]

[3r][*In angulo dextro superius scriptum*:] Presentatae 14^a Maii 1785. Relatae 21^a ejusdem Mensis. Nr. 975.

Ordine guberniale, 1785,⁴⁷ no. 3150, Serviciul Județean Sălaj, Arhivele Naționale ale României (hereafter *Ordine guberniale*).⁴⁸

b) Dominis Vice Comitibus. Zilah, 14^{ta} Maii 1785.

Decretum Guberniale de 28^{va} Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150. emanatum communicatur cum Dominatione Vestra ea cum intimatione, ut ad praescriptum ejusdem in Moscovitarum vel aliorum sub hoc praetextu Imagines distrahentium, et Plebem in sinistras opiniones adducentium, aliasque huc facientes circumstantias serio, diligenter,

⁴⁷ Thanks to Livia Ardelean for the support offered in identifying the new location of this documentary corpus and for assistance with obtaining photographs of the documents.

⁴⁸ The concept of this order is found on p. 4-5 of documentary batch no. 3150 in the National Archives of Hungary, together with the document presented in annex II.

circumspecte, ac adaequate investiget, pro comperto in conformitate communicatae Ordinationis agat, et Informationem intra 8^{vam} isthuc praestet.

Szebeny manu propria

[*In margine sinistra medialiter scriptum:*] Expediendum.

[*In margine sinistro inferius scriptum:*] Expeditum eodem.

Ordine guberniale, 1785, no. 975.

Annex IV

Gubernium's reply to the implementation of the Aulic decree of March 31, 1785 and the comments of the clerk of the Aulic Chancellery of Transylvania, referring to the Russian pedlars arrested in Aiud in November 1784 and to the transmission of the order to obtain other information from the field about the presence of Russian icon pedlars and to refute rumors of an imminent attack by the Tsarist Empire.

[2r] Euer Majestät,

Einem unter den 31^{ten} letzt verflossenen Monaths März und N^{ro} 3376 erlassenen hohen Hof Befehl zu Folge vermög welchem uns allergnädigst aufgetragen worden war eine verlässliche Auskunft zu erstatten, ob sich die Euer Majestät gemachte Anzeige, dass im Groß Fürstenthum Siebenbürgen gewisse Hausierer aus Russland mit Bilder herumstreichen und dem nicht unirten Volk beybringen, dass wenn selbe mit solchen Bildern nicht werden versehen seyn, sie in Gefahrt stehen würden, durch die nächst ankommende Russen umgebracht zu werden bestätige oder nicht? Unterstehen wir uns Euer Majestät allerunterthänigst zu berichten, dass im nächst verflossenen Jahr einige Russische Bilder Händler durch die Unter Albenser Tafel gefänglich eingebracht ihre Passuales untersucht und sie selbst gerichtlich abgehört worden seyn, da aber wider die gesagte Russische Bilder Händler nichts erhellet, dass sie über den Rodnaur [2v] Paß nach bezahlter Dreysigst in dieses Groß Fürstenthum hereingekommen und ihre Bilder zu verkaufen hereingeführet, so sind sie zwar wieder losgelassen, aber wgen damahls bestandenen Umständen mit dem Befehl, dass sie sich alsogleich aus dem Lande begeben mögen.

Obschon nun dieses so ist, so hat doch das Gubernium nicht unterlassen, um den Gegenstand näher aufzuklären, denen sämtlichen Obergespanen und ersteren Officianten derer Städten aufzutragen, dass dieselben durch verlässliche Nachforschungen zu erfahren suchen sollen ob derley Russische Bilder Händler sich jetziger Zeit im Lande befinden, ob sie dergleichen Gerücht unter das Wallachische Volck ausstreuen, ob Spuhren und Kennzeichen solcher Grüchte unter dem Volk wirklich vorhanden sind? Und wenn sich wirklich solche Russische Bilder Händler in ihren Bezirken finden und dergleichen Ausstreungen zur Last legen sollten sie einzufangen; so auch [3r] wen dergleichen Gerüchten unter dem Volk herumgingen, auf die Beförderer derselben aufmerksam zu seyn, und die Urheber herauszusuchen. Die Gerüchte aber selbst als falsch und unwahr zu erklären, und endlich binnen 15 Tagen von dem Erfolg ihren Bericht anhero abzustatten. Die wir in unverbrüchlicher Treue erstreben

Euer Majestät

allerunterthänigst treu gehorsamster

Samuel Freyherr von Brukenthal

Von dem Siebenbürgischen Landes Gubernio Hermannstadt den 28. April 1785

David Székelly

Stephanus Koszta

[3v]/Numero 3150

Allerunterthänigster Bericht des Siebenbürgischen Landes Gubernii. In Betreff der Ausfindig machung Russischer Bilder Händler und ihrer unter das Volk ausgesprengten Gerüchte.

Praesentatae den 16^{ten} May 1785

Donáth⁴⁹

[4r]/6191

An das Königliche Gubernium in Siebenbürgen

Die von Ihrem hoch löblichen Gubernio über die Ausfindigmachung der dort Landes herumgehen sollende Russischen Bilder Händler und wegen Bemahnung das durch selbe dem nicht unirten Volk beygebracht wozu sollenden [...] getroffen (!) mittels bereits de dato 28. April a. c. Nro 3150 angezeigten Führkehrungen, haben Seine Majestät allergnädigst zu Augen bringen gesucht, und wir auf die genaue Beobachtung derselben aller Orten sorgsam zu achten seyn,

Wienn den 23 May 1785

Expedit: Carolus Palffy

Georgius Bánffy

revisuit Donáth manu propria 24 May

Missum pro revisione den 24 Maji 1785

Alexander Horváth manu propria

[5r]

Datum den 28ten April 1785

Praesentatum den 16ten May 1785

Relatum 23. eidem

Acceptatum 26. eidem

Das Siebenbürgisches Landes Gubernium erstatt in Befolgung des unter 31^{ten} März den Jahres Numero 3376 erlassenen Allerhöchsten Befehles den gehorsamsten Bericht über die gemachte Anzeige, daß in Siebenbürgen gewisse Hausierer aus Rußland mit Bilder herumstreichen, und dem nicht Unierten Volk beybringen, daß wenn selbe mit solchen Bildern nicht würden versehen seyn, sie in Gefahr stehen würden, durch die nächst ankommende Russen umgebracht zu werden, dahin: daß im nächst verflossenen Jahr einige Rußische Bilder-Händler durch die Unter Albenser Tafel eingefangen und gerichtlich abgehört worden seyen, da aber wider dieselben nichts verdächtiges erhellet so sind sie zwar wieder losgelassen aber wegen damals entstandenen Umständen mit dem Befehl daß sie sich alsogleich aus dem Lande begeben mögen, womit auf denen sämtlichen Obergespannen, und ersteren Officianten derer Städten von Seiten des

⁴⁹ The concept of the letter, drawn up by the same signatory, Donáth, can be found on p. 6-7 in documentary batch no. 3150 located in the National Archives of Hungary, together with the document presented in annex II.

Gubernii die noch weitere und verlässliche Nachforschung der obberührten Anzeige aufgetragen worden und wenn sich wirklich solche verdächtige Bilder Händler in ihren Bezirken finden sollten, sie einzufangen; so auch wenn derley Gerüchte unter dem Volk herumgingen, auf die Beförderer derselben aufmerksam zu seyn, die Uhrheber herauszusuchen, die Gerüchte aber selbst [5v] als falsch und unwahr zu erklären, und entlich binnen 15 Tagen von dem Erfolg ihren Bericht abzustatten angeordnet.

Die von dem Gubernio getroffene Führkehrungen sind zu genehmigen, und dem selben zu rescribiren, es solle auf der Erfüllungobachtames Aug haben.

Erdélyi Udvari Kancelláriai Levéltár, Erdélyi Udvari Kancellária Regisztratrúrāja, *Acta generalia*, B 2, 1785, no. 6191, Országos Levéltár, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár (herafter *Acta generalia*, B 2).

Annex V

Replies sent by counties based on the order of the Gubernium of Transylvania of 28 April 1785.

[8] Supremorum Comitum Comitatum, ut et Primariorum Liberarum Regiarumque Civitatum, et Oppidorum Maiorum Officialium circa interceptionem Moscovitarum cum imaginibus venalibus in hocce Principatu circumvagantium, praeter illas, quae ex necessitate acclusi iisdem incaptivatorum eiusmodi hominum examinis Excelso Regio Gubernio inter exhibita ordinaria iam repraesentatae habentur, in ductu Gratosae sub 28a Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 emanatae Ordinationis Gubernialis successive submissae relationes in advoluto humillime exhibentur. Cibirii, die 15a Iunii 1785.

E Protocollo Exhibitorum Guberniali

4478. 3895. 4100. 4154. 4785 / 1785

[1] Die 18^a Iunii 1785

Exhibitorum Protocollistae Relationes Supremorum Comitum, et Primariorum Officialium circa ordinatam Moscovitarum imagines venales circumferentium interceptionem, submitunt.

1. Acclusa 12. Vide in Armario.

2^{do} Sacratissimae Suae Majestati

Vide inter Fascicula Frustum 18

4738 / 1785

Relatum 5^{ta} Iulii 1785

a) *Reply from Sighișoara*

[6] 4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Liber Baro, Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Regium in Transylvania Gubernium,
Domini Domini mihi Gratosissimi!

In complementum Gratosae Excellentiae Vestrae Excelsique Regii Gubernii die 28^a Aprilis anni currentis sub Numero 3150 emanatae, et mihi 11^a Maii praesentatae Ordinationis, liceat humillime referre: quod peracta sub manu genuina investigatione nullos Moscovitas cum Imaginibus venalibus in praesentiarum usque hic loci

circumvagari fuisse viscos. Interea non defui tales facere dispositiones, ut, si fors in posterum eiusmodi Russiae accolae cum Imaginibus circumvagerentur, Excellentiae Vestrae Excelsique Regii Gubernii iussis omnimode satisfacere valeam. Qui profundissimo devotionis cultu emorior

Excellentiae Vestrae
Excelsique Regii Gubernii

humillimus servus
Georgius Nobilis ab Ehrenschild manu propria
Consul.

Schaesburgi die 18^a Maii / 1785

[7] Ratione Moscovitarum cum Imaginibus circumvagantium humillima Consulis Schaesburghensis Informatio.

b) *Reply from Bistrița*

[35] 4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Liber Baro, Gubernator Regie,
Exccelsum Regium Transylvaniae Gubernium
Domini Domini Gratosissimi!

Instituta in consequentiam Gratosi Excelsi Regii Gubernii de dato 28^a Aprilis sub Numero 3150 ad me exarati Decreti per fidos Officiales Investigatione, relatum mihi per eosdem exstitit illos Russiae Accolas, qui cum Imaginibus Venalibus in Magno hoc Principatu circumvagari perhibentur anno superiore hic loci quidem etiam fuisse, Imaginesque suas Venales exposuisse, nulla tamen huiusmodi figmenta, qualia in praecitato gratioso Decreto memorantur, in Vulgus Vallachicum sparsisse.

Quibus ad exigentiam prius memorati gratiosi Decreti Gubernialis humillime relatis profundissimo venerationis cultu emorior

Excellentiae Vestrae et
Excelsi Regii Gubernii

humillimus Servus
Georgius Techelt manu propria
Iudex Primarius.

Bistricii 20^a Maii / 1785.

[36] Humillime refert Iudex Primarius Bistriciensis illos Russiae Accolas, qui cum Imaginibus Venalibus in Magno hoc Principatu circumvagari perhibentur, anno superiore hic loci etiam fuisse, nulla tamen figmenta in vulgus Vallachicum sparsisse.

c) *Reply from Cluj*

[33] 4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Regium Gubernium
Domini Domini Patroni Gratosissimi!

Ad Gratosos Excellentiae Vestrae, Excelsi item Regii Gubernii de dato 28a Aprilis sub Numero 3150 intuitu circumvagantium quorundam Moscovitarum imagines vendentium, et eadem occasione varia nociva figmenta spargentium emanatos Ordines demississime referendum habeo: nullos eiusmodi Moscovitas vagabundos in gremio huius Civitatis reperiri, consequenter nec vestigia expositurum nocivorum figmentorum superesse. In reliquum Gratiis et Patrocinio Excellantiae Vestrae, Excelsi item Regii Gubernii profunda veneratione commendatus emorior

Excellentiae Vestrae

Excelsi item Regii Gubernii

humillimus servus

Sigismundus Nagy de Radnotfaja manu propria

Civitatis Claudiopolitanae Iudex Primarius.

Claudiopoli 21^a Maii 1785.

[34][*Superius, in media pagina sigillum minus tondum in rubra cera impressum*]

Excellentissimo Domino Domino Libero Baroni Gubernatori Regio, Excelso item Regio Gubernio Dominis Dominis Patronis Gratosissimis.

[*Inferius, in angulo sinistro scriptum*]

Relatio Iudicis Primarii Claudiopolitani intuitu vagabundorum quorundam Moscovitarum submissa.

d) *Reply from Dumbrăveni*

[26] 4738 / 1785

Excellentissime, ac Illustrissime Domine Liber Baro,

Gubernator Regie, et Praeses!

Excelsum item Regium Magni Principatum Transylvaniae Gubernium

Domini Domini Nobis Patroni Gratosissimi!

In conformitate Gratosae Ordinationis Gubernialis de dato 28a Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 ratione instituendae sub manu investigationis, an Moscovitae in praesentiarum in gremio circumvagantes comperiantur, vulgum Valachicum in eo persuadentes, quod, nisi quis imaginibus per ipsos allatis provisos fuerit, per adventantes Moscovitas interficiendus sit, prona cum submissione referri: quod demandata investigatione partim personaliter, partim etiam per aptos Iuratos Assessores peracta in gremium nostri nec Moscovitas cum similibus Imaginibus umquam appulisse, sed nec rumorem Augustissimae Suae Maiestati relatum eotenus sparsum fuisse comperiat; in reliquo Gratiis devotus perenni venerationis cultu persevero

Excellentiae Vestrae et

Excelsi Regii Gubernii

humillimus servus

Samuel Csaki manu propria

Iudex Primarius.

Elisabethopolis Die 23. Maii

Anni 1785.

[27][*Superius, in media pagina sigillum minus tondum in rubra cera impressum*]

Excellentissimo, ac Illustrissimo Domino Libero Baroni Gubernatori Regio, et Praesidi,
Excelso item Regio Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernio Dominis Dominis
Patronis Nobis gratiosissimis.

Ex Officio.

Cibinii.

[*Inferius, in angulo dextro transverse sccriptum*]

Nec Moscovitas Venales Imagines circumferentes in gremio nostro unquam fuisse
reptos, nec rumorem, quod, nisi quis similibus imaginibus provisos sit, per adventantes
Moscovitas interficiendus sit, in plebem sparsum esse humillime refertur.

e) *Reply from Târgu-Mureș*

[30] 4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie!

Excelsum item Regium Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernium!

Domini Domini Patroni Gratiosissimi!

Gratiosis Excellentiae Vestrae et Excelsi Regii Gubernii de dato 28a Aprilis anni
currentis emanatis numeroque 3150 signatis, ac per me 12a praesentis humillime acceptis
Commissionalibus, promptissimo parendi studio satisfactorius, demandatam intuitu
Muscovitarum imaginibus venalibus circumvagantium Investigationem per fidos et ad id
aptos Officiales huius omni cum accuratatione suscipiendo compertum est similes
Muscovitas hic Loci etiam in Mense adhuc Novembri anni proximius evoluti quasdam
Imagines venum exposuisse, imo per nonnullos Graeci Ritus non Unitos Incolas huius
etiam comparatas extitisse, non tamen eo praemisso figmento, quod, nisi quis eiusmodi
imaginibus provisos fuerit, periculo sit expositus; imo referentibus melioris et peritioris
notae hominibus ob defectum Linguae Walachicae nullam praeter Russicam lallantes
Muscovitae hoc ipsum nec exprimi potuisse, quamvis quidem e Plebe Valachica occasione
distractionis Imaginum ex vulgari solum rumore ea audivisse non negarent, ast quod
iidem Muscovitae rumorem illum in vulgus Valachicum sparsissent, affirmare non
audent.

Actu tamen eiusmodi Muscovitas in gremio nostri minime circumvagari, nec
ullum eiusmodi figmenti vestigium aut inditium in Plebe huius Loci Valachica superesse,
vel fidem meruisse, quin potius in praesentiarum quoque falsa esse figmenta
recognoscere, ad exi[31]gentiam praelaudati Decreti humillime referre sustinui
profundissimo venerationis cultu emoriturus

Excellentiae Vestrae et

Excelsi Regii Gubernii

Humillimus Servus

Samuel Sz. Nyirö Iudex

Primarius manu propria.

Marus Vásárhelly 25^a Maii 1785.

[32] Humillima Iudicis Primarii Marus Vasarhellyiensis Relatio intuitu Muscovitarum
Imaginibus Venalibus circumvagantium submissa.

f) *Reply from Mediaș*

[19]4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine, Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Regium Gubernium,
Domini, Domini Gratosissimi!

Acceptis Excellentiae Vestrae Excelsique Regii Gubernii Gratosis de dato 28va Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 de instituenda ratione Accolarum Russiae cum imaginibus venalibus circumvagantium sparsorumque per eosdem figmentorum Investigatione Ordinibus non defui in eorundem conformitate tam ipse quam per alios fideles aptosque Officiales huiates in Civitate et Suburbio huiate genuinam sub manu tantum omnique cautela instituere Investigationem; ast non tantum nullos eiusmodi Russiae Accolas hic loci circumvagantes reperimus, verum nec minima vestigia, et indicia sparsorum in Vulgus praesertim Vallachicum eiusmodi figmentorum detegere valuimus. Quosuper, dum humillimam submittere Relationem, meae duxissem esse obligationis perpetuo venerationis cultu emorior

Excellentiae Vestrae,
Excelsique Regii Gubernii

humillimus Servus
Daniel Schatfindt manu propria
Consul Mediensis.

Mediae, die 27^a Maii 1785.

[20] Consulis Mediensis humillima Informatio, de Russiae Accolis cum Imaginibus venalibus circumvagantibus.

g) *Reply from Brașov*

[10]4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Liber Baro Magni Transylvaniae Principatus Gubernator Regie!
Excelsum Regium Magni Transylvaniae Principatus Gubernium,
Domini Domini, ac Patroni Gratosissimi!

In complementum Gratosissimae Excellentiae Vestrae Excelsique Regii Gubernii de dato 28 Aprilis anni currentis sub numero 3150 mihi exaratae, ac tandem 12ma Maii anni currentis acceptae Ordinationis, quoad suscipiendam sub manu investigationem circa factam Suae Maiestati Sacratissimae Denunciationem, quod nonnulli Russiae accolae cum imaginibus venalibus circumvagantes populum non unitum ad illas sibi comparandas excogitatis ad id figmentis adhibitisque territoribus inducere niterentur, humillime referre sustineo: post institutam sub manu et adhibita cum requisita cautela per fidos subofficiales ratione sparsi huiusce / [11] rumoris percontationem nihil aliud evenisse, quam quod proxime praeteritis diebus unicus tantum Rascianus cum imaginibus venalibus horsum adventasset, qui tamen populum ad eosdem sibi comparandas hoc solummodo argumento, quemlibet nimirum, qui se bonum Christianum profiteretur, sibi eiusmodi imagines comparare necessum habere, eundemque, qui hoc negligeret, Christiani nomen non mereri persuadere allaborasset, adeoque nulla plane vestigia et indicia sparsorum in vulgus eiusmodi noxiorum

figmentorum, quam quae Sacratissimae Suae Maiestati denunciata extiterint, in gremio nostro reperta esse. Quodsi tamen postmodum quosdam Moscovitas horsum adventare contingeret, demandatam mihi, quoad ipsorum conatus percontandos vigilantiam adhibere, acceptaeque eatenus Altae instructioni memet ad amussim informare non deero; iugi in reliquo venerationis cultu perseverans

Excellentiae Vestrae

Excelsique Regii Gubernii

humillimus servus

Michael Fronius manu propria

Iudex Primarius.

Coronae, die 28 Maii 1785

[12] Humillima Iudicis Primarii Coronensis, quoad factam Suae Maiestati Sacratissimae ratione nonnulorum Moscovitarum cum imaginibus circumvagantium Denunciationem Relatio.

h) *Reply from Gherla*

[21] 4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie!

Excelsumque Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernium Regium

Domini Patroni Gratosissimi!

In consequentiam Gratosae Ordinationis Excellentiae Vestrae Excelsique Regii Gubernii sub dato 28^a Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 emanatae humillime rescribendum esse duximus: in praesentiarum nullos Moscovitas cum Venalibus Imaginibus nostras partes circumire; nec observatum esse hoc anno eiusmodi Russiae Accolas ad Loca nostra adpulis; minus autem de realitate rumoris illius, quo Valachicum Populum eo praefascinasse feruntur, quod nisi talibus Iconibus provisi essent, ab advenientibus proxime Moscovitis forent internecione delendi, quidquam vel ex incerta fama nobis perlatum fuisse, neque etiam innotescere potuisse. Id, quod Excellentiis Vestris omni cum devotione notificantes profundissimo venerationis cultu permanemus

Excellentiae Vestrae

Excelsique Regii Gubernii

Servi humillimi

Martinus Balta manu propria

Substitutus Iudex Primarius

et cum octo Senatoribus

Ordinarius Iuratus Notarius

Emanuel Berkai manu propria.

Armenopoli 30^a Maii / Anni 1785.

[22] Magistratus Armenopolitanus ad Regii Gubernii Decretum sub Numero 3150 rescribit: in praesentiarum nullos Moscovitas cum Venalibus Imaginibus circumire nihilque de rumore Vulgus Valachicum circa emendas Icones praefascinante auditum esse.

i) *Reply from Alba Iulia*

[13]4738 / 1 785

Excellentissime, ac Illustrissime Domine Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Regium Gubernium,
Domine, Domini, ac Patroni mihi Gratosissimi!

Posteaquam Benignum, ac Salutare Excelsi Regii Gubernii intuitu exquirendorum nonnullorum Rusiae accolarum cum Imaginibus Venalibus circumvagantium de 28va Aprilis anni currentis sub Numeris Gubernialibus 3150 ad me clementer emanatum Decretum summa sub homagiali submissione 12a praesentis percepissem, ex eodem fidelitatis homagio in Augustissimum Principem, et Patriam obstricto statim haud defui tam ipsemet personaliter quam vero per subalternos tacita sub aure ratione huiusmodi circumvagantium Moschovitarum accuratam institui curare Investigationem, qua hic facta apud Disunitum tum viventem, nunc autem demortuum Popam Nicolaje Ruszand anno proxime elapso 1784. Mense Septembri duos Moschovitas cum Venalibus Imaginibus hic fuisse, et ex hoc solum eorundem figmento, quod nisi aliquis Valachorum talibus provisos fuerit, non sit bonus Christianus, nonnullos Valachorum similes emissee, et suis parietibus affixisse certum evenit, ab eodem vero tempore usque in praesentiarum nullum repertum, minus autem reperiri posse talem Moschovitam vel sparsorum eorundem figmentorum alia indicia, vel vestigia michi innotuisse, humillime Excelso Regio Gubernio refero, [14] casu vero affuturo, si talis repertus hic fuerit, vi muneris mei omnem movebo lapidem, ut similem intercipi, examini statim subiici, et ad Gratosum Excelsi Regii Gubernii Thronum demisse referre possim, sub profundissimo venerationis cultu, ac perpetuo fidelitatis homagio emoriturus

Excellentiae Vestrae et
Excelsi Regii Gubernii

Clyentum infimus
Demetrius Widray manu propria
Civitatis Albo Carolinensis Iudex Primarius

Albae Carolinae 25^a Maii 1785

[14]Humillima Relatio

Primarii Iudicis Magno Carolinensis circa Moschovitas cum Imaginibus pro nunc circumvagantes non repertos.

j) *Reply from Trei Scaune County*

[23]4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Regium Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernium
Domine Domini Patroni Gratosissimi!

Investigationem de vagabundis Russiae Incolis, qui imagines quo meliori precio distrahere possent, eo Valachos non Unitos persuadere conarentur, quod, nisi eiusmodi Imaginibus provisi fuerint, periculo sint expositi, ne per proxime adventantes Muscovitas interficerentur, medio Gratosi Decreti de 28 iam elapsi Mensis Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 emanati mihi demandatam per fidos, et ad id aptos Commissarios

exmissos sub manu peragi feci, verum nullos in toto Circulo cum venalibus imaginibus circumvagatos Muscovitas deprehensos, neque aliquod vestigium, et indicium eiusmodi sparsorum figmentorum evenit; solícite nihilominus invigilaturus, et siquid de figmentis mihi constare potuerit, humillime Excellentiis Vestris referre sustineo. Quibus Gratiis, ac favoribus commendatus in profunda veneratione emorior

Excellentiæ Vestrae,
Excelsi item Regii Gubernii

humillimus servus
Ioannes Benkő manu propria
Ordinarius Vice Comes.

Killyén 1^a Iunii 1785

[24]4738

Humillima Investigatio intuitu Incolarum Russiae cum Imaginibus circumvagantium Ordinarii Vice Comitatus Comitatus Háromszék.

k) *Reply from Lower Alba County*

[17]4738 / 1785

Excellentiissime Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernium Regium
Domini Domini Nobis Gratosissimi!

Relate ad Gratosum Excellentiæ Vestrae et Excelsi Regii Gubernii die 28^a Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 circa nonnullos Russiae Accolas cum Imaginibus circumvagantes, et quo illas pretio meliore distrahere possint, Populum Non Unitum quod, nisi eiusmodi Imaginibus provisi fuerint, periculo essent expositi, ne per proxime adventantes Muscovitas interficiantur persuadentes emanatum [Decretum], humillime referendum duximus: quod, etsi Tabula Continua aliquos eiusmodi Russos hinc inde cum Venalibus Imaginibus antea hoc in Comitatu oberasse Excellentiæ Vestrae et Excelso Regio Gubernio demisse repraesentaverit, peracta nihilominus in utroque huius Circulo seria eatenus Investigatione nihil eiusmodi prodierit, quod nimirum praevia ratione Muscovitae Venales Imagines circumferentes Populum Unitum ad emendas Imagines sub praescripta comminatione persuadere conati fuissent. In reliquo Gratiis enixe commendati perseveramus

Excellentiæ Vestrae et
Excelsi Regii Gubernii

humillimi Servi
Alexius Szentpáli
Ordinarius Vice Comes
Antonius Bisztrai
Ordinarius Notarius.

Nagy Enyedini die 10^a Iunii 1785.
Coedula 335.

[18]Circa Muscovitas Imagines in hoc Comitatu circumferri relatos Informatio.

Ex Comitatu Albensi Inferiori

l) *Reply from Middle Solnoc County*

[28]4738 / 1785

Excellentissime Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Regium Gubernium
Domini, Domini Gratosissimi!

Ad gratiosum Excellentiae Vestrae, et Egregii Regii Gubernii sub 28^a Aprilis anni currentis Numeroque 3150 exaratum Decretum, humillime referimus, quod per Circulares ViceComitis investigari curaverimus, an non aliqui Russiae accolae, seu Moscovitae in hoc Comitatu observati fuissent, qui cum Imaginibus circumvagarentur, et Populum in sinistras adducerent persuasiones; relatumque nobis per singulos ViceComites extitit nullos id genus homines per Incolas locorum observatos in hoc Circulo fuisse, disposuisse tamen, ut in similes homines attentio convertatur, et si pro futuro observarentur, intercipiantur; perpetua in reliquo veneratione persistentes

Excellentiae Vestrae
Excelsique Regii Gubernii

humillimi servi
Michael Katona manu propria
Ordinarius ViceComes
Josephus Szebeni manu propria
ViceNotarius.

Zilah die 11^a Iunii / 1785.

[29]Tabula Comitatus Mediocris Szolnok ad Numerum 3150 anni currentis nullos in hoc Comitatu Moscovitas Imagines distrahentes observatos esse refert.

m) *Reply from Târnava County*

[16]4738 / 1785

Excellentissime, ac Illustrissime Domine Liber Baro Gubernator Regie,
Excelsum item Magni Principatus Transylvaniae Gubernium Regium,
Domini et Patroni Mihi Gratosissimi!

In consequentiam Gratosi Excellentiae Vestrae et Excelsi Regii Gubernii Decreti de dato 28^a Aprilis anni currentis sub Numero 3150 intuitu Incolarum Russiae cum Venalibus Imaginibus circumvagantium, et populum false persuadentium emanati congruos de rei veritatis investigatione dedi ordines. Quandoquidem autem ex caeterorum Vice Iudicum Nobilium Relationibus nihil praeter auditum eveniat, quatuor tantum, qui imposturae certitudinem retulerunt. Relationes in advoluto Excellentiae Vestrae et Exelso Regio Gubernio demisse transpono una referens durante adhuc tumultu tales heic Moscoviae Accolas, uti Excelso etiam Regio Gubernio attunc retulimus, interceptos esse, ac intuitu actorum Investigationem peragi fecisse, nihil tamen certi comperisse, si quidem Plebs Walachica quaevis mala in suum commodum fore putans, tunc illorum imposturam revelare noluit, eosdem ad suos lares reinviando libertati restituimus, nulli tamen nunc in hoc Circulo divagari comperientur; inde, cum omnia per Dei Clementiam de praesenti pacata habeamus, non deerimus vigili oculo de hinc etiam similium imposterum interventui attendere. In reliquo perenni veneratione emorior

Russian Icon Marketing in Transylvania

Excellentiae Vestrae
et Excelsi Regii Gubernii

humillimus Servus
Alexander Comes de Bethlen manu propria
Comes Supremus

Maros Vásárhely, die 26^a Iunii 1785

n) *Reply of Biia District in Târnava County, addressed to the Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen.*

[37] 4738-1785

Illustrissime Domine Comes, Camerarie et Supreme Comes!
Domine, Domine mihi ac Persone Gratosissime.

Jelentem alázatosan Nagyságodnak, hogy minekutánna az Titulatus Sustitutus [*sic!*] Vice Ispány Ur Miske László Urnak küldött Nagyságod Meltóságos Commissiojanak tenorát az elmúlt esztendőben Hazánkban járt és képeket árult emberek iránt érttettem, azonnal ezen Processusbeli minden falukban ki menvén igen Curiosa de csendes investigatitot ez iránt tettem: Mellyek után kijön ez, hogy az elmúlt ősszel Enyeden az Gál napi, Küküllővárt az István Király napi Sokadalmokban, per consequens az egy Bénye és Veszszösön kívül ezen Processusbeli több falukbanis.

Három Muszkák, 3 Loval és egy csudalatos készületű szekerecskével jártanak s Deszkára festett Parkonyos [?] Képeket árulván kit kevesebb kit több áron adtanakis ell felesen, mely alkalmatossággal B[ethlen]Sz[en]tMikloson 1. Magyar, Szász Völgyin két Oláh szava be vehető emberek referallyak bizonyoson, hogy azon idegen emberek így szollottak: *Vegyetek ezen Képekből, mivel az kiknek efféle találatik jövendőben hasznát fogja venni.* A több falukban pedig (noha Boldogfalván egy öregrend ember, ki régen katonaságot is viselt magok nyelveken sokat beszeltett véllek) semmi effelet beszélleni referallyak.

A köntösök volt fekete Czondra, kék Nadrág, Bocskor hosszan fell tekerve, a Kalapjok igen magos tetejű és keskeny karimaju, Oláh nyelven hibáson beszéltek. Jártanak pedig egy izben a már meg irt időben. Mellyeketis e szerint Nagyságodnak pro informatione fide bona alázatosan Submittalok. In reliquo solito venerationis cultu persevero

Illustrissimi Domini Comitiss Camerarii et Supremi Comitiss

humilimus servus
Franciscus Bülgözdi manu propria
Processus Magyar Bényeiensis Substitutus vice Judicialium

Szanczal. 28^{va} Maii 1785

[38] Illustrissimo Domino Comiti Camerario et Supremo Comiti Inclitae Tabulae Comitatus de Küküllő cum Sede Marus uniti Continuae Judicialiae, Domino Domino mihi Gratosissimo.

Ex officio

Maros Vásárhelly
Relatio ex Processu Magyar Bényeiensi de Muscovitis imaginis deportantibus.

o) *Reply from Delenii District, Târnava County, addressed to Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen.*

[39]4738 / 1785

Méltóságos Groff Camerarius Fő Ispány és Ordinarium Praeses Úr!
Gratiosus Patronus Úram!

Vévén Nagyságos parantsalattyát Titulatus Substitutus Vice Ispány Miske László Ur által amely Decretumban és Natságos parantsalattyának tartása szerint, el mentem az én kezem és gondviselésém alá biztatott Processusban és Falukban, a holott is minden lárma és nélkül investigáltam; hogy melyik Faluban jártak azon kép árulok, és hányat mi formalog? és micsoda impressiot tsinált a népnek, és hogy adtak el. Találtam pedig hogy minden faluban jártak de nevezetesen Balastelkén Völczen és Felső Bajomban számosan is vettenek egyet egyet két két májjással ilyen szokkal biztatván és arulták képeiket: *Vegyétek mert a kinek az házában ilyeneket látnak akar kiis bémegyén meg tudgyák hogy keresztény emberek vagytok.*

Ezeknek jelentése után magamat gratiajában ajálom, maradok
Natságodnok

alazatos szolgálja

Sombori Sándor Darlaczi substitutus processualis szolgabíró

K[is]Sáros die 31^a Maii 1785

[40]Illustrissimo Domino, Domino Alexandro

Comiti de Bethlen Sacrae Caesareo Regiae et Apostolicae Majestati Cammerarius etc.
Inclutus Comitatus de Küküllő cum sede Marus Uniti Suprem. Comiti et ipsorum Tabulae Continuae Judicariae Praesidi ordinarius Domino, Domino mihi Patrono gratiosissimo
[*Sigillum in cera rubra*]

p) *Reply from Band District in Târnava County, addressed to Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen.*

[41]4738 / 1785

Méltóságos Grof Camerarius Fő Ispány Úr!
Tekintetes Ntes Törvényes Continua Tábla

A Muszka Országi kép árulok iránt újra magam Processusamba meg fordulván, a dolognak hitelesebb voltáért az ki adattatott parantsalat szerént, az előbbeni referenseket felkerestem, azan kép árulok mivelt dolgait újra investigáltam, s hitek után az alább irt fatensek fassioját serie sequenti leirtam

1^{mus} Testis M. Bándi Rusz Juon Annorum 52.

2^{du}s Testis ugyan M. Bándi Mosa János Annorum 50.

3^{ius} Testis Uroi Kodártsa Péter Annorum 56.

4^{us} Testis detto Trid Juon Annorum 42.

5^{us} Testis detto Popa Todor Annorum 40.

6^{us} Testis Bergenyei Zilai Ferentz Annorum 45.

7^{us} Testis detto Muntyán Nyikuj [Annorum] 58.

8^{us} Testis detto Szatmári János Annorum 43.

9^{us} Testis Malomfalvi Moldován Kosztán Annorum 51.

10^{um} testis detto Serván Juon Annorum 39.

Ezen Tiz Számból álló Fátensek mind egyformám valják, hogy azan Muszka kép

árulok olyan szokkal éltenek az irt falukban, s azzal árulták a' képeket, hogy az Oláság Vásáraljan tölle képeket, hogy azon képek által külembzessék meg az Oláh Ház a Magyar Házaktól, mert el jönnek az ő féléjek, és akkor azoknak a Házaknak a mellyeknél aféle képek találatnak jól fog a képnek létele. Mely hitek szerént való fassiojakat a fen megirtaknak, irtam meg énis futuro pro testimonio fide mea mediante tulajdan subscriptionnal corroborálván.

Datum Malamfalva Anno 1785. Die 20^a Junii.

Méltóságos Groff Fő Ispány Uramnak
és a Tekintetes Continua Táblánák

mindenkori kész szolgálja
Kováts Sigmond manu propria
Mező Bándi Processuális Vice Szolga Bíró

[42] Ad Illustrissimum Dominum Comitum Camerarium et Supremum Comitem,
Alexandrum Bethlen de Bethlen Tabulamque Continuum Inclytus Comitatus de Küküllő
cum Sede Marus unitus Judiciariam, Dominum Dominos Gratosissimo Collendissimos,
humilima Relatio

[*Sigillum in cera rubra*]

Acceptatum 23^{ium} Junii 1785

r) *Reply from Şincai District in Târnava County, addressed to Supreme Count Alexander Bethlen.*

[43] 4738 / 1785

Tekintetes Vice Ispány Úr!
különös tiszteletű igen Jó Úram!

Minekutánna a' Felséges Királyi Gubernium kegyelmes Decretuma szerint, a' Muszka kép-árulók iránt az Úrnak szóval nekem által adott Parantsolatját vettem volna; azonnal elmentem a' Marus Székkel egygyesült Nemes Küküllő Vármegyei M[ező] Sámsoni Processusban azon falukba, ahol azon Muszka kép-árulók magok árujokkal meg fordúltanak, és a' Parantsolathoz alkalmaztatott módon, alázatos kötelességem szerit, minél nagyobb szorgalmatossággal lehetett, per modum discursus a' dolgot investigálni igyekeztem, ily környűl álló beszédekkel, hogy a' discursus céljáról semmitis észre ne végyenek; melly investigationak megirt módjával találtam M[ező] Csáváson egy Bordás Lika, és más egy Czutzoja György nevű ilyen embereket, akik úgy adák ki, hogy midőn azon Muszka kép-árulók a' közelebb el múlt Őszön, és Télen jártanak, azt mondták volna az Oláhoknak, hogy akik tölle képet vásárolnak, hasznáth vészik, mert ha bé jó a' Muszka, akinek ilyen képe lesz az azt nem vágja le. Ugyan ezt Szabadban egy Máty Szávu nevű ember hasonloképpen mondtotta hallani, eztis hozzá tévén, hogy aztis hallotta, hogy mondták volna azon Muszka kép-árulók, hogy a' Muszkák azért nem bántják az ilyen képet tartókat, mivel azokat tartják igaz keresztyéneknek akik ilyen képet tartanak, jelen lévén a' Feleségeis ezen beszéd alkalmatosságával Máty Szávu az azon beszédek őis helyben hagyta. Mellyekről bona fide költ igaz Relatiomat kívántam alázatos kötelességem szerint a' tekintetes Vice Ispány Úrnak el küldeni; aki továbbra tapasztalt favorában ajánlott állandó alázatos tisztelettel vagyok.

A' Tekintetes Vice Ispány Úruk

alázatos szolgája
Szalai Farkas
Processualis Szólga Bíró

M[ező] Madaras 20^a Maii 1785.

[44] Acceptatum 22^{da} Iunii 1785

[2] 4738. Ad Illustrissimum Dominum Eszterházi 16^a Augusti 1785.

Gubernium Transylvanicum Levéltára, F 46, 1785, no. 4738.

Annex VI

The report of the Gubernium of Transylvania, based on the replies received from the counties and the comments of the clerk of the Aulic Chancellery. The imperial decree of 28 July 1785 would later be issued as a result of this report.

[2r] Euer Majestät!

In Verfolg dessen, was Euer Majestät Kraft des unterm 31^{ten} März laufenden Jahres, Numero 3376 herabgelangten allerhöchsten Befehles wegen Auskunftmachung derer hierlandes herumstreichenden Russischen Bilder Krämer uns aufgegegen hatten wir den 28ten April laufenden Jahres in Gemäßheit belobter Hohen Verordnung an die Obergespans das nöthige mit dem Bedeuten geordnet, damit sie uns binnen fünfzehn Tagen von der Beschaffenheit dieser Anzeige einen umständlichen und verlässlichen Bericht abstaten sollen.

Aus denen hierauf eingelofenen Berichten, worüber der zweyen Unterrichter des Küküllöer Comitats als des Volfgang Szalay und Sigmund Kováts ergiebt sich zwar, dass in dem dasigen Bezirk drey Russische Bilder Krämer herumgegangen wären, und laut Aussage einiger Wallachen, gesagt haben sollen; dass derjenige der sich dergleichen Bilder von ihnen kauft, den Nutzen haben wird, dass sie von der Russen, wenn sie [2v] hereinkommen, nicht umgebracht wird. Weil aber von Seite anderer Comitats wieder die besagten Russen nichts verdächtiges verspüret worden, übrigens dieselbe, wie wir solche Hoher Majestät noch untern 28^{ten} April laufenden Jahres Numero 3150 pflichtgemäß vorgestellt haben, bereits aus dem Lande gezogen, und keiner sich allhier befindet, so bleibt uns nichts mehr übrig, als bey so geschöpften unterthänigsten Auskünften und Hoher Majestät allermildesten Huld zu empfehlen, und mit unverbrüchlichsten Treue zu verbleiben.

Euer Majestät

Allerunterthänigst treu gehorsamster
Carl Graf Teleki

Von dem Siebenbürgischen Landes Gubernium, Hermannstadt den 8^{ten} Julii 1785

David Székelly
Adam von Veres

[3r] Numero 4738

Des Siebenbürgischen Gubernium allerunterthänigster Bericht in Ansehung der Russischen Bilder Krämer

praesentate den 20^{ten} Julii 1785

Donáth⁵⁰

[4r]8989

datum 5^{ten} 1785

praesentatum den 20^{ten} Julii 1785

relatum 28. eidem

acceptatum 2. August

Das Königliche Gubernium berichtet zu folge des untern 31^{ten} März laufenden Jahres mit N^{ro} 3376 herabgelangten Allerhöchsten Befehls wegen Auskunftmachung deren in Siebenbürgen herumstreichenden Russischen Bilder Krämer, daß aus denen von Comitaten hierauf umgelofenen Berichten sich zwar ergebe, daß in dem Kükelburger Bezirk drey Russische Bilderkrämer herumgegangen wären, und laut Aussage einiger Wallachen gesagt haben, sollen; daß derjenige der sich dergleichen Bilder von ihnen kauft von den Russen wenn sie dahin kommen sollen, nicht umgebracht werden können; da aber von Seite anderer Comitats wider den Russen gar nichts Verdächtiges erspüret worden, und die selben bereits aus dem Lande gezogen sind, so bleibe in dieser Sache nichts mehr zu berichten übrig.

Aus dieser Vorstellung ist zu ersehen, daß die von der Krasschower Komitats vice Gespan zu der Statthaltung gemachte Anzeige nicht ungegründet gewesen. Den Siebenbürgisches Gubernio ist demnach weiteres mitzugeben womit es obbachtames Aug darauf richten lasse sollten Bilderkrämer die das gemeine Volk nur zu verblenden, und [4v] zu betrügen suchen, aus dem Land zu schaffen und nicht mehr hineinlassen.

[5r]8989 ad 1785

An das Königliche Gubernium in Siebenbürgen

Die von dem Königlichen Gubernium in Siebenbürgen in betref der Russischen Bilder Krämer uter 5 July 1 laufenden Jahres N^{ro} 4738 erstattet Auskunft, haben zur Wissenschaft zu nehmen zugleich aber auftragen zu lassen geruhet womit selbes in Gewissheit Ihrem Gubernio das Allerhöchste Hof Decret vom 23 May für die Zukunft möge Sorge tragen, dafür derley Leute, die das gemeine Volk nur betrügen und vorzumachen suchen abgeschaffet, auch in das Land nicht mehr eingelassen werden sollen.

Wienn 28 July 1785

Expedit Carolus Palffy

Georg Banffy

Revisuit Donáth manu propria 30. July

Datum ad revisionen den 29 July 1785

Horvath manu propria

Acta generalia, B 2, 1785, no. 8989.

⁵⁰ The concept of the report can be found at f. 3-4 in the documentary batch no. 4738 in the National Archives of Hungary, as introduction to the replies received from the counties, presented in Annex V.

Annex VII

Abstract of the imperial decree of 28 July 1785, providing for the expulsion of the Russian icon pedlars and their ban on entering the country in the future.

Dem Königlichen Siebenbürgischen Gubernium wird aufgetragen, dass die Russischen Bilderkrämer, und ähnliche das gemeine Volk nur zu Irreführentrachtende Leute in das Land nicht eingelassen werden sollen. Wien den 28^{ten} Julii 1785.

8989 / 1785

Magyar Kancelláriai Levéltár, Magyar Királyi Kancellária Regisztratúrája, A 58, *Liber normalium et dignitatum*, no. 6, p. 351, Országos Levéltár, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár.

Russian Icon Marketing in Transylvania



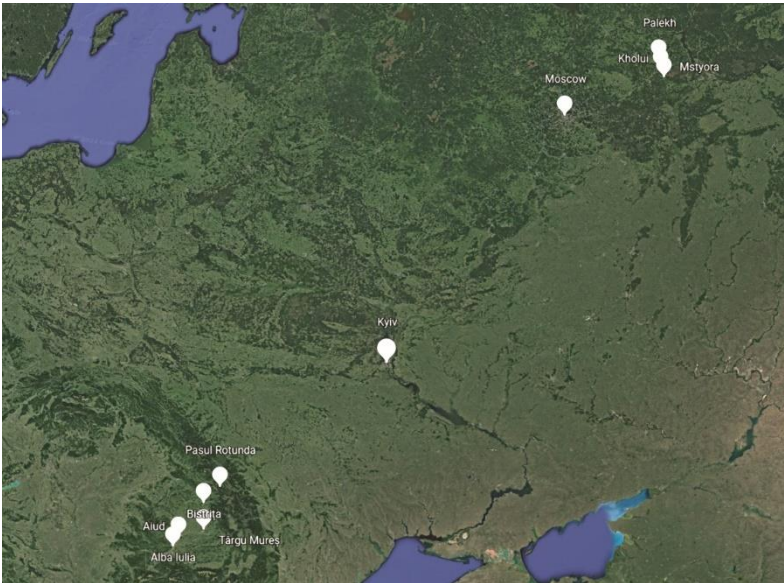
Fig. 1. Franz Neuhauser the Younger, *Fair in Transylvania*.



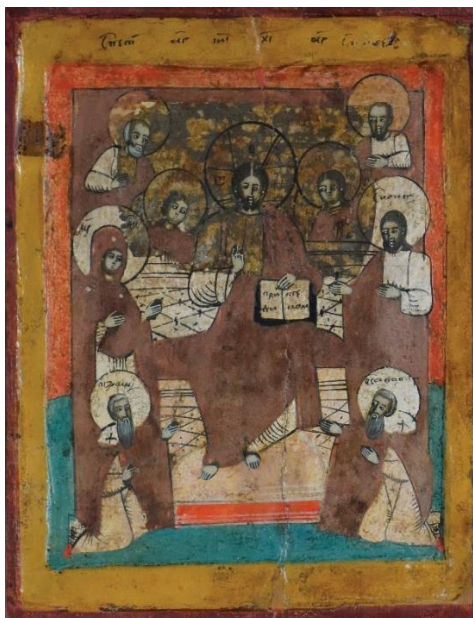
Map 1. Locations in Transylvania where Russian icon peddlars were attested in 1784.



Map 2. Routes of Russian icon pedlars in the eighteenth–twentieth centuries (according to Tarasov, “Русские иконы”).



Map 3. The distance covered by Russian icon pedlars in order to reach Transylvania.



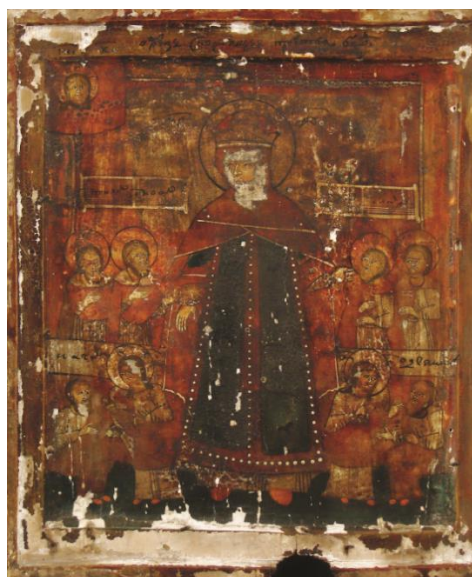
Figs. 2-3. Russian icons given to the church in Mogoș-Miclești (Alba County).



Figs. 4-5. Russian icons given to the churches in Geaca (Cluj County) and Valea Drăganului (Bihor County).



Figs. 6-7. Russian icons from the collection of Sibiu Archdiocese.



Figs. 8-9. Russian icons from the collection of Sâmbăta Monastery.



Fig. 10. Detail from *Fair in Transylvania*, by Franz Neuhauser the Younger.