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Beneficiar: Academia Română

Mentor/ expert științific  
prof. univ. dr. Alexandru Florin Platon

Instituția coordonatoare de tematică: Academia Română – Filiala Iași

Tematica: Discurs literar-artistic și construcție identitară în secolele XVI-XX

Numele și prenumele cercetătorului postdoctoral: Maleon Bogdan-Petru

Tema individuală de cercetare: Metamorfozele lui Thanatos. Expresii culturale ale spațiilor funerare din Moldova secolelor XVI-XX

*Thanatos' Metamorphoses. Cultural Expressions of Funeral Spaces in Moldavia  
during the 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries  
- synthesis study -*

### *Historiography for the Western Europe*

For the contemporary historiography, the exploration of the cultural meanings of funeral spaces involved both a quantitative reconstruction of the territorial dynamics of cemeteries in the evolution of urban topography, and an analysis of the social and cultural significance of funeral structures. The first systematic approaches on the key aspects of thanatology, such as the attitudes determined by the perspective of physical death, meanings of funeral rituals, structural changes of

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cemeteries and typology of burial places, belong to French historians<sup>1</sup>. The study of cemeteries developed in several lines of research, among which monographs of urban cemeteries<sup>2</sup>, hermeneutical studies on funeral monuments<sup>3</sup> and analysis on the dimension of the funeral ritual<sup>4</sup>. In addition to traditional documentary and narrative sources, the exploration of funeral perimeters benefits, though with significant regional differences, from the results of the “historic mortuary archaeology”<sup>5</sup>. In terms of methodology, the current trend tends to favour interdisciplinary

<sup>1</sup> We can mention here only few classical contributions of the French historiography: Michel Vovelle, *Mourir autrefois. Attitudes collectives devant la mort aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris: Gallimard/Julliard, 1974); M. Foizil, *Les attitudes devant la mort au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: sépultures et suppression des sépultures dans le cimetière parisien des Saints-Innocents*, in “Revue historique”, 510, 1974; Philippe Ariès, *Essais sur l'histoire de la mort* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975); *L'homme devant la mort* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1977); Roger Chartier, *Les arts du mourir, 1450-1600* and D. Roche, *La mémoire de la mort*, the last two studies being published in “Annales. ESC”, 1, 1976; Louis-Vincent Thomas, *Rites de mort. Pour la paix des vivants* (Paris: Librairie Artème Fayard, 1985).

<sup>2</sup> Michel Dansel, *Les lieux de culte au cimetière du Père-Lachaise* (Paris: Trédaniel, 1999); Gilles Plaut, *Cimetière du Père-Lachaise. Division israélite* (Paris: Cercle de généalogie juive, 1999); Christian Charlet, *Le Père-Lachaise. Au cœur du Paris des vivants et des morts* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003); Linda J. Kennedy and Mary Jane Galer, *Historic Linwood Cemetery* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004); W. C. Madden, *Crown Hill Cemetery* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004); Pod Redakcja, Anny Sylwii Czyż, Bartłomieja Gutowskiego, *Sztuka Cmentarzy w XIX i XX wieku* (Warszawa, 2010); *Średniowieczne i nowożytnie nekropole Wrocławia, cz. I / Medieval and Modern Necropolis of Wrocław, part I* (Wrocław, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture. Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964); Edmund Vincent Gillon Jr., *Victorian Cemetery Art* (Dover Publications, 1972); Richard E. Meyer, *Cemeteries and gravemarkers: voices of American culture* (Utah State University Press, 1992); Rosemary Muscarella Ardolina, *Old Calvary Cemetery. New Yorkers Carved in Stone* (Westminster, Maryland, 1996); Nigel Llewellyn, *Honour in life, death and in the memory: funeral monuments in early modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 1996); Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone. A Field Guide to Cemetery. Symbolism and Iconography* (Layton: Gibbs Smith Publisher, 2004); *The Art of Death* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1997); *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> J. Mitford, *The American Way of Death* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963); Loring M. Danforth, *The Death Ritual of Rural Greece* (Princeton University Press, 1982); Peter Metcalf, Richard Huntington, *Celebrations of Death. The Anthropology on Mortuary Ritual* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Jennifer Woodward, *The Theatre of Death. The Ritual Management of Royal Funerals in Renaissance England, 1570-1625* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997); Avner Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory in Modern France, 1789-1996* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Michael Parker Pearson, *The archaeology of death and burial* (Texas: A&M University Press, 1999); Harold Mytum, *Mortuary Monuments and Burial Grounds of the Historic Period* (New York: Kluwer Academic, 2004).

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explorations, which combine historical analysis with methods specific to funeral art and architecture, aiming to reconstitute the symbolic value of the designed cemetery landscape<sup>6</sup>.

### *Historiography for the Byzantine East*

The main papers refer to emperors' violent death, because the sovereigns' dying in a brutal manner was a reality which must be analyzed starting from the specific ways of ending life in middle ages in general, and in Byzantium in particular<sup>7</sup>. At the same time, the violence manifested within the city, in which the population actively took part, was a topical subject for the historiography, especially since it arose in some critical moments of the history of Christian Oriental Empire<sup>8</sup>. A special interest was paid to the involvement of sovereigns in dispensing justice, especially in sentencing to death<sup>9</sup>. Those guilty of political crimes were subject to public denigration, being forced to parade riding a beast of burden, and the public was allowed to take part in the flagellation preceding the execution, some spectators even aggressing the convicts by beating, snatching the hair, splashing hot water or maculating them with various residues<sup>10</sup>. It was of topical interest the manner in which funerals were organized in the sphere of power, as they had

<sup>6</sup> *Theory in Landscape Architecture: a Reader*, eds. Simon Swaffield (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Ken Worpole, *Last Landscapes. The Architecture of the Cemetery in the West* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2003); Blanche M. G. Linden, *Silent City on a Hill: picturesque landscape of memory and Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> George T. Dennis, *Death in Byzantium*, in "Dumbarton Oaks Papers", 55/2001.

<sup>8</sup> Milton V. Anastos, *Vox populi voluntas Dei and the election of Byzantine Emperor*, in Idem, *Studies in Byzantine Intellectual History*, London, Variorum Reprints, 1979; Timothy E. Gregory, *Vox populi. A Popular Opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies on the Fifth Century A. D.*, Ohio State University Press, 1979.

<sup>9</sup> Helen Saradi, *The Byzantine Tribunals: Problems in the Application of Justice and State Policy (9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> c.)*, in "Revue des Études Byzantines", 53/1995; Jane Bishop, *The Death Penalty in the Byzantine Empire*, in "Acts: XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies". *Select papers: main and communications*, Moscow, 1991, volume I: History. Editors-in-Chief: Ihor Ševčenco and Gennady G. Litavrin. Corresponding Editor: Walter K. Hanak, Byzantine Studies Press, Inc., Shepherdstown, 1996; O. F. Robinson, *Penal Practice and Penal Policy in Ancient Rome*, London and New York, Routledge, 2007; Melissa Barden Dowling, *Clemency & Cruelty in the Roman World*, The University of Michigan Press, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Michael McCormick, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity. Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and Cambridge University Press, 1986.

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an impressive and public nature, unlike those for common individuals, which took place in an intimate framework<sup>11</sup>. The rituals of emperors' transition to the world beyond exceeded in splendor, those organized for any other representatives of the imperial family, being comparable only to the cheers on the occasion of enthroning and, just like them, were performed by and for the people<sup>12</sup>. On that occasion there were organized solemn evocations of the dead ruler's personal virtues and celebrations of the imperial power<sup>13</sup>. Another important category of preoccupations refer to the arrangement of funeral space along the Byzantine history<sup>14</sup>.

### *Historiography for Moldavia*

The Romanian research on thanatology traditionally aimed at depicting the funeral ritual from an ethnological perspective<sup>15</sup>. Though this direction of research has not been entirely abandoned, recent approaches suggest for a change of emphasis, embodied in the emergence of preference for investigating perceptions and attitudes towards death. One of the most popular topics refers to the manner in which different communities related to physical death<sup>16</sup> and to

<sup>11</sup> Panagiotis A. Agapitos, *Public and private death in Psellos: Maria Skleraina and Styliane Psellaina*, in "Byzantinische Zeitschrift", 101/2008, 2.

<sup>12</sup> Patricia Karlin-Hayter, *L'adieu à l'empereur*, in "Byzantion", LXI/1991, f. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Elena Velkovska, *Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources*, in "Dumbarton Oaks Papers", 55/2001, p. 37.

<sup>14</sup> Glanville Downey, *The Tombs of the Byzantine Emperors at the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople*, in "The Journal of Hellenic Studies", 79/1959; C. Mango, *Constantine's Mausoleum and Translation of Relics*, in "Byzantinische Zeitschrift", 83/1990, 1; Mark J. Johnson, *On the Burial Places of the Theodosian Dynasty*, in "Byzantion", LXI/1991, f. 2; Julia Burman, *Death and Grief in Early Byzantine World*, in "Acta Byzantina Fennica", vol. I/2002.

<sup>15</sup> We mention here few classical contributions of the Romanian ethnography: Teodor Burada, *Datinile poporului român la înmormântări (Funeral Traditions of the Romanian People)* (Iași, 1882); Simion Florea Marian, *Înmormântarea la români: Studiu etnografic (The Romanian Burial: Ethnographic Study)* (București, 1995); Ion Ghinoiu, *Lumea de aici, lumea de dincolo: ipostaze românești ale nemuririi (The World Here and the Underworld: Romanian Instances of Immortality)* (București, 1999).

<sup>16</sup> It should be cited here Marius Rotar's work, *Moartea în Transilvania în secolul al XIX-lea, vol. I-II (Death in Transylvania during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, vol. I-II)* (Cluj Napoca: Accent, 2006-2007).

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hypostasis of various attitudes to (heroes and politics of founding) funeral monuments<sup>17</sup>. From this perspective the contribution of archaeology should also be considered, as evidenced by various diggings' reports and monographs, which emphasize some parts of the urban funeral space. All these results have been revealed after several archaeological campaigns, but the unveiling of several funeral spaces has not been always emphasized, and this lack of interest can be also explained by the belated assertion of an archaeological research line specialized in exploring the cemeteries<sup>18</sup>.

The present approach aims at using the methodological and conceptual suggestions of the European and Romanian historiography and all types of sources in order to reconstitute a diachronic perspective on the Moldavian cemetery, from the view of its cultural-artistic dimension.

#### *The sources of the research and methodological framework*

There is no significant material evidence on the funeral space for the first part of Moldavian urban history, as the cemeteries disappeared and the only preserved burial places were inside cult places. For the medieval period, the sources necessary for this research are the documentary ones, to which those narrative and ethnologic are added, but the information provided by the latter require for a conjunction with written sources, as for them to be used in a regressive manner. Beginning with the 18<sup>th</sup> century sources multiply and the research benefits from various documents regarding the delimitation of funeral spaces and the ways of organizing the burial places. This evidence also follows the changes of the Moldavian cemetery since late middle ages to early modern period. At the same time, various categories of cemeteries can also be defined, and there is the possibility to identify where the poor were buried and establish special places for those

<sup>17</sup> See a recently published essential contribution: Andi Mihalache, *Mănuși albe, mănuși negre. Cultul eroilor în vremea dinastiei Hohenzollern (White Gloves, Black Gloves. The Cult of the Heroes during the Hohenzollern dynasty)* (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> Vlad-Andrei Lăzărescu, *Arheologia funerară. Schiță de abordare teoretică (Funeral Archaeology. Draft for a Theoretical Approach)*, in "Arheologia medievală (Medieval Archaeology)", VII/2008, 55-77.

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died on battlefields. Another category of sources is represented by the testimonies from the sphere of otherness, generated by missionaries, diplomats and the military passing through Moldavia. Each of the categories of sources mentioned above raises specific issues of interpretation, so it is necessary to permanently adapt the concepts and methodology. Thus, although the archaeological information is of great accuracy, it only reveals limited urban funeral images, as they come from the investigation of different objectives. In exploring the material evidence of old cemeteries, there should be taken into account that, during the middle ages, the ritual aspects following death were more important than the concerns for building some monumental structures to single out the individual burial area<sup>19</sup>. In other words, the spiritual stakes were significantly increased compared to those of social representation. Regarding the medieval West, the individualisation of the burial place and the built of some dedicated supra-structures were interpreted both in the context of eschatological concerns, which required that the bodies be singled in the perspective of the Final Judgement, and as a result of the emergence of the modern individualist thought<sup>20</sup>. The generalization of aspiration to monumentality was manifested with the change of perspective on the urban landscape, in which the elite representatives entered a competition for the display of prestige and wealth. Regarding the funeral space also, the hierarchy according to merit and wealth required that sumptuous tombs to be built, so as to allow the elite express its social pre-eminence<sup>21</sup>, as opposed to the traditional view that the dead ones' places in cemeteries should have depended

<sup>19</sup> Michel Vovelle, *La mort et l'Occident. De 1300 à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983) 453-461.

<sup>20</sup> Jean-Didier Urbain, *La société de conservation. Étude sémiologique des cimetières d'Occident* (Paris: Payot, 1978) 77-78.

<sup>21</sup> Henriette s'Jacob, *Idealism and Realism. A study of Sepulchral Symbolism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954) 196-197. Douglas J. Davies defined this social reality showing that "The status of the living has also been reflected in the architectural location of their corpses. The metropolis was reflected in its necropolis, with the rich possessing extensive statues and the poor marked by simple graves or even massed in group burials devoid of individual recognition", *A Brief History of Death* (Blackwell Publishing, 2005) 118.

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exclusively on their spiritual merits<sup>22</sup>. The Orthodox communities in Eastern Carpathians individualized their burial place in early times, but the propensity to monumentality manifested in a much later period, in comparison to the Western European space, since the elites were a small part of the population and the cities knew a modest urban development until the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>23</sup>.

Both in terms of quantity and quality of information required for this research, a crucial role belongs to the documentary sources which, beyond their primarily administrative nature, have the advantage of depicting with great accuracy the place of cemeteries within the urban landscape. Besides the statistical value of such data, the systematic analysis of all occurrences offers various possibilities for the reconstruction of urban cemeteries typology and of multiple interferences between the worlds of the living and dead. Thus, the documents depict constant concerns of the faithful for their dead relatives, revealed by necessary arrangements for the transition to eternal resting and organisation of burial places. The 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Moldavian chronicles are the main sources for the reconstruction of ritual aspects and the feelings that marked the transition beyond. Each episode described by the narrative sources must be assessed in the context of time, given that the subjected impulses of the authors determined the enhancing or diminishing of the echoes of various characters' deaths. At the same time, the testimonies of those who came into contact with the Moldavian space must be used after taking all the precautions of methodology required by the interpretation of the sources of otherness.

The results of the research on the evolution of the Moldavian cemetery depend, on a large extent, on the appeal to the Western historiography, as the comparative perspective can offer some suggestions for the thematic organization of the research, adequacy of methodology and usage of the sources. For the pre-modern Moldavia, various evidence for reconstructing the history of the

<sup>22</sup> Thomas A. Kselman, *Death and the Afterlife in Modern France* (Princeton University Press, 1993) 199.

<sup>23</sup> See Gheorghe Cliveti, *Evoluția urbanistică a Iașilor la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea și începutul secolului al XIX-lea (The Urban Evolution of Iași city in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century)*, in "Cercetări istorice", IX-X, 1978-1979, 387-401.

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funeral space requires both a careful selection of the material and corroboration of diverse information. The usage of all these data can fulfil all the objectives of this approach, namely the reconstruction of changes in the cemeteries' morphology and the evolution of the attitude towards funeral monuments in the Moldavian society.

### *The living and the dead in the Middle Ages*

In the Middle Ages Western Europe the belief in the resurrection of the dead led to a familiarity with the deceased, which explained the increased concern that any violation of the graves not to compromise the awakening on the Judgement Day and, thus, the lost of the right to eternal life<sup>24</sup>. Since this conception of existing life after death made to disappear the fear of the deceased that existed since ancient times, every church began to host tombs inside it and around them parish cemeteries aroused, being dedicated to the patron of the cult place, a phenomenon that took place both in cities and villages<sup>25</sup>. Thus, the cemeteries became integrated spaces of the Christian communities, closely related to churches, and by their proximity they suggested the idea of continuity<sup>26</sup>. At the same time, they were suitable places for showing the charitable vocation, as the fringes of society sought here for shelter and protection<sup>27</sup>. Living with Thanatos explained why in the pre-modern period the isolated graves inspired horror, being associated to uninhabited space, which was considered amorphous and bearer of negative features<sup>28</sup>. The grave gradually became a reference point for the identity of every family, being extremely important in proving its prestige. Thus, the dead were integrated both in the collective mind of the society and the family group to

<sup>24</sup> Michel Vovelle, Régis Bertrand, *La ville des morts. Essai sur l'imaginaire urbain contemporain d'après les cimetières provençaise* (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1983) 102.

<sup>25</sup> Philippe Ariès' studies are essential for describing the complex process in which medieval cemeteries aroused near urban churches.

<sup>26</sup> Laurențiu Rădvan, *At Europe's Borders. Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities* (Brill, 2010) 46.

<sup>27</sup> Constantin C. Giurescu, *Târguri sau orașe și cetăți moldovene. Din secolul al X-lea până la mijlocul secolului al XVI-lea (Moldavian Boroughs or Cities and Fortresses. From the 10<sup>th</sup> Century until the mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century)* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997) 123.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas, *Rites de mort*, 186-187.

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which they belonged. Meanwhile, the family maintained a relation of intimacy with the space where the dead laid, so that periodical ritual commemorations represented the best guarantee that the graves of their relatives were not forgotten. Just like in the case of properties, there were various items necessary for delimitation, and the mind of the young was exercised to retain them. It must be said that thanks to the genealogic awareness, the data about the succession of burials and marital status of the deceased was preserved for several generations. Especially for this reason, the neglect of the final resting place was a sign of its abandonment by the family, thus suggesting a rift between the living and the dead, which equalled an uprooting<sup>29</sup>. The burial place and the manner in which the funeral ritual was performed were extremely important, so if death occurred suddenly, during a journey, or in exile, the corpse had to be brought within the community cemetery. On the other hand, those with no link to a space or family were buried in mass graves. That was also the case of the corpses of those sentenced to death, except for the elite representatives, whose bodies were given back to their families after a while<sup>30</sup>. During the great epidemics also, when death was imminent, the traditional funeral ordinances were disturbed and social boundaries blurred<sup>31</sup>. Such an example was provided by the travel notes of the Finish scholar Gustav Orraeus, general doctor of the Russian army in the war of 1768-1774, charged by the military authorities to investigate the sanitary conditions of the army in the capital city of Moldavia. He noted that the city of Iași was haunted by plague<sup>32</sup>, the dead were transported by

<sup>29</sup> Vovelle, Bertrand, *La ville des morts*, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Bogdan-Petru Maleon, *Preliminary Notes on Public Exposure of Convicts' Corpses in Medieval Moldavia*, in "Istros", XVII, 2011, 285-304.

<sup>31</sup> *Cronica Ghiculeștilor. Istoria Moldovei între anii 1695-1754 (The Chronicle of the Ghiculescu Family. The History of Moldavia between 1695 and 1754)*, eds. Nestor Camariano and Ariadna Camariano-Cioran (București: Editura Academiei, 1965) 289.

<sup>32</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române (Foreign Travellers about the Romanian Countries)*, vol. X, partea I, îngrijită de Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (editor), (București: Editura Academiei, 2000) 61.

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undertakers<sup>33</sup> to a cemetery out of the urban perimeter, and those who showed signs of contamination were abandoned in a forest nearby<sup>34</sup>. So as to make a comparison, the plague in Marseilles in 1720, which struck the contemporary with its virulence, as it devoured almost half of the city population, determined that the funeral rites to be compressed, while the distinctions between the manner and place of burial of elite representatives and lower categories were blurred<sup>35</sup>. At the same time, the missing or unidentified bodies in wars caused some tension within the community, which explained why solutions were sought for setting up special burials places<sup>36</sup>.

In Western Europe, the parish cemetery and the church were the focus of social life, so that, until the modern era the first was both a place for dead and various meetings for the community members<sup>37</sup>. In the medieval Moldavia there was probably a competition for obtaining a place as close to church, although by the 18<sup>th</sup> century evidence on concerns for displaying funeral monuments was not preserved. Besides that the issue of salvation was essential in the concept of thanatology<sup>38</sup> it should also be taken into consideration the correlation between the housing during life and that for eternal rest, so that the modest appearance of the first involved a similar concept on the latter. Just like in the living environment, the dead relatives were placed in a perimeter and

<sup>33</sup> The charitable duty of ensuring the transition to the world beyond of the marginal, poor or sentenced to death was performed by the undertakers whose guild was connected, not incidentally, to the ecclesiastical authority. They were extremely useful when the cities were haunted by epidemics, especially because of the devastating effects of the plague.

<sup>34</sup> *Călători străini*, 66.

<sup>35</sup> Vovelle, *Mourir autrefois*, 32-33.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas, *Rites de mort*, 142.

<sup>37</sup> Urbain, *La société de conservation*, 72-73.

<sup>38</sup> Bogdan-Petru Maleon, *În drum spre „lumea de dincolo”. Ierarhii urbane reflectate în ritualul de înmormântare din Iași secolelor XVI-XVIII (On the Way to the “World Beyond”. Urban Hierarchy Reflected in the Burial Ritual in Iași during the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries)*, in *Relațiile dintre Țările Române și Bisericile Răsăritene în sec. XIV-XIX. Contribuții (The Relations between the Romanian Countries and Eastern Churches between the 14<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Contributions)*, eds. Petronel Zahariuc (Iași: Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2009) 165-166.

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only a single cross was raised for all<sup>39</sup>. Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century the West adopted the practice of exhuming the corpses, thus releasing the graves for other dead, and the bones were deposited in an ossuary near the church. This practice was determined by the fact that the limited area of the parish cemetery had to host a great number of deceased<sup>40</sup>. The situation was different in the medieval Moldavia, due to a specific process of modest urban population development. Thus, given the low density of the housing area, by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the cemeteries extended horizontally, but the need for establishing new parish cemeteries had never been disappeared. While large necropolis developed on the edge of the living area, the funeral space around churches was gradually reduced.

### *The Moldavian funeral urban space topography*

The analysis of the cemetery topography must consider that the Moldavian cities had no system of fortifications which to clearly delimit them from the surroundings, thus giving a certain fluidity to the urban space. This implied the existence of transition areas between the actual urban area (*borough hearth*) and the periphery (*borough boundary*)<sup>41</sup>, which was gradually embodied in the city<sup>42</sup>. Besides the space expansion, there was a continuous phenomenon of population transfer between neighbourhood rural area and the city<sup>43</sup>. During this process of integration, the churches and cemeteries around them became areas of community convergence<sup>44</sup>, which usually hosted

<sup>39</sup> See Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone. A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith Publisher, 2004).

<sup>40</sup> Thomas, *Rites de mort*, 213.

<sup>41</sup> Alexandru Andronic, *Iași până la mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea. Geneză și evoluție (The City of Iași Until the End of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Genesis and Evolution)* (Iași: Junimea, 1986) 57.

<sup>42</sup> Giurescu, p. 99-103; 144-145.

<sup>43</sup> Mircea D. Matei, *Studii de istorie orășenească medievală (Moldova, sec. XIV-XVI) (Studies of Medieval Urban History) (Moldavia, 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries)* (Suceava, 1970), 136.

<sup>44</sup> Cătălin Hriban, *Bisericile și relieful urban medieval al Iașilor. O încercare de topografie istorică (Churches and the Urban Landscape of Iași. A Historical Topography Try)*, în *România în Europa medievală (Între Orientul bizantin și Occidentul latin). Studii în onoarea profesorului Victor Spinei (Romanians in Medieval Europe*

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those with the same occupations<sup>45</sup>, so that most often neighbourhoods coincided with parishes<sup>46</sup>. This coagulation had also had a strong religious mark, as most of them settled around Orthodox churches, as indicated by the Catholic missionaries' notes during the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>47</sup>. Moreover, the ethnic multiplicity of the Moldavian city<sup>48</sup> was evidenced by various documents proving the existence of Armenian and Catholic cemeteries, located near the churches dedicated to these denominations<sup>49</sup>. The situation in Iași is better known as the main residence of the Moldavian sovereigns was an important reference point for those travelling in the area of Eastern Carpathians. Although it is not known the exact number of cult places here<sup>50</sup>, the majority of reports mention a number between 30, 60 and even 100 churches and monasteries<sup>51</sup>. The real number is probably closer to the first, as a recent study quantified 32 cult places for the period between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, of which only one third were exclusively parish centres, while the others were monastic places or shrines belonging to the princely family<sup>52</sup>. Archaeological research revealed that during the 16<sup>th</sup> century many cult places were built in Iași<sup>53</sup>, most of which certainly were parish churches. Near every new cult place a cemetery aroused, as proved by that downtown of

(*Between the Byzantine East and the Latin West*). *Studies in Honour of Professor Victor Spinei*), eds. Dumitru Țicu and Ionel Cândea (Brăila: Editura Istros a Muzeului Brailei, 2008) 769.

<sup>45</sup> Matei, *Studii*, 149.

<sup>46</sup> Doina Mira Dascălu, *Paralelă între caracteristicile urbane ale târgului Iașilor și cele ale ariilor europene de centru și de sud-est, în veacurile XVII-XVIII (Parallel between the Urban Particularities of Iași and Areas of Central and East Europe in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, in "Historia Urbana", 14 (1)/2006, 25.

<sup>47</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. V, îngrijit de Maria Holban (redactor responsabil), M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (București: Editura Științifică, 1973) 177-186; 226-252; 324-329.

<sup>48</sup> Matei, *Studii*, 146-147.

<sup>49</sup> Dan Bădărău și Ioan Caproșu, *Iașii vechilor zidiri. Până la 1821 (The Iași of Old Constructions. Until 1821)* (Iași: Casa Editorială Demiurg, 2007), 42-45.

<sup>50</sup> Andronic, *Iașii*, 60.

<sup>51</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. V, 236; 178; 327. vol. VI, partea I, îngrijită de M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1976) 66

<sup>52</sup> Hriban, *Bisericile*, 772.

<sup>53</sup> Al. Andronic, *Iașii până în secolul al XVII-lea în lumina datelor arheologice (Archeological Data on Iași City until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century)*, in "Cercetări istorice", 1970, 12.

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Iași a necropolis was found, dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and located around the church of St. Elias<sup>54</sup>. Starting from this typology, one can say that, as the city extended, funeral spaces developed around new cult places<sup>55</sup>. This reality is also attested by documents which mention that the number of cemeteries multiplied as new churches were founded. For example, on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1716, the prince Mihail Racoviță gave the church of St. Lazarus, which he had founded, a special place for dead burials, as it had no sanctuary<sup>56</sup>. The restoration of some cult places was followed by the rearrangement of cemeteries, as happened downtown of the Moldavian capital, where the cemetery of the White Church was refurbished and expanded in late 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the restoration of the sanctuary<sup>57</sup>. Most of the spiritual foundations were made of wood, like other urban dwellings<sup>58</sup>, and beginning with the 17<sup>th</sup> century the number of stone buildings gradually increased<sup>59</sup>. It was particularly the case of princely and boyar's cult places, many of which were rebuilt in stone<sup>60</sup>, while the wood was still used for suburbs churches. This archaeological information was also confirmed by foreigners who came in contact with the Moldavian realities<sup>61</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> Al. Andronic și Eug. Neamțu, *Cercetări arheologice pe teritoriul orașului Iași în anii 1956-1960 (Archaeological Research in Iași City Between 1956-1960)*, in "Arheologia Moldovei", II-III, 1964, 427.

<sup>55</sup> Al. Andronic și Eug. Neamțu, *Cercetări arheologice pe teritoriul orașului Iași*, 427.

<sup>56</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași (1691-1725) (Documents Regarding the History of Iași City)*, vol. III, eds. Ioan Caproșu (Iași: Casa Editorială Demiurg, 2000) 459/527.

<sup>57</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași (1661-1690)*, vol. II, 509/574.

<sup>58</sup> Giurescu, 105-106.

<sup>59</sup> Alexandru Artimon, *Civilizație medievală urbană din secolele XIV-XVII (Bacău, Tg. Trotuș, Adjud) (Urban Medieval Civilisation Between the 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries) (Bacău, Tg. Trotuș, Adjud) (Bacău-Iași: Editura "Documentis", 1998) 83-84; Alexandru Artimon, *Orașul medieval Trotuș în secolele XIV-XVII. Geneză și evoluție (The Medieval City of Trotuș between the 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Genesis and Evolution) (Bacău: Editura "Corgal Press", 2003) 175-178 and 230-231.**

<sup>60</sup> Bădărău, Caproșu, 373-374.

<sup>61</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. III, îngrijit de Maria Holban (redactor responsabil), M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, București, Editura Științifică, 1971, 352; vol. IV, 1972, p. 336-338; vol. V, p. 116-118.

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The existence of some urban cores dating back before the foundation of the Moldavian state<sup>62</sup> determined the overlap between the political power's structures and a pre-existing organization of space. Thus, the princely courts developed in a heavily inhabited area<sup>63</sup>, which involved several reconstructions that disturbed both housing and burial spaces. This explained the presence, as evidenced by archaeological findings, of an old cemetery near the princely court in Suceava<sup>64</sup> and of a similar one in Iași<sup>65</sup>. In terms of the medieval religious mind, any disorder of the world of the dead was a sign of bad omen. This belief was also sustained by the fact that cemeteries were seen as the most stable marks of urban topography, often invoked when the properties were delimited, as it was also the case in rural areas<sup>66</sup>. However, just because of the structural integration of burial places within the urban habitat, they developed along with the city, and some were abandoned after a while, as other funeral areas were arranged, as evidenced by the documentary recurrence of phrases such as "old cemetery" and "new cemetery". This dynamics was linked to the gradual overcrowding of cemeteries and relocation of parish cult places<sup>67</sup>. Archaeological findings revealed that some cemeteries in small urban settlements were used for long periods of time; for example, a necropolis near an old Romanian church in Târgul Trotuș continuously functioned between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>68</sup>. For these cases also, solutions were sought to avoid saturation, as noted during the archaeological diggings at the cemetery of St. Trinity church in Siret, located near the cult place. Numerous graves discovered here were

<sup>62</sup> Giurescu, 252.

<sup>63</sup> Andronic, *Iași până la mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea*, 47-48.

<sup>64</sup> Matei, *Studii*, 169-170.

<sup>65</sup> Al. Andronic, Eugenia Neamțu și M. Dinu, *Săpăturile arheologice de la Curtea Domnească din Iași (Archaeological Diggings at the Princely Court of Iași)*, in "Arheologia Moldovei", V, 1967, 199.

<sup>66</sup> *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, vol. XXIII (1635-1636), eds. Leon Șimanschi, Nistor Ciocan, Georgeta Ignat and Dumitru Agache (București: Editura Academiei, 1996) 475/414.

<sup>67</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași*, vol. VIII (1781-1790), 2006, 276/203.

<sup>68</sup> Al. Artimon, *Descoperirile arheologice de la Tg. Trotuș din anii 1983-1986 (Archaeological Findings at Tg. Trotuș Between 1983-1986)*, in "Carpica", XVIII-XIX, 1986-1987, 319-333.

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damaged both in ancient and more recent times, due to successive burials<sup>69</sup>. The superposition of two or three graves suggested that, on the one hand, the necropolis had not had enough space for expansion and, on the other, that in time exterior parts of older cemeteries faded, so that other graves were organized on them<sup>70</sup>. The phenomenon was also found in larger cities, such as Bacău, where near the Precista (Virgin) church there was a cemetery where the graves overlapped during the 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>71</sup>. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the city of Iași faced a significant territorial expansion<sup>72</sup>, which followed during the next century<sup>73</sup>, leading to an inevitable restructuring of funeral perimeters. Although the graves should have never been disturbed, the pressure of the urban expansion often troubled the silence of the dead. Gradual dissolution of old urban cemeteries was however accepted under certain conditions, as proved by a statement from a St. Nicholas parish church in Iași. In 1792, its priests complained that some citizens built houses on the church cemetery, without paying the required fees<sup>74</sup>. The pressure on the funerary space of this cult place determined that on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1800, the churchmen submitted a new complaint, that the scandalmongers around made a way through the church cemetery, so that graves opened and Christians' bones trampled, which was a major sin<sup>75</sup>. The proportion of this phenomenon was suggested by the fact that in late 18<sup>th</sup> century another church cemetery in Iași, namely Saints

<sup>69</sup> Victor Spinei and Elena Gherman, *Șantierul arheologic Siret (1993) (The Archaeological Site at Siret (1993))*, in "Arheologia Moldovei", XVIII/1995, 234.

<sup>70</sup> Victor Spinei și Costică Asăvoaie, *Date preliminare privind rezultatele săpăturilor din 1992 de la Siret (Preliminary Data on the Results of the Archaeological Excavations at Siret in 1992)*, in "Arheologia Moldovei", XVI/1993, 226.

<sup>71</sup> Al. Artimon și I. Mitrea, *Așezarea din secolele XIV-XV de la curtea domnească – Bacău (The Dwelling of the Princely Court in Bacău during the 14<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, in "Carpica", VIII/1976, 193.

<sup>72</sup> Al. Andronic și Eug. Neamțu, *Cercetări arheologice pe teritoriul orașului Iași în anii 1956-1960 (Archaeological Research in Iași City during 1956-1960)*, in "Arheologia Moldovei", II-III, 1964, 421-425.

<sup>73</sup> Al. Andronic și Eug. Neamțu, *Cercetări arheologice pe teritoriul orașului Iași în anii 1956-1960*, 426-427.

<sup>74</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași (1791-1795)*, vol. IX, 2007, 83/86. Litigiile între orășeni și cler în legătură cu spațiul acestei necropole au continuat și în perioada următoare (vol. VIII, 507-508/400)

<sup>75</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași (1796-1800)*, vol. X, 2007, 342/373.

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Theodores, was threatened by the expansion of the citizens nearby<sup>76</sup>. Another issue was the extension of markets places in the cemeteries space, as happened in the Moldavian capital during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Such cases opened the way of the outskirts cemeteries' expansion, which were initially projected for marginal or those killed by violent death. These funeral perimeters were set up around a place of worship, following the model of the old parish churches<sup>77</sup>, though the new edifices did not played this role anymore, but became exclusively funeral places. With the topographic separation between the living and the dead, the elite representatives maintained their right of being buried around urban churches, claiming that their privileges derived from their right of founding cult places. Thus, the traditional couple of the parish church and the cemetery attached to it was also broken in Moldavia, though later than in Western Europe<sup>78</sup>, and the necropolis gradually avoided clerical control and became an extension of the municipal administration.

\*

The analysis of the Moldavian urban funeral spaces can not be separated from the specific context of this civilisation, which showed a reduced appetite for urban life. For this reason, there was minimal difference in organizing rural and urban cemeteries, though as the number of population increased, a relative cluster of the latter occurred. In order to solve the issue, bodies were not exhumed and deposited in an *ossuary*, like in Western Europe, but successive burials were performed on the old places and new funeral spaces were established around later churches. Except for the elite, the graves were not monumentally arranged, but a simple cross was preferred, marking the burial place for many dead relatives. The identity of the burial place depended on the mind of the descendants, as an expression of the family genealogy consciousness, so that the destiny of each grave merged with that of the nation. In the absence of strong material reference

<sup>76</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași*, vol. VIII, 381-383/297.

<sup>77</sup> Rădvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 537.

<sup>78</sup> On the Western 18<sup>th</sup> century's efforts to take the cemeteries out of the cities' centre, as they were real threats to public hygiene and true focuses of disease, see Vovelle, *La mort et l'Occident*, 461-467.

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marks, the disappearance of some families was inevitably followed by the abandonment of the space consecrated to the dead, which was immediately taken over by other believers. The foundation of large buildings was a phenomenon which extended during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when extensive cemeteries were set up on urban outskirts. These new cemeteries were structured after the criteria that no longer regarded the spiritual merits of the deceased, but rather the economic status and civic prestige. In comparison to the Western world, the Moldavian space faced a great fall, regarding the manner in which the organization of space developed and the emergency of symbolic meanings of modernity.

### *Case study: Corpses of the Convicts*

According to the well-known medieval concept concerning the relation between body and soul, the posthumous destiny of each individual depended both on how the pious duties and demands of Christian morality were fulfilled during life and what happened with the perishable part of the being, after death occurred. From this point of view, the concern for the integrity of the carnal layer reached its climax when the mundane existence of each individual came to an end. The care for the body, ultimately the respect and veneration for it, or on the contrary, disregard, abandonment or even dismantling of corpses were manifestations with rich symbolic meanings, highly relevant for the urban area, due to the socio-cultural diversity specific to this milieu. No matter how unusual the death conditions were, corpses had to find their eternal rest underground, so as to reach the Final Judgment. Not incidentally, one of the greatest fears in old societies was that of not having the body buried<sup>79</sup>. Beyond the harsh conditions that disrupted the funeral ceremony, or even led to abandonment of corpses, there was fear that the body would not decompose, due to the sins performed. For example, in formulation of a curse, especially within testamentary provisions, it was revealed that those who violated the testators' last wishes were

<sup>79</sup> Jacques Le Goff, Nicolas Truong, *Une histoire du corps au Moyen Âge*, Paris, Éditions Liana Levi, 2003, p. 47-54.

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terrible punished so as their corpses never to rot<sup>80</sup>. Regardless of the manner the funeral was performed, as long as the bodies were buried in a place for Christian eternal rest, peace of the dead was not to be disturbed. Precisely for that reason, there were complaints addressed to the reign, especially from some priests, indicating that the development of urban life disturbed the cemeteries<sup>81</sup>. So as to obtain salvation it was both important how death occurred and what happened to lifeless bodies. In medieval Moldavian society, the funeral ritual was often disrupted either as a result of several being sentences to capital punishment, or in times of political unrest, wars, disasters or plagues. Moreover, extreme poverty often hindered the fulfillment of ordinances regarding the inanimate body.

The narrations of characters arriving in Moldavia during the 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> centuries with diplomatic, military or religious assignments showed how numerous the threats of daily life were. For example, the German humanist Johann Sommer related an episode, relevant in this regard, that occurred during the reign of Ioan Iacob Heraclid or Despot Voda (1561-1563). It was about the fate of a Greek merchant who, after being in an audience at the prince in the fortress of Suceava, he walked, on the nightfall, to his place of accommodation. While he fearless went down to the city, he was followed by criminals and killed, and his body was found the next morning on the road<sup>82</sup>. Although the author let the impression that the ruler was behind the assassination from a desire to seize the victim's goods, the incident showed how fragile the boundary between life and death in Moldavia, was in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the next century Fedor Dorohin sent a letter from

<sup>80</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași*, vol. VI, p. 491-492, nr. 564; p. 251, nr. 290; p. 551, nr. 626; vol. VIII, p. 395, nr. 305; vol. X, p. 66, nr. 69. See also Dan Horia Mazilu, *O istorie a blestemului*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2001, p. 387.

<sup>81</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași*, vol. X, p. 342, nr. 373.

<sup>82</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, îngrijit de Maria Holban (redactor responsabil), M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, București, Editura Științifică, 1970, p. 263-264. The same author mentioned the adventures of a merchant from Krakow in Moldavia, whom faced death several times, but each time he managed to dramatically save himself (p. 267).

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Cotnari to the secretary of the Congregation *De Propaganda Fide* showing that, in Moldavia the robberies and murders were frequent, and the ruler and his representatives could not stop them, as the criminals were robbing cities and villages one after another<sup>83</sup>. In a contemporary letter to the same addressee, Antonio Angelini from Campi noticed that it was almost impossible to live in Moldavia, due to the violence and killing<sup>84</sup>. In the fourth decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Italian monk Niccolò Barsi showed that the area East of the Carpathians was full of thieves, so that one could believe that all the inhabitants were born to live a thief's life<sup>85</sup>. The bishop Petru Bogdan Bakšić, apostolic vicar of the two Walachia, office in which he inspected Moldavia in 1641, noted in his report also the travel difficulties, which were primarily due to the large number of villains, who always made him live with fear of death. The feeling of imminent end was stressed by the fact that everywhere along the road he could see graves of people who had been killed by bandits<sup>86</sup>. A much more detailed and suggestive narration was that of the Syrian Deacon Paul of Aleppo, according to which God did not create on the earth a nation worse than that in Moldavia, where all people were thieves and murderers. Although he exaggerating related that the ruler Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) sent to death more than forty thousand thieves, he also noticed the gradualness of punishments of the prince's justice. Every Saturday he used to try the thieves, some of which were condemned and others freed. Usually, a guilty one was not sentenced to death after his first offense, but was beaten and marked with hot iron. For the second offence, one ear was cut, for the third, the other, and only the fourth time he was executed<sup>87</sup>. Although the Syrian deacon's narration did not illustrate a standard procedure of the justice in medieval Moldavia, as every

<sup>83</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. VII, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980, p. 326.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 335.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. V, Editura Științifică, 1973, p. 74.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 223.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. VI, partea I, 55-56.

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sovereign enjoyed some freedom of implementing the legal regulations<sup>88</sup>, even when related to the written law<sup>89</sup>, the description reproduced the spirit of how the sanctions were applied by the states' rulers<sup>90</sup>. Some other documentary sources confirmed the gradual approach of the princely justice until modern ages. An example in this regard was found in a document on May, 24<sup>th</sup>, 1783 through which the ruler Alexandru Constantin Mavrocordat (1782-1785) decided that the thieves who stole horses, oxen, or other valuables were to be released after the goods were recovered and their action written down in the registry. The second time they were caught thieving, they were to be beaten and carried on the streets of Iasi, and then sent to hard labor. According to law, if those actions were committed a third time, the doer was punished by death<sup>91</sup>. In Moldavia, the most common punishment for minor offenses was beating on the foot and back, performed in public squares, crossroads, or at the gate of the royal court, and the stick lashes varied between 1 and 300. Among the mutilations there was used blindness, cutting off the limbs, nose, or ears and stigmatization with the hot iron on the forehead, under a form of a bull<sup>92</sup>. A valuable source in this regard was offered by Georg Reicherstorffer, the envoy of Ferdinand of Habsburg in Moldavia during the

<sup>88</sup> Regarding the rulers' legal powers, there can be mentioned the testimony of an Englishman, Robert Bargrave, according to whom the state's rulers bore the whole judicial power in their hands and were the sole judges of all important causes (*Ibidem*, vol. V, p. 493). According to Petru Bogdan Bakšić the Moldavian rulers had the right to execute both boyars and other individuals, without taking into account anybody else (p. 233).

<sup>89</sup> On the ruler's judicial rights, see Valentin Al. Georgescu, Petre Strihan, *Judecata domnească în Țara Românească și Moldova (1611-1831)*, vol. I (1611-1740), partea I *Organizarea judecătorească*, București, Editura Academiei, 1979, p. 46-47.

<sup>90</sup> This freedom of the rulers' decision made some of those who came into contact with the Romanian area remain with the impression that the locals did not have written law, and the act of justice was referring only to the tradition interpreted by the ruler or judge (*Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 382; vol. V, p. 223).

<sup>91</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași*, vol. VIII, p. 201-202, nr. 152.

<sup>92</sup> Gh. Ungureanu, *Pedepsele în Moldova la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea și începutul secolului al XIX-lea. După documente inedite*. Extras din *Intregiri*, Buletinul Seminarului de Istoria Vechiului Drept Românesc, Iași, 1931, p. 4; See also Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, „La scara Mitropoliei”: *pedeapsa publică ca spectacol în societatea românească (1750-1834)*, in vol. *Spectacolul public între tradiție și modernitate. Sărbători, ceremonialuri, pelerinaje și suplicii*. Coordonatori: Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu și Măria Pakucs Willcocks, București, 2007, Institutul Cultural Român, 2007, p. 189-203.







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ruling of Petru Rareș, by noting that the princely justice produced a large number of blind and people with hands cut off<sup>93</sup>. A few decades later, Ioannes Belsius, the imperial liaison officer close to Despot, showed in the report to Maximilian of Habsburg on April, 8<sup>th</sup>, 1562, praising the prince's spirit of justice, that the ruler had not ordered mutilations, but only used the penalty of beating. Moreover, the author noticed a large number of people blind or without limbs, which made him say that the state could have been named "of the mutilated ones"<sup>94</sup>. Indirect evidence in this regard was provided by Iohann Mayer, emissary of Queen Christina of Sweden to the Tatar khan in Crimea, when crossing Moldavia in 1651. On that occasion, he noted that at the Moldavian ruler's insistence, the Tatar leader agreed to release 300 of the captives they had taken from East of the Carpathians, but chose only the very young or those lame and blind, thus keeping people in prime of life, who were able to work<sup>95</sup>. The Moldavian chronicles also confirmed these practices, citing the blinding, cutting the nose and ears, but referred less to the punishment of offenders and rather to the mutilations that rulers applied to boyars as political punishments<sup>96</sup>.

The capital punishments were done in Moldavia by hanging, decapitation, impalement, drowning, strangling and burning on the pyre<sup>97</sup>. Like everywhere in Europe, until the 18<sup>th</sup> century executions were to be performed as to have maximum of visibility<sup>98</sup>. In Moldavia, as well as in

<sup>93</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. I, îngrijit de Maria Holban, București, Editura Științifică, 1968, p. 201.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. II, p. 132.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. V, p. 453.

<sup>96</sup> *Cronicile slavo-române din sec. XV-XVI, publicate de Ioan Bogdan*. Ediție revăzută și completată de P. P. Panaitescu, București, Editura Academiei, 1959, p. 104, 119, 122. Miron Costin, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, în *Opere*. Ediție critică de P. P. Panaitescu, București, Editura de stat pentru literatură și artă, 1958, p. 156. On the pretender's mutilation, see Marco Bandini, *op. cit.*, p. 410 and Emil Dragnev, Virgil Pâslariuc, *Rhinocopia în tradiția bizantină și românească medievală*, în vol. *In honorem Ioan Caproșu. Studii de istorie*. Volum îngrijit de Lucian Leuștean, Maria Magdalena Székely, Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, Petronel Zahariuc, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2002, p. 95-109.

<sup>97</sup> Gh. Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, p. 4. In Europe there is a wide literature on this topic. See, in this regard, *Capital Punishment. A Bibliography with Indexes*, C. Cliff (Editor), New York, 2003.

<sup>98</sup> Robert Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (XV<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*. *Essai*, Paris, Flammarion, 1991, p. 249-255.

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Walachia, they were made in front of the royal court and other highly frequented urban places, especially in fair days, when the publicity was at maximum extent<sup>99</sup>. The information supplied by various clerics and diplomats arriving East of the Carpathians revealed that there were organized fairs on the occasion of all major religious holidays<sup>100</sup>, which provided the opportunity for performing the punitive shows. Moreover, according to Georg Reicherstorffer' narration, executions in Moldavia took place almost every day, which was, obviously, an exaggeration<sup>101</sup>. The application of the capital punishment was followed by the dismantling of corpses and their exposure, for at least three days. The period corresponded to the one the funeral rituals usually took place<sup>102</sup>, so that the corpses' exposure was intended to impede the funeral ceremony, thus depriving the condemned ones of the perspective of salvation. The type of capital punishment and enforcement of judgments were related both to the severity of committed acts and social status of perpetrators. The crime of lese majesty was the worst, since the action taken against the sovereign was equal to one against the state and, thus, against the order which governed the entire society. From this point of view, the punishment had to have an extreme character, which involved the convict's physical destruction in an agonizing ordeal, which should have emphasized the physical side of the leaders' domination on the subjects. The hardness of tortures depended on the extent to which the convict's actions directly harmed the monarch. Thus, the claim of fraudulent access to the supreme dignity was to draw a punishment proper for the criminals, and the gravity of the gesture was to be updated by an excess of force in the punitive performance<sup>103</sup>. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an educated clergy like Antonio Maria Graziani, pontifical secretary, emissary of the Roman curia

<sup>99</sup> See Ovidiu Cristea, „Cu acet feliu de pompă i-au dus”. Un „spectacol” pentru un caz de „hiclenie” în veacul al XVII-lea, in vol. *Spectacolul public între tradiție și modernitate*, p. 165-173.

<sup>100</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. V, p. 281.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. I, p. 201.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. V, p. 77; vol. VI, partea I, p. 71.

<sup>103</sup> Michel Foucault, *Abnormal. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975*. Translated by Graham Burchell, New York, Picador, 2003, p. 94-95.

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and biographer of cardinal Commendone, noted, in a biography devoted to Despot that, although the Moldavians worshiped their rulers as they worshiped God, they did not hesitate to kill them when the latter strayed away from their duties<sup>104</sup>. Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, those deemed as usurpers or rulers accused of tyranny were executed and their bodies were exposed in places that ensured maximum visibility. The chronicler Grigore Ureche showed that Petru Rareș (1527-1538; 1541-1546) ordered the execution by beheading of Alexandru Cornea (1540-1541) in Galați, as he was considered a usurper on the throne of Moldavia<sup>105</sup>. According to the testimony of mercenaries who betrayed Despot in the siege of Suceava<sup>106</sup>, when he found out that the defenders decided to leave him, he asked them several times to cut his head off, thus avoiding being subjected to a horrible death. He even knelt and uncovered his neck, but the ungrateful soldiers did not hear his lamentations<sup>107</sup>. Johann Sommer related how, after the capitulation of the city, Despot was beheaded and his corpse was buried like that of an ordinary man<sup>108</sup>. Another case from the end of that century was that of the former ruler Ștefan Răzvan (1595), who was brought before Ieremia Movilă (1595-1606) who had him impaled, a degrading punishment for a former ruler, who, while in agony, also assisted his former supporters being executed<sup>109</sup>. According to Miron Costin, before execution, about which he believed it was a beheading, in agreement with the convict's condition, the sovereign reprimanded the usurper, showing that the punishment was also for the harm he had

<sup>104</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 383.

<sup>105</sup> Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*. Ediție îngrijită, studiu introductiv, indice și glosar de P. P. Panaitescu. Ediția a II-a revăzută, București, Editura de Stat pentru Literatură, 1958, p. 162.

<sup>106</sup> Adolf Armbruster, *O relatare inedită a morții lui Despot-Vodă*, in "Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie", VII, 1974, p. 323.

<sup>107</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 303, 306, 307.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*, II, p. 268.

<sup>109</sup> For the mentioning by contemporary sources regarding that Ștefan Răzvan was impaled, see Constantin Rezachevici, *Cronologia critică a domnilor din Țara Românească și Moldova (a. 1324-1881) I. Secolele XIV-XVI*, București, Editura Academiei, 2001, p. 799, to which it can be added the narration of comander Stanislaw Chanski (*Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. III, 1971, p. 662).

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done to Aron (1591-1595) in the past<sup>110</sup>. In the scenario described by the Moldavian chronicler there are to be identified two attitudes against the usurpers or tyrants deposed of power, consisting in addressing reproaches for disturbing the states' order or for bad governance<sup>111</sup> and solidarity with the ancestors through the retroactive application of penalties for lese-majesty. A case similar to the latter point of view was rendered by *Life of Gaspar Grațiani*, by John Jancović, one of the captains serving the adventurer arrived in Moldavia. According to the narrator, Grațiani's successor exemplarily punished those guilty of his assassination<sup>112</sup>. Miron Costin also narrated the episode focusing on the idea that the betrayal was punished because the ruler had to be protected, as his power came from God<sup>113</sup>.

Treacherous boyars (guilty of *hiclenie*) were usually executed by beheading, a punishment considered as appropriate for their social status<sup>114</sup>. The first historical references on the decapitation of some traitors among the social elite referred to the execution by Ștefan cel Mare order, in Vaslui borough, on January, 16<sup>th</sup>, 1471<sup>115</sup>. For the following period also, internal narrative sources indicated beheading for treason, but the concise nature of this information does not allow us see what happened to the convicts' bodies during and after the tortures ended. Thus, we only find out that from the order of Ștefan IV (1517-1527), the high official Luca Arbure found his end in the city of Hârlau<sup>116</sup> and a group of boyars were punished in the borough of Roman<sup>117</sup>. On the same hand, the sources related that Iliăș Rareș (1546-1551) beheaded several great boyars,

<sup>110</sup> Miron Costin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>111</sup> The verbal duel was a practice frequently attested in the two Romanian principalities (Ovidiu Cristea, *op. cit.*, p. 165-173).

<sup>112</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, IV, p. 557.

<sup>113</sup> Miron Costin, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

<sup>114</sup> Alexandra-Marcela Popescu, *Mărturii privind pedeapsa cu moartea pentru hiclenie în Țara Moldovei*, in "Opțiuni Istorice", IX, no. 1-2, 2008, p. 115-118.

<sup>115</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 96. Explanations on this episode in Ștefan S. Gorovei, Maria Magdalena Székely, *Prințes omni laude maior. O istorie a lui Ștefan cel Mare*, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2005, p. 77-79.

<sup>116</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146.

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including hetman Petru Vartic<sup>118</sup>. The chronicler Grigore Ureche narrated one of the first episodes on the performing of execution, with the precise purpose of providing an example, consisting in the stabbing of 47 boyars who had been invited by Alexandru Lăpușneanu (1552-1561; 1564-1568) to a fake feast<sup>119</sup>. Internal sources presented Ion vodă (1572-1574) as the most inventive ruler regarding the penalties imposed to his opponents, as he resorted to beheading, skinning, mangling into four pieces and burying them alive<sup>120</sup>. At the same time, the tensions between the churchmen and Ion vodă took extreme forms and the chronicler Azarie showed that the ruler burned bishop Gheorghe on the pyre and seized his great wealth, because he was greedy and stingy<sup>121</sup>. The information was taken over by Grigore Ureche, according to whom, in addition to avarice, the high clergy would have been also guilty of sodomy<sup>122</sup>. That was a unique case in Moldavia's history, when a hierarch was burned on the pyre under such charges<sup>123</sup>. The character in question was probably the former metropolitan Gheorghe II from Bistrița, head of the Moldavian church during the ruling of Ștefan Rareș (1551-1552)<sup>124</sup>. As known, this churchman was an enemy of the Lăpușneanu family, reason for which the treatment he was subjected could not be linked to the attempts of Bogdan IV Lăpușneanu (1568-1572) to take back the reign<sup>125</sup>. It

<sup>118</sup> *Cronicile slavo-române...*, p. 104. On the debates regarding the reasons for this executions, see Maria Magdalena Székely, *Sfetcnicii lui Petru Rareș. Studiu prosopografic*, Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2002, p. 317-319.

<sup>119</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 190. On the circumstances of this suppression and the number of murdered boyars, Gheorghe Pungă, *Țara Moldovei în vremea lui Alexandru Lăpușneanu*, Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 1994, p. 109.

<sup>120</sup> *Cronicile slavo-române...*, p. 149. For details, see Nicolae Grigoraș, *Politica internă a lui Ioan vodă cel Viteaz*, in “Revista de Istorie”, 24, 1974, no. 6, p. 874-875.

<sup>121</sup> *Cronicile slavo-române...*, p. 149.

<sup>122</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

<sup>123</sup> Nicolae Grigoraș, *Politica internă a lui Ioan vodă cel Viteaz*, in “Revista de Istorie”, 24, 1974, no. 6, p. 878.

<sup>124</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *Contribuții la istoria Mitropoliei Moldovei în secolul al XVI-lea*, in „Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei”, LI, 1975, no. 3-4, p. 233-235.

<sup>125</sup> Bogdan-Petru Maleon, *Clerul de mir din Moldova secolelor XIV-XVI*, Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2007, p. 205.

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seemed that a great part of the clergy was on the latter's side<sup>126</sup>, which prompted Ion vodă to initiate a series of persecutions, during which, as Grigore Ureche claimed, many monks were imprisoned, while some representatives of the clerical elite were exemplarily punished, like Iacob Molodeț, abbot at Slatina and priest Cozma, who were buried alive<sup>127</sup>. The metropolitan Teofan II was forced to leave from the leading of the Moldavian church and took refuge in Transylvania<sup>128</sup> after the failure of the expedition undertaken by Bogdan IV in March-early April 1572 in Moldavia<sup>129</sup>. Later the same century, Aron vodă put down a plot against him by beheading some remarkable boyars at his court<sup>130</sup>. Much richer in details was the narration of French mercenary Charles of Joppecourt, who related the quarrel of Ștefan Tomșa II (1611-1615; 1621-1623) with the Moldavian boyars, after which three of them were impaled "as they were notorious robbers" and 75 beheaded<sup>131</sup>. Facing the rebellion of some of those who escaped that action, the ruler made appeal to the help of the population in Iași, promising them a general exemption of taxes<sup>132</sup>. The fight in October 1615 took place nearby the city, in present days Păcurari quarter, and ended with the victory of the ruler and the citizens<sup>133</sup>. Many of the insurgents were captured and Tomșa had them suppressed in a degrading manner, by impalement or hanging, ordeals meant to scare the potential opponents of the ruler<sup>134</sup>. Beyond the exaggerated number of victims who appeared in

<sup>126</sup> Const. A. Stoide, *Frământări în societatea moldovenească la mijlocul secolului al XVI-lea*, in „Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie <<A. D. Xenopol>> Iași”, XI, 1974, p. 83.

<sup>127</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>129</sup> Constantin Rezachevici, *op. cit.*, p. 697.

<sup>130</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 220-221.

<sup>131</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. IV, p. 390.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. IV, p. 390.

<sup>133</sup> Aurel Iacob, *Țara Moldovei în vremea lui Ștefan Tomșa al II-lea*, Brăila, Muzeul Brăilei & Editura Istros, 2010, p. 107.

<sup>134</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. IV, p. 390; Miron Costin, *op. cit.*, p. 62. On the internal and external political circumstances in which those executions were ordered, see, Constantin Rezachevici, *Politica internă și externă a Țărilor Române în primele trei decenii ale secolului al XVII-lea* (I), in “Revista de Istorie”, 38, 1985, no. 1, p. 21-22.

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many of these accounts, it was clear that Moldavians sovereigns exceptionally resorted to some execution methods inappropriate to boyars' social condition, just to humiliate his opponents. That situation was also noticed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the Turkish traveler Evlia Celebi, who stated that, if a ruler's servant rebelled, he no longer had the right to defend himself, as the only fate he could have expected, regardless of his condition, was public execution by impalement through ribs<sup>135</sup>. It can be said that, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Moldavian rulers became more merciful, using the public execution of the elite members guilty of political offences, especially in cases of relapse. Thus, *Cronica Ghiculeștilor* related the conspiracies of Iordachi Costachi against Grigorie II Ghica (1726-1733; 1735-1741; 1747-1748), during the turmoil caused by Tatars in 1731 and the fact that the ruler's men captured the head of the conspiracy and the majority of his acolytes<sup>136</sup>. As Iordache had proved before, he was capable of treason and the prince had forgiven him, but this time the action could not have been overlooked, so he was sent to death by beheading and the sentence put into practice in front of the royal court in Iași<sup>137</sup>. The other plotters were forgiven, as they were in their first offence and sworn on the Gospel for everlasting faith to the sovereign<sup>138</sup>. During the same period, it was usually that the suppression of some conspirators took the form of assassinations, which excluded public torment, as it was the well-known case of chronicler Miron Costin, in late December 1691<sup>139</sup>. However, the punitive performing was inevitable when the actions against the ruler had a military aspect, even if they were led by foreigners. A spectacular episode in this regard took place after the defeat of Austrian troops led by commander François Ernaut (Ferenț), who, in

<sup>135</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. VI, partea a II-a, îngrijită de Mustafa Ali Mehmet, p. 486.

<sup>136</sup> *Cronica Ghiculeștilor. Istoria Moldovei între anii 1695-1754*. Text grecesc însoțit de traducerea românească, cu prefață, glosar și indice. Ediție îngrijită de Nestor Camariano și Ariadna Camariano-Cioran, București, Editura Academiei, 1965, p. 337.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 337-339.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 339.

<sup>139</sup> C. A. Stoide, *În legătură cu sfârșitul cronicarului Miron Costin și al fratelui său Velicico Costin*, in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie <<A. D. Xenopol>> Iași", XVIII, 1981, p. 575-582.

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January 1717, undertook an expedition in Iași, at the instigation of claimant Vasile Ceaurul<sup>140</sup>, in order to capture the ruler Mihail Racoviță (1703-1705; 1707-1709; 1715-1726). The latter found out about this action only in the last moment, and he only had time to flee to Cetățuia, one of the hills near the city and called the Tatars across the city to help him<sup>141</sup>. When the hostilities ended with the victory of the Moldavian rulers and his allies, the latter brought the defeated commander with his neck tied in a rope, before Mihail Racoviță<sup>142</sup>. After the ruler reproached the plot against him, he decided to follow some Turks' advice to redeem him and apply a punishment appropriate for the usurpers, in order to give an example for those who wanted to overthrow the principles of Moldavia<sup>143</sup>. Shortly after he paid the price demanded by the Tatars, forced the hostage to kneel in front of his seat, in the lower house of the lady, position the criminals had to adopt when they were judged by the sovereigns<sup>144</sup>. The ruler himself punched him several times, then gave him to Ali-aga, who took him in front of the large gate of the court and cut his head off and his body remained on the ground for several days. Thereafter, Mihail Racoviță ordered that the former combatants were gathered from forests around Iași and hanged. Dimitrașcu, the nephew of the abbot of the monastery of Cașin, was burned alive, as he had plotted with the invaders to overthrow him. The narrative source showed that all the rebels were properly punished, due to the divine right judgment<sup>145</sup>. Moreover, the source related the modality of punishments' differentiation according

<sup>140</sup> On this character, see Petronel Zahariuc, *Țara Moldovei în vremea lui Gheorghe Ștefan voievod (1653-1658)*, Iași, Editura Universității <<Al. I. Cuza>>, 2003, p. 512-513.

<sup>141</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu, *Țările Române în sistemul relațiilor internaționale medievale (secolele XVII-XVIII)*, București, Editura Fundației <<România de Măine>>, 2006, p. 103-104.

<sup>142</sup> *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, p. 207.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209.

<sup>144</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. VII, p. 263.

<sup>145</sup> *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, p. 209.

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to the guilt and the condition of convicts, whose corpses were gathered on the battle field and covered with land, and on the mound there was raised a cross mentioning the event<sup>146</sup>.

The penalties for people of inferior social condition, who conspired against the rulers, differed from those for the elite's representatives. An example in this regard was provided by Ioannes Belsius, who showed in a report on May, 4<sup>th</sup>, 1562 that Despot ordered the impalement of a spy of Alexandru Lăpușneanu, who came from Constantinople to kill the prince, after he confessed his guilt in the great square<sup>147</sup>. A very tough treatment was also applied for those who attempted to the Moldavian rulers' relatives. In this regard, it can be mentioned the spectacular episode narrated by Charles de Joppecourt, according to whom, on December, 26<sup>th</sup>, 1615 a Moldavian priest, sustainer of Ștefan Tomșa II, would have poisoned Mihail Wiśniowiecki, during the Eucharist. The seriousness of the crime was even greater, as it had been committed by a churchman, who used the sacrament to kill the brother in law of the Moldavian ruler Alexandru Movilă (1615-1616)<sup>148</sup>. For that reason, the culprit was soon subjected to terrible and long lasting tortures. Particularly for that execution, it was prepared a wire chair, on which the convict was immobilized, and around it, fire was set on a distance which to allow the extension of a long ordeal. After more than twelve hours of agony, he was heard shouting with horrible cries and moaning in despair because of the terrible pain he endured before dying<sup>149</sup>. Although the story was not mentioned by any other historical source, some of which even noted the Polish prince's death

<sup>146</sup> *Un monument uitat. Crucea lui Ferentz*. Text și selecția documentelor de Silviu Văcaru, Iași, Editura <<Alfa>>, 2004, p. 12-16.

<sup>147</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 155.

<sup>148</sup> Prince Mihail Wiśniowiecki was married to Irina (Reghina), daughter of Ieremia Movilă (Ștefan S. Gorovei, *Sângele Movileștilor*, în *Movileștii. Istorie și spiritualitate românească*, vol. I „Casa noastră Movilească”, Sfânta Mănăstire Sucevița, Editura Mușatinii, 2006, p. 306).

<sup>149</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. IV, p. 401.

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by natural causes<sup>150</sup>, the execution can be considered as emblematic for the medieval ruling's preference for performing well developed shows.

All the above analyzed examples showed that the princely justice was of implacable nature, and the punitive scenarios were enhanced when the offences harmed the sovereign. The limits by which there could work the mechanisms of executing the punishments were put in a different light but an anonymously narration in 1542, on Petru Rareș's expedition in Transylvania. It assigned to the Moldavian ruler the intention to exhume and hang Ioannes Zápolya's body, as he had died a year before, the Moldavian prince arguing that only such a sentence was appropriate for his obvious traitor's corpse<sup>151</sup>. Taken as unique, that episode might seem strange, if other evidence would not provide examples of realization of similar intentions. The epic *Ruinae Pannonicae*, by Christianus Schesaeus, Transylvanian poet of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, related that Despot's body was smash by the winners, after which they dipped their swords in his blood and buried him in an anonymous tomb<sup>152</sup>. According to the same source, after returning on Moldavia's throne, Alexandru Lăpușneanu ordered that Despot' corpse be taken out of the ground and put in a sack, which was to be hung in a high tree, in which there were hung the condemned robbers<sup>153</sup>. This exhumation can be considered perfectly possible, given the information from the passage dedicated to Despot and added by Simion Dascălul in Grigore Ureche's chronicle. According to this source, Alexandru Lăpușneanu's spies were there when the adventurer occupying the Moldavian throne was suppressed and buried, after which they went to their ruler to tell him where the tomb was<sup>154</sup>.

<sup>150</sup> Aurel Iacob, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>151</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. I, p. 392.

<sup>152</sup> Johannes Sommer și Christianus Schesaeus, *Scrieri alese*. Introducere, schițe bibliografice, text latin, traducere și comentarii: Traian Diaconescu, Iași, Editura Junimea, 1988, p. 176-177. Iohannes Sommer claimed that the beheaded body of Despot was buried like that of an ordinary man in a cemetery in Suceava (*Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 268).

<sup>153</sup> Christianus Schesaeus, *op. cit.*, p. 178-179.

<sup>154</sup> Grigore Ureche, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

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From the perspective of this analysis, it must be interpreted an event that Dimitrie Cantemir mentioned in a biography devoted to his father, Constantin Cantemir (1685-1692). The Moldavian scholar prince talked about how Grigore Ghica (1660-1664; 1672-1673), now in his second reign on the Walachian throne, put into practice a sentence of hanging of an old captain, whose treason had been proved by Constantin Cantemir. According to the quoted source, when finding out that he died after three days of detention, the prince said “mortuus est ut homo, sed ut perfidus desertor debet etiam mortuus suspendi”. Thus, although the prisoner was no longer alive, he was not buried, but his corpse hung, so that the princely sentence was put in practice<sup>155</sup>. These episodes can be deciphered starting from the inextricable link between the physical nature of the body and the symbolic significance of the punitive act. Therefore, if the convict’s body was not punished and publicly exposed according to the sentence, it equaled the cancellation of the penalty, which was contempt to the princely power. Even if many of the mentioned actions were never put into practice, the fact that they were considered possible, by various narrators, illustrated a certain attitude on the bodies of those considered to have attempted to the sovereign. Thus, these evocations revealed the need for bodies, even if lifeless, to be subjected to punitive rituals, in order to mark the superiority of the sentencing court.

The bodies of those guilty of political crimes were usually taken by relatives and buried after the ordeal, but only after they had been exposed for a certain period to public view. The monk Niccolò Barsi provided some information particularly suggestive in this regard, that the habit in Moldavia asked for the decapitated body to be left for three days on the bare ground<sup>156</sup>. The scholarly prince Dimitrie Cantemir pretended that it was also the case of Velicico Costin, whose

<sup>155</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *Viața lui Constantin Cantemir*. Text stabilit de Radu Albala. Introducere de Const. C. Giurescu, București, Editura Minerva, 1973, p. 20-21.

<sup>156</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. V, p. 74.

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beheaded body was restored to his family after three days, so as to be buried<sup>157</sup>. While that was the case for public executions, the bodies of those killed in a hurry, out of public performances, were often destroyed. Thus, according to a Szekler anonymous in 1552, the ruler Ștefan Rareș ordered the murder of several Turks who were there in the country and their bodies were thrown in water or kiln<sup>158</sup>. After losing the ruling of Moldavia in favor of Alexandru Movilă, in November 1615<sup>159</sup>, Ștefan Tomșa II took refuge in Brăila. The ruler of Buda, Kadezade Ali-Pasha, sent, tied up, to Brăila, the envoys who had been sent in Istanbul by the new ruler in Iasi, on rounding routes, in territories governed by him. According to Charles Joppecourt, Tomșa ordered that the hostages to be executed in one evening, after the dinner, and their bodies thrown into the Danube<sup>160</sup>. Either the boyars did not often have a better fate, so that, according to captain John Jancović, the ruler Alexandru Iliăș punished Gaspar Grațiani's killers by cutting their arms and legs at the knees, after which the bodies were thrown into a frozen river<sup>161</sup>. Regarding that episode, Miron Costin claimed that the killers were beheaded and their corpses thrown away<sup>162</sup>. The former prince was buried as a Christian, as it had been found dismembered in a forest, where it had been left by the assassins who intended to offer his head to the new ruler, believing that it would be exposed in a highly visible place. In fact, during the history of Moldavia, the rulers used to announce the victory against their rivals by exposing various parts of their bodies, especially skulls, to public view. How was it possible for such a thing to be accomplished, without the organic matter to undergo a rapid degradation? After boyars' betrayal, in June 1574, prince Ioan was forced to surrender himself<sup>163</sup>.

<sup>157</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *op. cit.*, p. 188-189.

<sup>158</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 100.

<sup>159</sup> Constantin Rezachevici, *Politica internă și externă a Țărilor Române...*, p. 22.

<sup>160</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. III, p. 398.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. IV, p. 557.

<sup>162</sup> Miron Costin, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

<sup>163</sup> Constantin Cihodaru, *Inadvertențe privind cercetarea domniei lui Ioan vodă cel Viteaz în Moldova (1572-1574)*, in „Cercetări istorice” (serie nouă), VII, 1976, p. 113-122.

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with the condition to be brought alive in front of the Sultan to justify his acts, but the Ottoman commander Yusuf Aga Cigalazadé decided to kill him. He was beheaded, his head stuck in a thorn, after which the body was tied to two camels and broke into pieces, and the Turkish soldiers soaked their yathagans in his blood<sup>164</sup>. Maciej Strykowski, Andrew Taranowski's companion, related that, on the return from the mission in the Ottoman capital, in 1575, he saw Ioan's head exposed on the gates of Bucharest<sup>165</sup>. On the same hand, according to the chronicler Miron Costin, the ruler Ieremia Movilă ordered that his rival Ștefan Răzvan's head be exposed in a pole in the city of Suceava<sup>166</sup>. Considering that, after the executions, the heads were often exposed to public gaze for a long time, there appears the question of the concrete way in which their decay could be prevented. A first answer in this regard was provided by Ioannes Sommer that the Turks took Despot's head, which they skinned and filled with straw, then stuck it in a pole so as to take it to Constantinople<sup>167</sup>. Almost two and a half centuries later, in 1799, Constantin Hangerli tragically ended his reign in Walachia, as we learn from *Hronograful* by Dionisie Eclesiarhu. He was deadly injured by the Sultan's men sent to dethrone him, who beheaded him while he was still in agony and took off the jewels and clothes, abandoning him naked in the yard, where stayed overnight<sup>168</sup>. The executioner come from Constantinople skinned his head, washed it from blood, filled it with cotton and then placed it on a tray to show it to the wife of the former prince<sup>169</sup>. The source showed that the Turkish murderers' intention was to burn the treasury bills over the body of the former ruler, a show which was to be performed in public place so the population of the city to be

<sup>164</sup> Dinu C. Giurescu, *Ioan vodă cel Viteaz*, București, Editura Științifică, 1966, p. 172.

<sup>165</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 455.

<sup>166</sup> Miron Costin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>167</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 268.

<sup>168</sup> Dionisie Eclesiarhu, *Scrieri alese. Hronograf. Predoslovii*. Ediție, prefață, note, glosar și bibliografie de Natalia Trandafirescu, București, Academia Română, Fundația Națională pentru Știință și Artă, Institutul de Istorie și Teorie Literară „G. Călinescu”, 2004, p. 93.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 93-94.

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present. However, some officials of the deceased offered them some money to give up the show and the Turks agreed with the Christian burial of the corpse<sup>170</sup>. The head was taken from the lady's house and sent to Istanbul where, as the narrator claimed, the Sultan asked to be proved, by testimonies, that it belonged to the former prince<sup>171</sup>.

Starting from the above mentioned examples, one may say that the bodies' punishment through an action with emphasis on those parts symbolizing the crime, also determined the punishment of the soul, according to medieval concept regarding the correspondence between carnal layer and spiritual principle<sup>172</sup>. As any deviation was seen as a disruption of order guaranteed by sovereign, the sanction should have taken the frightening aspect given by the destruction of the convict's body, which to symbolically restore the reign's integrity<sup>173</sup>. Eloquent in this regard was that the traditional legal procedure also physically marked the difference between rulers and judged criminals, who, during the trial, were forced to kneel before the sovereign<sup>174</sup>. As for the princely power to achieve its communication goals, the execution of sentences were supposed to take place as publicly as possible, and the delinquents' bodies be subjected to a real "économie de l'humiliation"<sup>175</sup>, during which the connection between offence and corporal punishment should have been as obvious as possible. For example, the imperial agent Ioannes Belius showed, in the report on April, 13<sup>th</sup>, 1562, that Despot ordered the execution in

<sup>170</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 94.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 94-95.

<sup>172</sup> This correspondence was also met in other European punitive systems, like the Venetian one (Guido Ruggiero, *Constructing Civic Morality, Deconstructing the Body: Civic Rituals of Punishment in Renaissance Venice*, in vol. *Riti e rituali nelle società medievali*, a cura di Jacques Chiffolleau, Lauro Martines, Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto, 1994, p. 180).

<sup>173</sup> Michel Foucault, *op. cit.*, p. 94-96.

<sup>174</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. VII, p. 263.

<sup>175</sup> Michel Porret, *Corps flétri – corps soigné. L'attouchement du bourreau au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in vol. *Le corps violenté. Du geste à la parole*. Etudes réunies et présentées par Michel Porret, Genève, Librairie DROZ S.A., 1998, p. 21-22.

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Roman of some Voinea, sent by Alexandru Lăpușneanu to murder him<sup>176</sup>. After being sentenced to death, the culprit was carried tied up through various cities, continuously repeating on the road: “I was a traitor to the ruler and now suffer a just punishment; those who would try the same thing are to be punished the same way”<sup>177</sup>. Thus, the admission of the guilt within the public ritual of the punishment confirmed the rightness of the sentence and was meant to prevent some similar crimes in the future<sup>178</sup>. The intention of giving an exemplary nature to the punishment was also emphasized by Paul of Aleppo, according to whom, the beating and marking with hot iron were primarily meant to make the crime known<sup>179</sup>. He also related that, in Moldavia, the one sentenced to death were first taken to church for confession and Eucharist, then naked and hung, all the while being accompanied by a great number of people<sup>180</sup>. The same scenario was depicted for the principality south of the Carpathians by Anton Maria Del Chiaro, the Florentine who worked as a secretary of Latin language for Wallachian rulers, since late 17<sup>th</sup> century and early the next one. He narrated that the executions took place in “Tirgo de Fora”, Wednesdays and Saturdays, in days of fair. The convicts walked toward the place of torment while asking for forgiveness for the act committed, from the people; all this time, the women innkeepers offered them drinks, as well as their mothers or wives did. Thus, drowsy by alcohol, the condemned were easily able to face death<sup>181</sup>. Those who committed crimes for which they received the flogging sentence, were bound by arm in pairs, naked from the waist down, and carried through the most crowded places, while those who led them were forcing them, in lashes, to scream that it was the right punishment for

<sup>176</sup> Maria Holban, *Despre osândiri la moarte prin „glasul poporului” sub Despot*, in “Studii. Revista de Istorie”, XXII, 1969, no. 6, p. 1156-1157.

<sup>177</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. II, p. 141-142.

<sup>178</sup> On the exemplary nature of the punishment and the European historiography on the issue, see Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *op. cit.*, p. 190, n. 1.

<sup>179</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. VI, partea I, p. 55-56.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 97.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibidem*, 1983, vol. VIII, p. 385.

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those who stole<sup>182</sup>. The preference for that kind of processions in crowded places so as to increase public excitement was also attested for the next century<sup>183</sup>. Representatives of the elite were not subjected to such humiliation, as they were executed in public places only in exceptional cases. Although in cases of felony there were organized public shows for boyars also<sup>184</sup>, in most cases an atmosphere of secrecy was preferred. According to Dimitrie Cantemir, his father ordered Velicico Costin be decapitated in front of the ruling court at three in the morning, after which his body was covered<sup>185</sup>. It was also the case of Ilie Canta, who killed his servant during the latter's wedding night. After giving the sentence, the prince decided that the execution took place at dawn, and the body remained before the main gate of the princely court, until the night, after which it was given to the relatives so as to be buried<sup>186</sup>. Therefore, the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be considered a period of transition, when the punitive show was limited, particularly for the elite's representatives, while during the next century the convicts' corpses were returned to their families as soon as possible<sup>187</sup>.

Iași  
10.09.2011

Cercetător postdoctoral  
Dr. Bogdan-Petru Maleon

<sup>182</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>183</sup> Ștefan Lemny, *Sensibilitate și istorie în secolul XVIII românesc*, București, Editura Meridiane, 1990, p. 123-124.

<sup>184</sup> See, in this regard, Ovidiu Cristea, *op. cit.*, p. 163-189.

<sup>185</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *op. cit.*, p. 184-185.

<sup>186</sup> Pseudo-Enache Kogălniceanu, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovii de la domnia întâi și până la a patra domnie a lui Constantin Mavrocordat voevod (1733-1774)*. Ediție critică de Aurora Ilieș și Ioana Zmeu. Studiu introductiv de Aurora Ilieș, București, Editura Minerva, 1987, p. 103-105.

<sup>187</sup> On the way it was given up the convicts corpses' exposure in Western Europe, see Laurence Guignard, *Les supplices publics au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'abstraction du corps*, in vol. *Le corps violenté. Du geste à la parole*, p. 174-176.

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