

COMPLEXUL MUZEAL NAȚIONAL „MOLDOVA” IAȘI  
MUZEUL DE ISTORIE A MOLDOVEI

**CERCETĂRI ISTORICE**  
**(SERIE NOUĂ)**

**XXXIII**  
**2014**

IAȘI  
2014

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ISSN 1453-3960

EDITURA PALATUL CULTURII

Iași

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## ABREVIERI

### ABBREVIATIONS - ABREVIATIONS - ABKURZUNGEN

- AAC - *Acta Archaeologica Carpathica*, Polska Akademia Nauk, Oddział w Krakowie, Komisja Archeologiczna, Krakowie.
- AARMSI - *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, București.
- AIIAI/AIIX - *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie Iași/Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A. D. Xenopol”*, Iași.
- Albina Românească - *Albina Românească. Gazetă administrativă și politico-literară*, Iași.
- AMM - *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis*, Anuarul Muzeului Județean „Ștefan cel Mare”, Vaslui.
- AMMSS - *Acta Musei Moraviae – Scientiae Sociales*, Moravian Museum, Brno.
- AMN - *Acta Musei Napocensis*, Muzeul Național de Istorie a Transilvaniei, Cluj-Napoca.
- AMNP.A - *Acta Musei Nationalis Pragae. Řada A, Historie*, Národní Muzeum, Praha.
- AMT - *Acta Musei Tutovensis*, Muzeul „Vasile Pârvan”, Bârlad.
- ANIC - Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, București.
- ANRM - Arhiva Națională a Republicii Moldova, Chișinău.
- AP - *Analele Putnei*, Centrul de cercetare și documentare „Ștefan cel Mare”, Mănăstirea Putna.
- ArhGen - *Arhiva Genealogică*, Academia Română. Comisia de Heraldică, Genealogie și Sigilografie, Iași.

ArhMold	- <i>Arheologia Moldovei</i> , Academia Română. Institutul de Arheologie Iași.
AȘUI	- <i>Analele Științifice ale Universității „A. I. Cuza” din Iași</i> , Iași.
BAR Int. Ser.	- <i>British Archaeological Reports. International Series</i> , Oxford.
BCMI	- <i>Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice</i> , București.
Carpica	- <i>Carpica</i> , Muzeul Județean de Istorie „Iulian Antonescu”, Bacău.
CCAR	- <i>Cronica cercetărilor arheologice din România</i> , CIMEC, București.
CercIst S. N.	- <i>Cercetări Istorice</i> (serie nouă), Muzeul de Istorie a Moldovei, Iași.
DIR	- <i>Documente privind istoria României</i> , seria A, Moldova; seria B, Țara Românească, București.
DRH	- <i>Documenta Romaniae Historica</i> , seria A, Moldova; seria B, Țara Românească, București.
Hierasus	- <i>Hierasus. Anuarul Muzeului Județean Botoșani</i> , Muzeul Județean Botoșani.
MCA	- <i>Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice</i> , București.
MemAntiq	- <i>Memoria Antiquitatis, Acta Musei Petrodavensis</i> , Muzeul de Istorie și Arheologie Piatra-Neamț.
MIA	- <i>Materialy i issledovanija po arheologii SSSR</i> , Moscova-Leningrad.
Monumentul	- <i>Monumentul - Tradiție și Viitor</i> , lucrările Simpozionului Național Monumentul - Tradiție și Viitor, Iași.
Památky archeologické	- <i>Památky archeologické</i> , Archeologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, Praha.
Pontica	- <i>Pontica</i> , Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie Constanța.
Peuce	- <i>Peuce</i> , Institutul de Cercetări Eco-Muzeale Tulcea.

- PZ - *Praehistorische Zeitschrift*, Freie Universität, Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie, Berlin.
- RÉSEE - *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européenes*, Institutul de Studii Sud-Est Europene, București.
- RI - *Revista Istorică*, Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga”, București.
- RIR - *Revista istorică română*, București.
- RMMMIA - *Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. Monumente Istorice și de Artă*, București.
- RRH - *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, București.
- SASTUMA - *Saarbrücker Studien und Materialien zur Altertumskunde*, Bonn.
- SCIA - *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei. Seria Artă plastică*, București.
- SCIV(A) - *Studii și cercetări de istorie veche (și arheologie)*, Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan”, București.
- SCN - *Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică*, Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan”, București.
- SlovArch - *Slovenská archeológia*, Slovenská akadémia vied, Bratislava.
- Suceava - *Suceava, Anuarul Muzeului Bucovinei*, Suceava.
- Tyragetia - *Tyragetia*, Muzeul Național de Arheologie și Istorie a Moldovei, Chișinău.
- UISPP - Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques.

## THE FEUDAL CEREMONY OF COLOMEEA/KOŁOMYJA (SEPTEMBER 12<sup>th</sup> 1485). NOTES ON THE MOLDAVIAN HERALDRY AND VEXILLOLOGY DURING THE REIGN OF PRINCE STEPHEN THE GREAT\*

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*Cuvinte cheie:* Ștefan cel Mare, omagiul de la Colomeea/Kołomyja, heraldica, vexilologie, relații moldo-polone

*Keywords:* Stephen the Great, homage of Colomeea/Kołomyja, heraldry, vexillology, Moldavian and Polish relationship

The purpose of this study is to put unveil several features of the ceremonial usage of flags and coats of arms in the Moldavian court practice of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, in the light of several written and illustrated foreign sources of the period.

Moldavia's foundation was closely related to the military expeditions of the Hungarian Crown to the East and the battles with the Tartars from the Golden Horde. One of these actions, led by Andrew Lackffy, count of the Szeklers, who crossed the mountains in 1345, had a significant role in the history of Moldavia. After the victory over the Tartars in 1347, a "march" was created in the East of the Carpathians, for the defense of the

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\* Lecture given, under the name "The Moldavian Heraldry and Vexillology during the Reign of Prince Stephen the Great", at the Second Conference on Heraldry and Vexillology / II Konferencja IHW o Heraldyce i Weksylologii, Instytut Heraldyczno-Weksylologiczny, Cieszyń, Poland, 4-6 September 2014.

<sup>1</sup> Presidential Administration, Bucharest.

<sup>2</sup> County Center for Preservation and Promotion of the Traditional Culture, Vaslui.



Kingdom of Hungary, the entity being placed under the rule of Dragoș, a Romanian *voivode* from Maramureș.

Another significant moment in Moldavia's early history was the rebellion of Bogdan, *voivode* of the Romanians of Maramureș, against the Hungarian king Louis. Accompanied by his soldiers, in 1363 he crossed the mountains to the East and banished Sas, son of Dragoș, then the ruler of the realm; thus was founded the Moldavian dynasty, the Bogdans. On May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1387, the land formally became a vassal to the Polish Crown<sup>3</sup>, the moment being regarded as the "...very first integration of the Moldavian principality into the family of European states and sovereigns..."<sup>4</sup>.

\*

Despite the fact that the direct mentions were very limited, it has been concluded that the symbolical moments connected with the accession to the throne of a Romanian prince were all inherited from the practice of the Byzantine court, as a strong proof that the Romanian principalities continued the "imperial idea". The ceremonies consisted in three parts: the formal election, "in open field" (having a double feature: popular and military), the anointment and the coronation in the church, with a special "reign oration" (*molitva de domnie*) and other rites closely following the Byzantine tradition, and finally the acceptance of the "flag of the realm", offered by the boyars<sup>5</sup>. Two 16<sup>th</sup> century anonymous chronicles, as well as the so-called chronicle of Grigore Ureche, were referring to the accession to power of Stephen the Great attesting this practice: "...So (the boyars, A/N) all together raised him as lord and metropolitan Theoctist anointed him for ruling. And Stephan *voivode* took the flag of the Land of Moldavia from there (the election place, A/N) and went to the throne (-place, A/N) of Suceava...". We should also notice that the word "scepter" (*schiptru*) was then used as an alternative one for flag, other texts of the period giving it

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<sup>3</sup> M. Costăchescu, *Documentele moldovenesti inainte de Ștefan cel Mare*, II, Iași, 1932, doc. 162, p. 599-603.

<sup>4</sup> Șt. S. Gorovei, M. M. Székely, «*Princeps omni laude maior*». *O istorie a lui Ștefan cel Mare*, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2005, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> C. Nicolescu, *Le couronnement – «încoronația»*. *Contribution à l'histoire du ceremonial roumain*, in *RÉSEE*, XIV, 1976, p. 656-657.

the same meaning<sup>6</sup> (the word was coming from the Greek σκήπτρον, that is to say “stick”, while the word “flag”, “steag” in Romanian, was used in connection with a military unit thus referred. Anyway, this alternative use is largely attested by the other Romanian medieval sources)<sup>7</sup>.

Therefore, “scepter” and “flag” were referring the same object (that is to say the flag, having its well-known meaning). On the other hand, we can reasonably suppose that two different-like objects, a scepter and a flag, were simultaneously used for a prince’s consecration, each having a symbolical meaning. As a part of the spiritual ceremony of accession to power, the oration given by the metropolitan was asking Lord to “Give in his right hand (of the new prince, A/N) *the scepter of salvation*”<sup>8</sup>. Closely following several biblical excerpts<sup>9</sup>, in which the scepter was also taken with the meaning of staff or rod<sup>10</sup>, this formula not excluding *the possible consecration of a Moldavian prince with a flag*<sup>11</sup>, as a much more visible, yet the paramount symbol of monarchic power<sup>12</sup>. Even during the Ottoman rule, when the election of a prince “in open field” was discarded and other details were limited to the essential (such replacing the crown with a

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<sup>6</sup> L.-V. Lefter, *12 aprilie 1457: o problema de logică istorică*, in *CercIst S. N.*, XXI-XXIII/2002-2004, p. 299-300.

<sup>7</sup> M. Romanescu, *Despre schiptru*, in *RIR*, XVI, III, 1946, p. 288-294.

<sup>8</sup> P. Mihail, I. Caproșu, *Despre ceremonialul domnesc*, in *AILAI*, VII, 1971, p. 398.

<sup>9</sup> “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom” (Hebrews 1:8): “The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying, «Rule in the midst of your enemies!»” (Psalm 110:2) etc.

<sup>10</sup> “The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor *the ruler’s staff* from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his” (Genesis 49:10); “The Lord has broken *the rod* of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers” (Isaiah 14:5).

<sup>11</sup> C. Rezachevici, *A fost Ștefan cel Mare „ales” domn în aprilie 1457? Un vechi „scenariu istoric”: de la „tradiția” imaginară la realitate*, in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Portret în istorie*, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2003, p. 331-332.

<sup>12</sup> C. Nicolescu, *Les insignes du pouvoir. Contribution à l’histoire du cérémonial de cour roumain*, in *RÉSEE*, XV, 1977, p. 234-235.

decorated fur cap, or *cuca*), they used to say that the prince received the *steagul domniei* (= flag of reign)<sup>13</sup>.

Even if some authors are now discarding the image of a Romanian prince sitting upon his throne, wearing a crown and holding in his hand a flag<sup>14</sup>, in reality this pose was inherited from the iconography of the Eastern Roman emperors, where the *labarum* had the meaning of the permanent triumph over the evil<sup>15</sup>. The direct association between the flag and the sovereign also resulted from the iconography of the medieval rulers of the region, as attested by one of the gravures which adorn Johannes de Thurocz's work *Chronica Hungarorum* (1488), depicting Attila, king of the Huns, with the features of a 15<sup>th</sup> century monarch (Fig. 2)<sup>16</sup>.

Thus, the flag belonged to a series of "signs of power" (lat. *insignia potestatis*), together with the crown, the sword, the mantle, the cross, the mace etc.<sup>17</sup>. The older image of the Moldavian flag results from a woodcut reproduced several times in the above-mentioned *Chronica Hungarorum*, illustrating a fight between the Hungarian and the Moldavian armies, presumably during king Matthias Corvinus's invasion of Moldavia in 1467: it is about a pennon, charged with an aurochs head (Fig. 3/a-b)<sup>18</sup>. Fortunately, a hand-colored copy of this incunable (belonging to the *Corvina* collection and now preserved in Széchényi National Library of Budapest), also gives the chromatics of this flag (Fig. 4). The same aurochs appeared to have been used on blue, red, yet greenish flags during the time of Stephen the Great<sup>19</sup>, one explanation offered for all these variants being

<sup>13</sup> D. Simonescu, *Literatura românească de ceremonial: Condica lui Gheorgachi, 1762*, București, 1939, p. 78.

<sup>14</sup> Șt. S. Gorovei, *Mușatinii*, București, 1976, p. 20.

<sup>15</sup> A. Grabar, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin. Recherches sur l'art officiel de l'Empire d'Orient*, Paris, 1936, p. 32-34.

<sup>16</sup> Joannes de Thwroc, *Chronica Hungarorum*, Augsburg, 1488, f. b. 4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> C. Nicolescu, *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 234.

<sup>18</sup> C. I. Karadja, *Despre edițiile din 1488 ale cronicei lui Iohannes de Thurocz*, in *AARMSI*, III, XVI, 3, p. 35-43.

<sup>19</sup> T.-R. Tiron, *Steagurile heraldice ale lui Ștefan cel Mare. Certitudini și ipoteze în lumina informațiilor mai vechi sau mai noi*, in *AP*, VIII, 2012, 1, p. 71-72, 77, fig. 13-17.

the necessity to have different, however related flags for the military units acting in the battlefield<sup>20</sup>.

Retaining the conclusion that the Moldavian heraldic flags of the period were decorated with the aurochs head (in different chromatic combinations), we should now focus on the ceremonial use of the object. The only 15<sup>th</sup> century preserved mentions on the subject are connected with the strong Moldavian and Polish relationship: no less than 43 acts of allegiance, defensive treaties, commercial ones etc. were concluded with the Kingdom of Poland by the princes of Moldavia, from the earliest mention up to Stephen the Great<sup>21</sup>.

All these documents were conceived and authenticated according to the usages of the Moldavian chancellery. Speaking about the most important acts, those of allegiance, besides receiving the written form of the submission, the Polish practice required a solemn statement from the prince to become a vassal of the Crown. Already in the third decade of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Polish crown had a thoroughly described custom on receiving homage: *Modus prestandi omagium, qui semper observantur*. The king, crowned, enthroned and surrounded by his spiritual and temporal counselors, was receiving the vassal-to-be, exchanging typical formulas of pledge of allegiance from one side and taking under protection from the other; the concerned prince with his barons and other men, all dismounting, were having banners in their hands (“...banderium habens in manibus suis...”); after the exchange of formulas and embraces between the king and the prince, the first was receiving from the second the banner, telling him to serve with this particular flag: “*Servias nobis cum isto vexillo*”. After that moment, the vassals of the prince were approaching the royal throne, depositing down their little flags (“*vexilla parvula*”)<sup>22</sup>.

The *Relation of the State of Polonia and the United Provinces of that Crown anno 1598*, a text attributed to George Carew, queen Elisabeth I’s

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 78-79.

<sup>21</sup> F. C. Nano, *Condica tratatelor și a altor legăminte ale României 1354-1937*, vol.1, [București], 1938, nr. 3, 9, 11-15, 17-18, 20, 22-23, 33, 40-45, 47, 50-52, 57, 63, 66, 68, 76-77, 80, 82-84, 88, 92, 94, 96-98, 105, 108, 113-114.

<sup>22</sup> Anatol Lewicki, *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, II, Krakowia, 1891, p. 480.

envoy to Poland, brings other significant details on the subject<sup>23</sup>. After confirming the above-mentioned procedure, the text added that the banners of the new vassals were destroyed, as a part of the submission ceremony: "...So the kinge kissing hym (the prince to become vassal of the Crown, A/N) receyveth hym into hys protection and *taking hys banner breaketh it and throweth it away*. Afterwarde all the Barons Vassalls and hommagers of the same prince carrying their penons in their handes doe also their homage to the kinge, *their penons being lykewise so broken*". The text mentioned only one exception for this procedure: "The homage of Moldavia is somewhat different, *in that the Princes and hys hommagers banners are not rent, nor hys throwne on the grounde*. Besydes, he kneeleth not but bowes hys body and banner very lowe..."<sup>24</sup>. Such formal practices knew other peculiarities as well: speaking strictly about the Polish-Moldavian intercommunication, it was noticed that since the very first beginning – prince Peter's homage of Lwów (1387) – the holy act of kissing the cross, typical for the Russian culture, was met with, adopted through the practice of the Lithuanian ducal court<sup>25</sup>. The presence of this specific act in the Moldavian homages testified about how the vassals knew to adapt their conduct, in relation with the laws and customs of a suzerain power, without prejudice to the *de jure* essence of the relationship.

Returning to George Carew's text, we should notice that he strengthened what the period sources were telling about the personal allegiance of the Moldavian princes. From the Polish point of view, it was natural to require the effective submission of this powerful vassal, the allegiance being made public through a typical feudal ceremony. On the other hand, the personal allegiance was regarded as an undeserved

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<sup>23</sup> *Res Polonicae ex archivo Musei Britannici I Pars. „Relation of the State of Polonia and the United Provinces of that Crown anno 1598”*, edit. Dr. Carolus H. Talbot, Romae, 1965 (Elementa ad fontium editiones, vol. XIII), apud V. Eskenasy, *Omagiul lui Ștefan cel Mare de la Colomeea (1485). Note pe marginea unui ceremonial medieval*, in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Portret în istorie*, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2003, p. 440-441.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 449.

<sup>25</sup> L. Pilat, *De la Liov la Colomeea. Observații privind ceremonialul depunerii omagiului de către domnii moldoveni*, in *AP*, IV, 2008, 1, p. 137.

humiliation, from the point of view of a Moldavian prince<sup>26</sup>, nevertheless constrained to ask for the Polish protection in order to face the Ottoman threat.

Presumably, the Moldavian homage knew different degrees of 'humiliation', as indicated by the role of the new vassals' flags during these ceremonies. Regarding the prince Alexander the Good's allegiance to the king Władysław II Jagiełło, on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1415, in Sniatyn, all the information on this issue is that the flags of the Moldavians had been thrown down on the ground, at the king's feet ("...proiectis in terram ad pedes Regis banderiis..."), as recorded by the chronicler Jan Długosz<sup>27</sup>.

The homage of his successor, prince Elias, to king Władysław III occurred on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 1436, in Lwów, offer a clear image of how the Moldavians bore down themselves. Following the same author relation of the event, the prince and his boyars "...carrying in their hands the banners and war flags of the land of Wallachia (name also given in mediaeval Polish sources to Moldavia, A/N), humbly kneeling, broke the banners' staffs as a sign of submission and obedience, dropping them down the king's feet..." ("...hastilia banderiorum in signum subiectionis et obedientiae frangunt et ad pedes regis proiciunt...")<sup>28</sup>.

Another significant moment occurred fifty years later, on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1485, when Stephen the Great himself paid the homage to king Casimir IV, in Colomeea/Kołomyja. A contemporary, the chronicler Bernard Wapowski, mentioned that Stephen took his oath, standing with one knee bent and holding in his hand the flag of Moldavia, eventually grounding it to earth, in front of the king ("...genu flexu vexillum terre Moldavii manu tenebat (...). Vexillum principale Moldavicum ante pedes regio stravit..."). The mentioned author also added a significant detail, that the sides of the royal tent, where the entire event took place, had been purposely dropped, in order that not everyone may see "the submission and

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<sup>26</sup> N. Iorga, *Polonais et Roumains. Relations politiques, économiques et culturelles*, Bucarest, 1921, p. 13-14.

<sup>27</sup> Johannes Dlugossius, *Historiae Polonicae*, ed. Leipzig, 1711, I, Liber undecimus, col. 367.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, col. 690-691.

humiliation of such a great prince”<sup>29</sup>. However, a 1595 text, presumably based on a protocol drawn up during the Colomeea historical meeting, offers much detailed information on the issue. We are aware that the prince and his armigers approached all on horseback, that there was a silk main flag of Moldavia, carried in front of the procession, upon which there were beautifully painted, in gold, the arms of this principality (“...Banderium quoque magnum sericeum coloris rubri, in quo arma Terrae Moldaviae pulcre auro depicta errant...”). After giving this first written description of a Moldavian flag, the text also mentioned that each of Stephen’s hereditary landlords, as well as each courtier of his suite, all on horseback, were holding little flags. Dismounting in the sound of trumpets, the prince and his followers approached the royal throne, where Stephen made his allegiance promises and received the king’s answer, as well as his kiss. Differently to other Moldavian homages, this time the great banner was personally handed by Stephen to his suzerain, the latter passing the object to the marshal of the realm, asking for it to be kept in the royal treasury. Thrown down on the ground, the little flags were equally collected and sent to the treasury. The text stressed the fact that Stephen and his men didn’t agree their flags to be destroyed during the ceremony, asking their reputable conservation, as a supplementary sign of friendship (“...Noluit quippe Palatinus, et armigeri sui consentire, ut intra tractandum diripentur: quin petijt ipsorum ut Banderia omagialia honeste seruarentur propter maioris amicitiae auctoramentum...”). After all the Moldavians were swearing on the cross, according to their Orthodox Faith, the king offered chivalric insignia to Stephen’s esquires, then to the whole youth of his court<sup>30</sup>.

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The significance of the flag, as a sign of the Moldavian statehood, is obvious. Submitting and transmitting the object to a monarch – for instance the king of Poland – meant not only entering under his feudal

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<sup>29</sup> *Kroniki Bernarda Wapowskiego z Radochonic, kantora katedr. Krakowskiego. Część ostatnia czasy podługoszowskie obejmujące (1480-1535)*, (*Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum*, II), Kraków, 1874, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> Cl. Isopescu, in *Diplomatarium Italicum*, I, 1925, p. 423-426, *apud* V. Eskenasy, *op. cit.*, p. 450-453.

jurisdiction, but also recognizing him as the highest military commander – taking the flag’s first use, that of a signaling device in battlefield. Besides being a sign of submission and obedience, breaking the banners’ staffs (as done by the Moldavian princes before Stephen the Great) may be considered as an indirect recognition of the Polish royal banner, as *the supreme flag to obey at, from now on*. Because speaking of a territory becoming vassal to a kingdom, discarding the own flag is understandable; however, the 1485 act of Colomeea illustrated a completely different situation. Not only that the Moldavians obtained a much more worthy submission – compared to the Polish general custom – but instead of being destroyed, prince Stephen’s banner was gently offered to the king and subsequently conserved – as well as the boyar’s flags – in the royal treasure. Speaking strictly from the symbolical point of view, this very moment may be considered as a *pleno jure* integration of the Moldavian aurochs within the “patrimony” of Polish state symbols. Anyway, this integration is clearly illustrated by the presence of the Moldavian aurochs into the official iconography of the Polish monarchs, attested from John Albert to Stanisław August Poniatowski<sup>31</sup> (Fig. 5-6)<sup>32</sup>.

Approaching the above-mentioned written and illustrated sources is indispensable for understanding the features of the Moldavian mediaeval vexillology and heraldry. We are now aware of the aspect of Stephan’s banner and we know that there were other little banners in use. Were they military or territorial flags? The 1485 “bandiera parva” may have belonged to the military units connected with the districts of the land of Moldova, already attested, under the name *steag* (= flag), in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>33</sup>. Having or not a military meaning, containing or not the image of

<sup>31</sup> I. Czamańska, *Stemele Moldovei și Țării Românești în iconografia Polonă (secolele XV-XVIII)*, in *ArbGen*, V (X), 1998, 3-4, p. 275-318.

<sup>32</sup> \*\*\* *Siegel des Mittelalters von Polen, Lithauen, Schlesien, Pommern und Preussen*, Berlin, 1854, pl. 12, fig. 1 (the 1502 great Crown seal of king Alexander Jagiełło); Jan Łaski, *Commune incliti Polonie Regni privilegium constitutionum et indultum publicitus decretorum approbatorumque...*, Cracovia, 1506 (the king surrounded by his court).

<sup>33</sup> *DRH*, A. Moldova, I (1384–1448), eds. C. Cihodaru, I. Caproșu, L. Șimanschi, București, 1975, doc. 106 (document dated 1432, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, containing a mention on the “*steag* of Tutova”)



the aurochs, the constant involvement of multiple flags in the ceremonies occurred from 1415 to 1485 should effectively signify a collective allegiance at once, of the prince and of the realm (the latter represented by the boyars).

One last word should be mentioned on the detail regarding the chivalric insignia offered by king Casimir to Stephen's attendants. The mention has been considered, in the recent Romanian heraldic literature, as denoting the collective ennoblement of the Moldavians present at Colomeea<sup>34</sup>. Knowing that there are number of arguments in the direction of a direct Polish influence upon the coats of arms used by the Moldavian boyars, particularly in the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>35</sup>, without denying the possible grant of Polish knighthood and armorial bearings to Stephen the Great's dignitaries, we consider that the Latin formula "militiae Symbolis" should not necessarily be taken as referring to a bestowal of coats of arms, but to chivalric objects in the period sense: swords, spurs, belts etc. Anyway, an alleged mass-ennoblement of that kind should have left some more "traces" in the Polish written sources – much more better than the Moldavian ones – as happened, for instance, during the well-known historic event of Horodło, on October 2<sup>th</sup>, 1413, when forty-seven Lithuanian boyars were formally "adopted" into a similar number of Polish coats of arms<sup>36</sup>. Of course that the Colomeea moment has very few similarities with what had happened seventy-two years earlier, however if an alleged ennoblement of Moldavians took place, the event should have been similarly mirrored into the sources of the period.

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<sup>34</sup> Șt. S. Gorovei, *Cu privire la heraldica medievală românească*, in *ArhGen*, II (VII), 1995, 1-2, p. 281-282; M. M. Székely, *Heraldică, genealogie și sigilografie la familia boierilor Ureche*, in *ArhGen*, I (VI), 1994, 3-4, p. 38.

<sup>35</sup> T.-R. Tiron, L.-V. Lefter, *Boierii lui Ștefan cel Mare. Conexiuni genealogice și moșteniri heraldice*, in *AP*, IX, 2013, 1, p. 69-71.

<sup>36</sup> \*\*\* 1413 m. *Horodlės aktai = Akty Horodelskie z 1413 roku: (dokumentai ir tyrinėjimai)* / Lietuvos istorijos institutas, Polska Akademia Umiejętności; sudarė Jūratė Kiaupienė, Lidia Korczak; parengė Jūratė Kiaupienė, Lidia Korczak, Piotr Rabiej, Edmundas Rimša, Jan Wroniszewski, Vilnius/Kraków, 2013, p. 532, 536-542. The authors avail themselves of this opportunity to express their sincere thanks to Dr. Agnė Railaitė-Bardė, researcher at the Lithuanian Institute of History, for kindly offering the present reference.

Come to the final point, our study has gradually reviewed generalities and particularities regarding the political status of Moldavia during the period of prince Stephen the Great, focusing on the Moldavian-Polish relations, regarding the tradition of the flag as a symbol of statehood, as well as regarding the ceremonial features resulted from several 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> sources, both written and iconographical, on the homages implying the Moldavian princes.

At the crossroads between Western and Eastern feudal practices, the symbols of the land of Moldavia were illustrating the political, military, yet mystical image of power in this part of the Orthodox world.

### *Appendix*

#### 1.

##### <cca. 1430>

“Modus prestandi omagium, qui semper observantur

Dum aliquis princeps alicui regi prestare debet homagia, rex debet in solio maiestatis sue residere tamquam rex coronatus, et debet ad latus suum habere prelatos et barones consilii regni sui. Tunc princeps prestiturus omagia debet cum suis baronibus et omagialibus ac wasallis, banderium habens in manibus suis, ad sedem solii regalis procedere equester, et descendens equo suo iuxta solium ista verba proferre in hunc modum: «Clementissime domine mi rex. Ego serenitati vestre omagium facio et presto cum omnibus terris et hominibus meis, et peto tuicionem serenitatis vestre et circa iura et in iure meo ducali et dignitatibus conservari». Debet autem sic iurare tacto crucis signo: «Clementissime domine pye mi rex. Ego omagium presto et promitto fideliter sine dolo et fraude serenitati vestre et corone regni vestri cum omnibus terris et hominibus meis fidelitatem et esse fidelis, sic me Deus adiuvet et hec sancta crux gloriosa». Tunc rex debet ipsum recipere in suam tuicionem et ista verba dicere ad prestantem omagium: «Nos accipimus te in nostram proteccionem et circa omnes dignitates ac iura omnia ducatus tui tamquam principem nostrum relinquimus». Tunc osculentur eum et recipiat rex de manibus suis banderium principis et illud restituat amplexis manibus suis. Et dicat rex: «Servias nobis cum isto vexillo». Omnes autem vasalli et omagiales principis omagia facientis debent post eum transire usque ad sedem solii regalis, portantes singuli in manibus vexilla parvula, et eadem eciam post vexillum principis dimittere debent, ita quod banderium principis

procedere debet, vasallorum vero sequi ipsum. Pos hec debet rex recipere a principe recognitionem facti omagii litteralem sub eius sigillo ducali.”

(Anatol Lewicki, *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, II, Krakowia, 1891, p. 480)

## 2.

### 1415

“Quo cum suam Serenitatem Alexander Moldaviae Voieuoda cum consorte sua et maxima militum suorum cohorte accedit et a Wladislao Poloniae Rege, frequentissimam militum pompam etiam tunc habente, benigne exceptus est, et multipliciter honoratus. Devotionem autem et fidem erga Wladislaum Poloniae Regem monstranturus, sibi, in corona et maiestate sedenti, ut et tanquam Regi Poloniae et coronae Regni Poloniae, fidelitati et subiectionis, cum omnibus Boiaris terrae Valachiae, solenne praestitit homagium et fidelitatis corporale iuramentum, proiectis in terram ad pedes Regis banderis. De quo et literas patententes dedit, quae in thesauro habentur ad rei memoriam fermitatem...”

(Johannes Dlugossius, *Historiae Polonicae*, ed. Leipzig, 1711, I, Liber undecimus, col. 367)

## 3.

### 1436

“...Heliam Woiewodam Moldaviae cum omnibus Baronibus et Consiliariis suis (...) in civitatis Leopoliensis circulo ad id specialiter constructo et exornato, corona et omnibus indumentis regalibus insignitus consedit, ad quem Helias Woiewoda, splendida veste cum suis Boiaris et Consiliariis indutus, banderia et signa bellica quae sunt terrae Walachiae, in manibus accedentes, flexis genibus facta humiliatione et hastilia banderiorum in signum subiectionis et obedientiae frangunt et ad pedes regis proiiciunt, et iuramentum deinde tam Helias, quam sui omnes praestant corporale in fide, obedientia et subiectione integra Regis et Regni (...) post caeteris Boiaris, utque exhibitio ipsa homagii (...) exhibitionem et praestationem praefatam Helias Woiewoda cum suis publicis literis sigillis eorum munitis...”

(*Ibidem*, col. 690-691)

## 4.

1485

“...Preparatus erat mediis castris excelsus ac ornatissimus suggestus auro et oloscrico usquequaque coopertus intra altum ac spaciosum tentorium. Suggestum Casimirus Rex diademate et aliis regalibus insignibus conspicuus consentit, in eoque aurato solio sublimus presedit. Cum ecce Stephanus Palatinus cum gentis sue purpuratis et nobilissimo quoque magna pompa supervenit. Ubi tentorio region aporinquavit ex composito Polonorum equitum interventu a suis exclusus ac equo desiliens in tabernaculum introductus solus regalem suggestum conscendit Regemque more gentis adoravit. Inde in verba regia iuraturus utroque genu flexus vexillum terre Moldavie manu tenebat: ut vero tanti principis denicio ac humiliacio omnibus et his precipue, qui aderant, testate esset, tabernaculum Regium re ita ex industria adaptata, solutis repente funiculis e sublime in terram decidit et omnia, que in suggesto agebantur omnibus admiracione attonitis patuere, Stephanus Palatinus, ut erat ingentis animi, nihil turbatus. Vexillum principale Moldavicum ante pedes regios stravit ac demum alma cruce ac sacro codice adhibito: erat siquidem ritus Grecanici Christianus, juramentum fidelitatis, obediencie ac subiectionis (quod omagium vocant) Casimiro Regi et Regibus Poloniae successoribus multa cerimonia, quod felix faustumque sit prestitit...”

*(Kroniki Bernarda Wapowskiego z Radochonic, kantora katedr. Krakowskiego. Część ostatnia czasy podługoszowskie obejmujące (1480-1535), (Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum, II), Kraków, 1874, p. 4)*

## 5.

&lt;1595&gt;

“...Omagium Palatini Moldaviae

Post plures tractatus inter Serenissimum Principem et Dominum Kasimirum III Poloniae Regem, et Barones Poloniae, Suae Serenitatis et Regi nomine ex una, et inter Magnificum Jo Stephanum Palatinum Moldaviae armigerosque ipsius suo, et Terrae Moldaviae similiter nomine, parte ex altera partim personaliter, partim etiam per Regiae Maiestatis Nuncios diebus aliquot ab aduentu ipsius in praesentem diem habitos, Dominus Palatinus Moldaviae, qui supra propter defensionem a Poloniae regno habendam feria 2 a proxima post festum Natiuitatis Virginis Gloriosae Mariae, ad omagium Serenissimo Principo Domino Kasimiro Poloniae Regi etc. inclitaeque Suae Poloniae Coronae praestandum se, posteros, et terram suam iuramento ad fidelitatem, subiectionem, et obedientiam perpetuo seruandam, habendam, et obstringendam consensit hora tertiarum eademque die hora meridiei, uel paulo serius.

Omagium et corporale iuramentum praestitit iuxta informationem per Regiam Maiestatem datam.

Primum itaque Maiestas Regia cum adhuc ille abesset solium suum in corona qua coronatus est ascendente, ibique in apparatus integro quem circa coronationem induit sedente, Maiestatis sede scepta spiritualibus, et secularibus Praelatis, et Summatibus infrascriptis. Stephanus Palatinus a Maiestate Regia per Magnificos Nuncios ad uniendum, faciendumque eaque debet ausatus, et conductus cum omnibus suis armigeris, Boiarijs, uulgari eorum dictis eques uenit: ad latus uero per unum suum fidelem habebat, cui Banderium quoque magnum sericeum coloris rubri, in quo arma Terrae Moldauiae pulcre auro depicta erant, ferebantur. Sui uero omnes Terrigenae bona haereditaria in Moldauia habentes, et alij omnes Curienses notabiliores Bandiera parua qui libet suum insedendo manu tenebant. Ipsius et Regijs clangentibus tubis: accedensque ad solium Maiestatis Regiae ex equo descendit, dein Banderium manibus corripuit. Ac mox cum Banderio uersus solium processit: id etiam sui omnes post eum fecere immdeiateque solium accedens flexis suo more genibus, et capite prono Banderium usque ad terram inclinat, similiterque facientibus subditis: tenores Omagij his uerbis proferebant Maiestas Regia immota sedente, sed stantibus dominis his uerbis in facie Maiestatis Regiae:

Clementissime mihi Rex, ego Serenitati Vestrae omagium facio et praesto cum omnibus Terris, et hominibus meis, et peto tuitionem Serenitati Vestrae et circa iura in iureque meo et dignitatibus conseruari.

Hic adhuc Banderium tenuit pro genu autem flexione de ritus sui more capite inclinato tacto signo Crucis Sanctae ius iurandum fecit corporale his uerbis:

Graciossime Rex, ego Omagium praesto, et iuro, ac etiam promitto fideliter, sine dolo, et fraude Vestrae Serenitati, successoribusque Serenitatis Vestrae Regibus et Sacrae Coronae Regni Poloniae cum omnibus Terris, Baronibus, et hominibus meis fidelitatem, esseque fidelis, et obediens Serenitati Vestrae, successoribus, et Coronae Poloniae Regni sic me Deus adiuet, et haec Sancta Crux.

Mox iuramento finito respondit haec Sacra Maiestas Regia uerba residens in sede Maiestati(s) Suae:

Nos Te, et Terras Tuas in nostram protectionem recipimus, et circa omnes dignitates, et iura omnia Terrarum, tamquam Palatinum nostrum relinquimus.

Hic dictis osculata est eum Maiestas Regis.

Osculo facto recipit Banderium Maiestas Regia manibus suis de manibus Palatini in manusque Marscalci Regni illud dedit. Hic primum armigeri omnes Palatini Moldauiae stantes circa solium Maiestatis Suae bandiera parua, e manibus in Terram strauerunt, Marscalcoque Regni praedicto banderium Magnum de solio Maiestatis iuxta, ac conclusum erat ad Thesaurum Regium deferente, et parua illa per cubicularios Maiestatis Regiae collecta, itidem ad Thesauri locum ferebantur seruanda.

Noluit quippe Palatinus, et armigeri sui consentire, ut intra tractandum diripentur: quin petijt ipsorum ut Banderia omagialia honeste seruarentur propter maioris amicitiae auctoramentum. Quo facto Maiestas Regia non longe a se Palatinum tanquam amicum, et suum Omagiales penes se locauit, et consedentibus illis armigeri ipsius omnes sub hac forma iurauerunt tacta cruce:

Nos Barones Vasali, et tota Terra Moldauiae praestamus omagium nostro et totius communitatis Terrae Moldauiae nomine, Serenissimo Principi Domino Kazimiro, et successoribus Regibus Poloniae et Coronae Regni Poloniae promittimusque et iuramus omnem fidelitatem, subiectionem, et obedientiam in perpetuum Serenitati Suae, Regno, et Regibus Poloniae: ita nos Deus adiuuet, et Sancta Christi Crux.

Quod quidem iuramentum quidam eorum manibus cruci apositis quidam uero expansis supra fecerunt, eo facto Regia Maiestas omnes Palatini armigeros, uniuersam denique Curiae Suae iuuentutem militiae Symbolis insigniuit”

(Cl. Isopescu, in *Diplomatarium Italicum*, I, 1925, p. 423-426, *apud* V. Eskenasy, *Omagiul lui Ștefan cel Mare de la Colomeea (1485). Note pe marginea unui ceremonial medieval*, in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Portret în istorie*, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2003, p. 450-453)

*CEREMONIA FEUDALĂ DE LA COLOMEEA/KOŁOMYJA (12  
SEPTEMBRIE 1485). NOTE ASUPRA HERALDICII ȘI VEXILOLOGIEI  
MOLDOVENEȘTI ÎN TIMPUL DOMNIEI LUI ȘTEFAN CEL MARE  
(Rezumat)*

*Venind în completarea unui studiu mai vechi al lui Victor Eskenasy, contribuția de față trece în revistă evoluția relațiilor moldo-polone, de la cele mai vechi mențiuni până în timpul domniei lui Ștefan cel Mare, culminând cu actul omagial de la Colomeea (1485).*

*În continuare, este analizată semnificația simbolică a steagului Moldovei, alături de alte însemne asociate instituției Domniei. În baza izvoarelor de tip documentar și iconografic, autorii au pus în evidență mai multe aspecte de ordin formal, referitoare la utilizarea steagului domnesc și a steagurilor boierești, în cadrul ceremoniilor din 1415, 1436 și 1485.*

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**Fig. 1.** The ceremony of Colomeea.  
Contemporary composition by M. Gatalovich, illustrating the use of the Moldavian aurochs flag





Fig. 2. Imaginary portrait of Attila, king of the Huns.  
Miniature from Joannes de Thurocz's *Chronica Hungarorum*, Augsburg, 1488

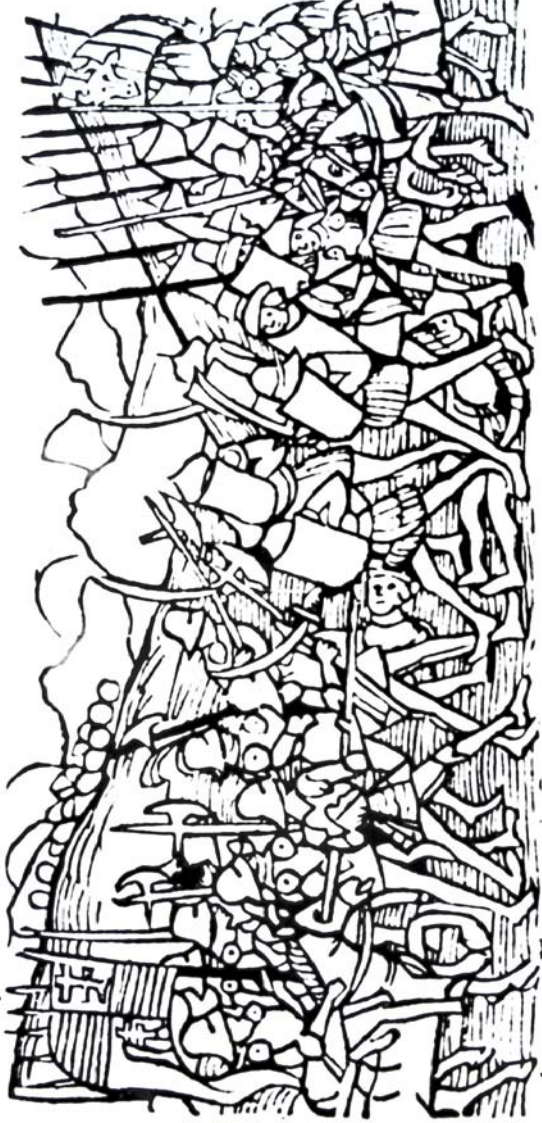


Fig. 3/a-b. Woodcut reproduced in Johannes de Thurocz's *Chronica Hungarorum* (1488), illustrating a battle between the Moldavian and Hungarian armies, presumably occurred in 1467



**Fig. 4.** The polychromatic Moldavian heraldic flag: painted woodcut, included into a copy of Joannes de Thurocz's work, belonging to the "Corvina" library of king Mathias of Hungary



**Fig. 5.** The Moldavian coat of arms (top-left, or heraldic *dexter*), displayed in the Crown seal of king Alexander Jagiello (1502)



**Fig. 6.** The Moldavian coat of arms (third from top, counterclockwise), displayed in the allegorical image of the Polish royal court  
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