

ABSTRACT

The salt mines located at the Eastern edge of the Habsburg Empire, subsequently the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, were part of the territory of two historical regions. Firstly, there were places with salt mines in Transylvania – Désakna (in Hungarian) / Ocna Dejului (in Romanian), Szék / Sic, Kolozs / Cojocna, Torda / Turda, Marosújvár / Ocna Mureş, Vizakna / Ocna Sibiului and Parajd / Praid. At present these are part of Romania. Secondly, the salt mining places of Máramaros (in Hungarian) / Maramureş (in Romanian) / Marmarosh (in Ukrainian) were Coştiui / Rónaszék, Ocna Şugatag / Aknasugatag and Aknaszlatina (in Hungarian) / Solotvyno (in Ukrainian). Coştiui and Ocna Şugatag are now part of Romania; Solotvyno is part of Ukraine. Covering the time period from the mid-1700s until the 1890s, this publication aims to revive those occasions on which foreign travellers – that is, coming not from Transylvania or Maramureş, but from further away – visited these salt mines. The period investigated starts at the end of the 1760s with the first scientific travels to Transylvania and Maramureş, and concludes at the beginning of the 1890s with the increasing number of tourist excursions and salt mine visits, which can be connected to the emergence of organised tourism in Transylvania and Maramureş. The book presents visits to the mines of Coştiui, Ocna Şugatag, Solotvyno; Ocna Dejului, Turda, Ocna Mureş, Ocna Sibiului and Praid – the writings on which the synthesis is based on do not relate of any visits to the mines in Cojocna or Sic.

Following the acknowledgements and the introduction (Chapter I), the first major unit (Chapter II) includes narratives of visits to the salt mines of Transylvania and Maramureş (some of these are original Hungarian texts, the others are texts translated into Hungarian). This collection presents the written reports on salt mine visits in a chronological order. The next unit (Chapter III) contains the track logs of the investigated travels in written form and the maps based on these. This chapter may serve as an atlas for the history of travel in this region. The written track logs (including references to page numbers of the source travel narratives) can provide valuable resources for historians researching areas in Transylvania and Maramureş, irrespective of their thematic focus (travel descriptions can be used in research on the history of architecture, politics, literature, theatre, industry, transport, or even folk costumes, folk music, etc. of a specific area). The next extensive unit of the publication (Chapter IV) contains an overview of the travellers, their respective travels and travel accounts, rendered in brief summaries. A continuous reading of this chapter will also illustrate the changes over time in traveller profiles. The inclusion of a detailed description by individual traveller and travel from these three chapters in the Table of Contents allows the reader to find information on a particular traveller or travel, beyond merely following the history of visits to the mines. The next section of the book (Chapter V) first presents quantitative indicators reflecting the interest for the salt mines over time, then discusses the topic of categorization of travellers and their travels. Chapter VI informs on contexts: brief subsections elaborate on subjects considered to be of particular relevance to the investigated salt mine visits. Discussed topics are, among others, the accessibility of the salt mines in Transylvania and Maramureş during particular time periods; the role of *ars apodemica* in shaping the interests of travellers exploring a land; the relevance of geology and mineralogy research in Transylvania

and Maramureş to the unfolding of the history of mine visits; the circumstances of collecting minerals and rocks in the territory of former Hungary and Transylvania; the emergence of a culture of spas in Hungary and Transylvania during the period investigated and the relevance thereof to the history of salt mine visits; the appearance of the salt mines of this particular area in curiosity collections and travel guides of the times, etc. Whilst exploring issues related to the visiting of salt mines in Transylvania and Maramureş, these chapters also trace a general history of travel and tourism in Transylvania and Maramureş. The last major unit (Chapter VII) contains an analysis of the writings gathered in the Corpus, within the context of travel and tourism history (these texts could accommodate investigations focussed on other topics as well – for example, the history of technical development, the history of science, etc.). This chapter first introduces the scenarios of mine visits (reconstructed on the basis of travel accounts), then continues with particularities of the representations of these visits to salt mines. The Epilogue (Chapter VIII) and the Bibliography are followed by an Appendix, which (together with the Bibliography) illustrates the wide spectrum of travel accounts linked to Transylvania and Maramureş. The history of mine visits presented in the book is completed by an Addendum of images, which are organically linked to the texts featured.