

THE IMPACT OF THE OTTOMAN FACTOR ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES THROUGH HISTORIOGRAPHY PERSPECTIVES

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Rezumat. Impactul factorului otoman asupra statutului femeii în Țările sud-est europene în Evul Mediu din perspectivă istoriografică. Studiul propune o perspectivă istoriografică asupra imaginii femeii în Evul Mediu, așa cum este ea reflectată în literatura de specialitate din Serbia, Bulgaria, România și Republica Moldova. Materialul este elaborat într-o astfel de manieră încât să constituie nu numai o raportare a cercetărilor întreprinse în domeniul studiilor de gen, ci și să ilustreze legătura între diversele abordări istoriografice din aria geografică amintită. Precizărilor teoretice și de natură contextuală despre aria tematică studiată li se adaugă o prezentare a impactului factorului otoman asupra cotidianului feminin, așa cum acesta a fost surprins în impresiile unor călători străini care au tranzitat spațiul sud-estic european. Se insistă asupra detaliilor care permit gruparea rezultatelor cercetării referitoare la istoria femeii din Evul Mediu în trei cicluri tematice: monografiile istorice generale, lucrări de specialitate centrate pe viața privată, monografiile tematice specifice studiilor de gen.

Abstract: The study proposes a historiographic perspective on the image of women in the Middle Ages, as it is reflected in the historical literature of Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova. The material is designed not only to report the researches conducted in the field of gender studies, but also to illustrate the link between different historiographical approaches from the mentioned geographical area. To the theoretical and contextual nature of the studied thematic area is an added description of the impact of the Ottoman factor on the female daily, as it was caught in the impressions of foreign travellers who crossed South-Eastern Europe. The emphasis on the details of the grouping results of research on women's history from the Middle Ages into three thematic cycles: general historical monographs, papers focused on privacy, thematic monographs specific to the gender studies.

Résumé: L'impacte du facteur ottoman sur le statut des femmes dans les pays sud-est européens pendant le Moyen Age de la perspective historiographique. L'étude ci-jointe propose une perspective historiographique sur l'image de la femme au Moyen Age, réfléchie dans la littérature de spécialité de Serbie, Bulgarie, Roumanie et la République Moldavie. Le matériel ne constitue seulement un rapport des recherches menées dans ce domaine-ci, mais illustre en même temps la liaison existante entre les divers abords historiographiques de l'aire géographique qu'on vient de mentionner. On y ajouta aux précisions théoriques de nature contextuelle sur l'aire thématique étudiée une présentation de l'impacte du facteur ottoman sur la vie quotidienne féminine, comme on le surprit dans les impressions des voyageurs étrangers qui transitèrent l'espace sud-est européen. On

insista aussi sur les détails qui permirent de grouper les résultats des recherches concernant l'histoire de la femme au Moyen Age en trois cycles thématiques: monographies historiques générales, ouvrages de spécialité centrés sur la vie privée, monographies thématiques, spécifiques aux études du genre.

Keywords: *women, gender, historiography, the South-Eastern Europe, Ottoman factor, Middle Ages*

Introduction

In recent decades, a massive change has taken a special place in historical research at the global, European and national level. Despite the large amounts of scientific literature on women's and gender history, many thematic units – as gender-related European past – are almost unknown, and very little research has been made in this field. In particular, one of these issues is the impact of the Ottoman factor on the status of women in the conquered countries, in the Middle Ages. In this study, we shall review the contemporary historical literature of Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova.

Moving on to the research subject, it is necessary to mention that the territories controlled by the Ottoman Empire had different status: incorporated and not incorporated. Moldova and Wallachia have not been incorporated into the empire; they have kept their statehood, language, local laws and customs. The official religion also maintained its status; these countries were not subject to Islamization. Unlike these countries, Bulgaria and Serbia were incorporated, and lost their independence for five centuries. For example, in Bulgaria, the legal status of Bulgarians was determined by Muslim private law – Sharia. Most Bulgarians remained Christians, but parts of them were forcibly converted to Islam – such as the so-called Pomaks, mostly in the Rhodopes; however, they preserved the Bulgarian language and many traditions.

In modern historical literature there is a common view that the Ottoman factor in many Christian countries, particularly in the Balkans, meant not only the negative radical change in the political and religious spheres, but also an improvement of the people's lives, in economic terms: trade, granting land to the peasants etc., especially in rural areas, where “regime change did not bring about any change, life went on in the tradition of the peoples living there”¹. This is quite a complex issue, covering various areas and aspects, so we'll confine to women social status. In our opinion, the daily life is of particular interest, as it is a most exact and

¹Льюис Рафаэла [Raphael Louis], *Османская Турция. Быт, религия, культура* [Ottoman Turkey. Life, religion, culture], Москва [Moscow], 2004, pp. 210-211.

colourful reflection of the changes in the evolution of society by the influence of external factors.

The state of the problem in regional historiography

Serbian historiography

In recent decades, a large number of studies on the life of the medieval Serb appeared, describing environment, food and kitchen, private and family life. The authors also included issues relevant to the medieval Serb woman. An illustration of this trend is the work entitled *Срби у средњем веку* (Serbs in the Middle Ages)², and the collective monograph *Приватни живот у српским земљама средњег века* (Family life in the Serbian lands of the Middle Ages)³, where an attempt is made to examine the daily life of a medieval man. Apart from the aforementioned works, some aspects of life in medieval Serbia have been discussed in various articles⁴, such as the example of Branichevskogo Deftera investigated by Mirjana Bobich⁵.

A special place in research on women's issues in the Serbian scientific community takes Svetlana Tomin, Professor at University of Novi Sad. Serbian scholar wrote a series of articles⁶ and monographs⁷ about the life of women in

² С. Ћирковић [Cirkovic, S.], *Срби у средњем веку* [Serbs in the Middle Ages], Београд [Belgrade], 1997.

³ *Приватни живот у српским земљама средњег века* [Family life in the Serbian lands of the Middle Ages], Београд [Belgrade], 2004.

⁴ Ђ. Тошић [С. Totic.], *Живот у средњовековном селу требињског краја* [Life in Medieval Village of the Trebinje Region], in *Српско село. Могућности и даљи правци истраживања* [Serbian Village. Opportunities and Further Directions for Research], Београд, [Belgrade], 2003, pp. 19–29; Idem, *Земљорадња у средњовековној жупи Требиње* [Agriculture in the Trebinje Parish], in „Godišnjak Društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine” [Yearbook of the Society of Historians of Bosnia and Herzegovina], vol. XL–XLI, Sarajevo, 1990, pp. 2–58.

⁵ М. Бобић [M. Bobic], *Куће, породице и задруге* [Houses, Families and Cooperatives], in *Насеља и становништво области Бранковића 1455 годне* [Settlements and Population of the Brankovic Region in the year 1455], Београд [Belgrade], 2001, pp. 311–406.

⁶ Светлана Томин [Svetlana Tomin], *Епистоларна књижевност и жене у српској средњовековној култури* [Epistolary Literature and Women in Serbian Medieval Culture], Србија [Serbia], Нови Сад [Novi Sad], децембар [December] 2004–2005, pp. 89–99; Idem, *Књигољубиве жене српског средњег века. Прилог познавању* [Book loving Women of the Serbian Middle Ages] in “Паисиеви четенија. Међународна славистична конференција. Литературознание. Фолклор” [Paisievo Readings. International Slavic Conference. Philology. Folklore], том. 44, Пловдив [Plovdiv], 2006, pp. 91–106; Idem, *Женски ликови у Доментијановом Житију светог Саве* [Female Characters in Hagiography of Saint Sava by Dometijan], in *Митолошки зборник* [Mythological collection], Рача-Београд [Racha-Belgrade], 2008, pp. 81–92; Idem, *Мотив оклеветаног младића. Прилог представљању зле жене у књижевности* [A Motif of an Allegedly Guilty Young Man. A Case of a Wicked Woman in Literature], in *Међународни научни скуп Бањалучки новембарски сусрети. Наука, култура и*

medieval Serbia as a whole, and particularly about outstanding women of that era, as well as comments and reviews on the history of women⁸. The monographs *Книголюбиве женици српског Средневековья* (Book loving: Women of Serbian Middle Ages) and *Мужественне женици средневековей Сербии* (Courageous women of medieval Serbia)⁹ are based on significant documentary material of that time and devoted to female aristocrats, queens, princesses, and all the women who played a role in highest social circles.

Bulgarian historiography

While characterizing the Bulgarian historiography, it should be noted that the issue of women's image in the Middle Ages did not get coverage in special studies. But in individual articles and general works on the Middle Ages¹⁰, this problem is

идеологија [International Scientific Conference Banja Luka. Science, culture and ideology], том I, Бањалука [Banja Luka], 2009, pp. 107-116; Idem, *Личности средњег века – царица Мара Бранковић* [Figures of the Middle Ages - Czarina Mara Branković], in *Настава и историја* [Teaching and History], vol. 3, Нови Сад [Novi Sad], 2004, pp. 7-17.

⁷ Idem, *Книгољубиве жене српског средњег века* [Book loving Women of the Middle Ages], Нови Сад [Novi Sad], 2007; Idem, *Деспотица и монахиња Ангелина Бранковић – света мајка Ангелина* [Duchess an Nun Angelina Brankovic - Holy Mother Angelina], Нови Сад [Novi Sad], 2007; Idem, *Мужаствене жене српског средњег века* ["Manlike Woman". A Topos of Serbian Medieval Literature], Нови Сад [Novi Sad], 2011, p. 260.

⁸ Idem, *Реконструкција свакодневног живота* [Reconstruction of Everyday Life], in Smilja Marjanovic-Dusanic, Danica Popovic (eds.), *Приватни живот у српским земљама средњег века* [Private Life in Medieval Serbia], Београд [Belgrade], 2004; Idem, *О једном мотиву косовске легенде* [On one Motif of the Kosovo legend], in Jelka Redjep, *The Clear Water Muddied. The Quarrel of Lazar's Daughters*, Београд-Нови Сад [Belgrade-Novı Sad], 2006, pp. 1226-1229; Idem, *Perceptions of Women in Serbian Medieval Literature*, in "Oriente Cristiano", vol. 10, nr. 2, Roma, 2006, pp. 75-99; Idem, *Сексуалност и друштво као славистичка тема: Ив Левин, Сексуалност и друштво код православних Словена од X до XVIII века* [Sex and Society as a Slavic Topic: Sex and Society among the Orthodox Slavs from X to XVIII century], in "Зборник Матице српске за књижевност и језик", књ. 56, св. 3, Нови Сад [Novi Sad], 2008, pp. 710-714; Idem, *Glas "druge strane"* ["Other Party's" Voice], in Vladislav Djordjević, *Benefits of Women*, Београд, 2007, according to „Polja“, nr. 458, jul/avgust, Novi Sad, 2009, pp. 185-187.

⁹ Idem, *Книгољубиве жене српског средњег века* [Book loving Women of the Middle Ages], Нови Сад, 2007; Idem, *Мужаствене жене српског средњег века* [Courageous Women of Medieval Serbia], Нови Сад, 2011.

¹⁰ В. Златарски [V. Zlatarski], *История на българската държава през средните векове*, [The history of the medieval Bulgarian state], vol. 3, София [Sofia], 1972, pp. 325-326; Г. Цанкова-Петкова [G. Tsankova-Petkova], *България при Асеневци* [Bulgaria under the reign of the Asen dynasty], София [Sofia], 1978, pp. 109-137; Й. Иванов [I. Ivanov], *Богомилски книги и легенди* [Bogomil Books and Folktales], София [Sofia], 1980; П. Мутафчиев [P. Mutafichev], *История на българский народ* [History of the Bulgarian People], София [Sofia], 1986.

partially paid attention too. For instance, in the works of P. Angelov¹¹, Yordan Andreev¹², Vzh. B. Venedikov¹³, A.D. Vasileva¹⁴, dedicated to outstanding male characters of that time, against the background of their military, administrative and political activity, stories of mothers, wives and daughters are clearly and concisely described. Of particular importance is the work of the famous Bulgarian scholar Ivan Bozhilov¹⁵, which in addition to historical information, contains a rich genealogical material, the role and the political activity of life in which we find invaluable material. Passages of private life of Bulgarian women in the Middle Ages are reflected in the collective work of Ivan Bozhilova and Vasil Gyuzeleva, published in 2006¹⁶.

Romanian historiography

Romanian historiography has a special place in the study of the role and place of women in society. Over the last 20 years in Romania, a series of studies appeared in historical and anthropological centres such as: Cluj Napoca, Arad, Bucharest and Iassy. This period is characterized by the emergence of new conceptual works, fundamental and multidisciplinary research on the legal and social status of women, family and legal status of women in the family, women's political participation, etc. In this context, we can mention the work of Maria Magdalena Székely¹⁷, Alexandru I.

¹¹ П. Ангелов [P. Angelov], *Болгаро-сербские политические отношения в годы правления царя Феодора Святослава и короля Милутина* [Serbo-Bulgarian Political Relations during the Reign of Tsar Feodor Svyatoslav and King Milutyn] in „Études balkaniques”, 1979, nr. 4, pp. 108-117.

¹² Йордан Андреев [Jordan Andreev], *Надписите при село Иваново. Русенско, и последните години от живота на цар Георги Тертер I* [Written Sources on the Ivanovo and Rusensko Villages, and the last Years of Tsar George Terter Ist], in „Векове”, 1975, nr. 3, pp. 77-84; Idem, *Легендите за цар Иван Шишман – мит или действителност* [Legends about Ivan Shishman: Myths and Reality], in *Величието на Търновград* [The greatness of Tarnovo], София [Sofia], 1985, pp. 165-175; Idem, *Българските ханове и царе VII-XIV век. Историко-хронологически справочник* [Bulgarian “Khans” and Tsars during the VII-XIVth Centuries], София [Sofia], 1988.

¹³ В.И. Венедиков [V.I. Venediktov], *Първият брак на Гавриил Радомир* [First Marriage of Gavril Radomir], in *Сборник в паметна Ал. Бурмов* [Work in memoriam Al. Burmov], София [Sofia], 1973.

¹⁴ А.Д. Василева [A.D. Vasileva], *Българска държава при цар Иван Асень II* [The Bulgarian State during the Rule of Tsar Ivan Asen II], in *България 681-1981* [Bulgaria 681-1981], София [Sofia], 1981, pp. 134-143.

¹⁵ *Ibidem.*

¹⁶ Иван Божилов, Гюзелев Васил [Ivan Bozhilov, Vasil Giuzelev], *История на средновековна България VII-XIV век* [The History of Medieval Bulgaria, VII-XIVth Centuries], София [Sofia], 2006.

¹⁷ М. М. Székely, *Neamul lui Nestor Ureche* [Nestor Ureke's family line], in “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «A. D. Xenopol»” [Yearbook of A.D. Xenopol Institute of History], XXX, 1993; Idem, *Contribuții la genealogia familiei Stroici* [Contributions to Stroici family's genealogy], in “Arhiva Genealogică” [Genealogical Archive], 1-2, I (VI), 1994,

Gonța¹⁸, Matei Cazacu¹⁹, Vasile Gionea²⁰, Violeta Barbu²¹, Constanța Ghițulescu²², Sorin Iftimi²³, Alin Ciupală²⁴, Iolanda Țighiliiu²⁵, Șarolta Solcan²⁶, D. H. Mazilu²⁷.

pp. 249-253; Idem, *Boieri hicleni și înrudirile lor* [The disloyal Boyars' kin], in "Arhiva Genealogică", nr. 1-2, I (VI), 1994, pp. 219-229; Idem, *Noi contribuții la genealogia familiei Stroici* [New Contributions to Stroici family's genealogy], in "Arhiva Genealogică", nr. 1-2, II (VII), Iași, 1995, pp. 65-67; Idem, *Teodosia Nicorițoiaia și bărbații ei* [Teodosia Nicorițoiaia and her spouses], in "Magazin istoric" [Historical Magazine], XXIX, nr. 7 (340), 1995, pp. 47-52; Idem, *Femei-ctitori în Moldova medievală* [Female church-founders in Middle Ages Moldova], in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «A.D. Xenopol», XXXII, 1995; Idem, *Pentru o istorie a vieții zilnice* [For a Daily-life History], in "Magazin istoric", Anul XXXI, nr. 5 (362), 1997, pp. 57-59; Idem, *Structuri de familie în societatea medievală moldovenească* [Family structures in Medieval Moldavian Society], in "Arhiva Genealogică", IV (IX), nr. 1-2, Iași, 1997, pp. 59-119; Idem, *Neamul dinspre mama lui Petru Rareș* [The maternal line of Petru Rares], in "Arhiva Genealogică", V (1998), nr. 1-2, pp. 169-178; Idem, *Nepoții lui Ștefan cel Mare* [The Grandchildren of Steven the Great], in "Arhiva Genealogică", V (1998), nr. 1-2, pp. 107-125, Idem, *Viața de familie în Moldova medievală* [Family life in Middle-aged Moldova], in "Magazin istoric", Anul XXXI, nr. 10 (367), 1999, pp. 75-77; M.M. Gorovei, Ș.S. Gorovei, *Maria Asanina Paleologina. O prințesă bizantină pe tronul Moldovei* [Maria Asanina Paleologina. A byzantine Princess on the Moldavia's Throne], Putna, 2006.

¹⁸ Alexandru I. Gonța, *Femeia și drepturile ei la moștenire în Moldova, după „obiceiul pământului”* [Moldovan Women and their Hereditary Rights according to the "land law"], in *Studii de istorie medievală (texte selectate)* [Studies of Medieval History/Selected texts], Iași, 1998, pp. 269-276.

¹⁹ M. Cazacu, *A existat aprodul Purice?* [Has Usher Purice existed?], in "Magazin istoric", Anul IV, nr. 4, 1970, p. 69; Idem, *Pierre Mohyla (Petru Movilă) et la Roumanie: essai historique et bibliographique*, in "Harvard Ukrainian Studies", nr. 1/2, VIII, 1984, pp. 193-195; Idem, *La famille et le statut de la femme en Moldavie (XIV – XIX siècles)*, in "Revista de Istorie Socială", II-III (1997-1998), Iași, 1999, pp. 1-16.

²⁰ Vasile Gionea, *Quelques aspects du mariage dans l'ancien droit roumain entre 1646-1865*, in "Recherches sur l'histoire des institutions et du droits", 1981, nr. 6, pp. 23-27; Idem, *Logodna și căsătoria în dreptul român vechi* [Engagement and Marriage in Old Romanian Law], in *Studii de drept constituțional și istoria dreptului* [Constitutional law and history of law studies], vol. III, București, 1995, pp. 78-85.

²¹ V. Barbu, „Ceea ce Dumnezeu a unit, omul să nu dispartă”. *Studii asupra divorțului în Țara Românească în perioada 1780-1850* ["What God has united, man should not set apart". Considerations on Divorce endeavours in the Romanian Kingdom during 1780-1850], in "Revista de Istorie" [Historical Review], III, nr. 11-12, 1992, pp. 1143-1155; Idem, *Pagini din istoria căsătoriei în Țările Române. Căsătoria ca sacrament (secolul al XVII-lea)* [Pages from Marriage History in Romanian Principalities. Marriage viewed as a Sacred Union (XVIIth century)], in "Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie" [Studies and materials of Medieval History], vol. XXIII, 2005, București, pp. 101-117.

²² Constanța Vintilă Ghițulescu, *Zestrea între normă și practică. Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea (I)* [Normative and Practical sides of the Dowry. The Romanian Kingdom during the XVIIth century], in "Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie", vol. XVIII, 2000, pp. 213-222; Idem, *Zestrea între normă și practică. Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea (II)* [Normative and Practical sides of the Dowry. The Wallachian Principality during the

These works are based on the methodology of modern European and, in particular, French School of History²⁸.

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- ²³ S. Gh. Iftimi, *Sigilii de doamne și domnițe ale Moldovei* [Seals of Moldovian Queens and Princesses], in “Arhiva Genealogică”, II (VII), nr. 1-2, Iași, 1995, pp. 291-305; Idem, *Curtea Doamnei. I. Dregători și slujitori ai Doamnelor Moldovei* [The Queen’s Court. Valets and Servants of Moldavian Ladies], in “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «A.D. Xenopol»”, XXXII, 1995, pp. 423-440; Idem, *Sigilii ale doamnelor din Țara Românească (secolele XVI-XVIII)* [Seals of the Wallachian Principality’s Queens (XVI-XVIIIth centuries)], in “Arhiva Genealogică”, V (1998), nr. 1-2, pp. 329-345; Idem, *Ipostaze feminine între medieval și modern* [Between Modern and Medieval Female Postures], in “Revista de Istorie Socială” [Review of the Social History], IV-VII, 1999-2002; Idem, *Un model cultural oriental: soțiile ale domnilor români (secolele XVI-XVII)* [An Oriental Cultural Model: Romanian Princes’ Spouses (XVI-XVII-th Century)], in *De Potestate. Semne și expresii în Evul Mediu românesc* [De Potestate. Signs and Phrases in Romanian Middle Ages], Iași, 2006; Idem, *Doamnele și puterea. Statutul doamnei în Țările Române. (Un proiect de cercetare)* [Women and Power. The women’s status in the Romanian Principalities. A research Project], in *De Potestate. Semne și expresii în Evul Mediu românesc* [De Potestate. Signs and Phrases in Romanian Middle Ages], Iași, 2006; Idem, *Apanaje și surse de venit ale doamnelor din Moldova și Țara Românească* [Land Ownership and other Income Sources of Moldavian and Wallachian Ladies] în *De Potestate. Semne și expresii în Evul Mediu românesc* [De Potestate. Signs and Phrases in Romanian Middle Ages], Iași, 2006.
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- ²⁵ I. Țighiliiu, *Societate și mentalitate în Țara Românească și Moldova în secolele XV-XVII* [Society and Mentality in the Wallachia and Moldavia during the 15-17th Centuries], București, 1997.
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- ²⁸ René Metz, *Le statut de la femme en droit canonique médiéval*, in *La Femme, Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin pour l’histoire comparative des institutions*, II, Bruxelles, 1962; P. Grimal (coord.), *Histoire mondiale de la femme*, vol. I, Paris, 1965; M. Piettre, *La condition féminine à travers les âges*, Paris, 1974; Jacques Heers, *Le clan familial au Moyen Age. Étude sur les structures politiques et sociales des milieux urbains*, PUF, Paris, 1974; Alain Collomp, *Ménage et famille. Etudes comparatives sur la dimension et la*

Moldovan historiography

The history of women has been reflected in the Moldovan historiography, too. Some passages of women's lives during the Middle Ages have been, partially highlighted in the works of P. Sovetov²⁹, A. Galben³⁰, I. Eremia³¹, A. Eșanu³², A.

structure du groupe domestique, in "Annales E.S.C.", 29e année, no. 3, 1974, pp. 777-786; Mikhaël Harsgor, *L'essor des bâtards nobles au XVe siècles*, in "Revue historique", 514, avril-juin, 1975, pp. 319-354; Alain Ducellier, *Le dram de Byzance. Idéale échec d'une société chrétienne*, Paris, 1976; M. Albistur, D. Armogathe, *Histoire du féminisme français. Du Moyen Age à nos jours*, Vol. I-II, Paris, 1977; Bernard Guenée, *Les généalogies entre l'histoire et la politique: la fierté d'être Capétien, en France, au Moyen Age*, in "Annales E.S.C.", 33e année, no. 3, 1978, pp. 450-477; E. Power, *La femme au Moyen Âge*, Paris, 1979; Y. Knibiehler, C. Fouquet, *L'histoire de mères du Moyen Age à nos jours*, Paris, 1980; Georges Duby, *Le chevalier, la femme et le prêtre*, Paris, 1981; Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, *Sur les structures de parenté dans l'Europe médiévale*, in "Annales E.S.C.", 36e année, nr. 6, 1981, pp. 1020-1038; Phillipe Ariès, *Le mariage indissoluble*, in Phillipe Ariès et, André Bejin (eds.), *Sexualités occidentales*, Paris, 1982; Robert Delort, *La vie au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1982; Phillipe Ariès, *L'amour dans le mariage*, in Phillipe Ariès et, André Bejin (eds.), *Sexualités occidentales*, Paris, 1982; Robert Delort, *La vie au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1982; Claude Grimmer, *La femme et le bâtard. Amours illégitimes et secrètes dans l'ancienne France*, 1983; D. Gourevitch, *Le mal d'être femme*, Paris, 1984; J. L. Flandrin, *Failles, parenté, maison, sexualité dans l'ancienne société*, Paris, 1984; R. Pernoud, *La femme au temps des cathedrales*, Paris, 1984; A. Burguière, C. Klapisch-Zuber, M. Segalen, F. Zonabend, *Histoire de la famille*, Vol. I, Paris, 1986; A. Burguière, *Pour une typologie des formes d'organisation domestique de l'Europe moderne (XVIe-XIXe siècles)*, in "Annales E.S.C.", 41e année, 1986; Evelyn Patlagean, *Familles et parenté les a Byzance*, in A. Burguière, C. Klapisch-Zuber, M. Segalen, F. Zonabend, (eds.), *Histoire de la famille*, vol. II: *Temps médiévaux: Orient, Occident*, Paris, 1986, pp. 214-222; Georges Duby, *Mâle Moyen Age. De l'amour et autre essais*, Paris, 1988; Idem, *Structures de parenté et noblesse dans la France du Nord aux XIe-etXIIe siècles*, in *La société chevaleresque. Hommes et structures du Moyen Age (I)*, Paris, 1988; M. Rouche, J. Heuclin, *La femme au Moyen Âge*, Maubeuge, 1990; Georges Duby, *L'histoire continue*, Paris, 1991; E. Amt, *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe*, London, 1993; Hervé Martin, *Mentalités médiévales XIe-Xve siècle*, Paris, 1996; Jacques Le Goff, *La civilisation de l'Occident médiéval*, Paris, 1997; FrançoiseThélamon, *Écrire l'histoire des femmes*, Saint Cloud, 1998; Madeleine Lazard, *Le savenues de Fémynie. Les femmes et la Renaissance*, Paris, 2001; Georges Duby, Michelle Perrot, *Histoiry des femmes en Occident*, vol. I-V, Paris, 2001-2002; Godineau Dominique, *Les femmes dans la société française, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, 2003; Raul Mordeni, *Les livres de familli en Italie*, in "Annales", LIX, 2004, nr. 4, pp. 785-804; Claude C. Bérard, Ch. Klapisch-Zuber, *Mémoire des oier des autres dans livres de famille italiens*, in "Annales", LIX, 2004, nr. 4, pp. 804-821; Dror Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900*, Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2006, 223 p.; Heather Madar, *Before the Odalisque: Renaissance Representations of Elite Ottoman Women*, in "Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal", vol. 6, 2011, pp. 1-42.

²⁹ Советов, Павел [Sovetov, Pavel], *Исследования по истории феодализма в Молдове* [Inquiries on the history of Moldavian feudalism], Chișinău, 1972, pp. 317-322; Idem,

Felea³³. It is important to note that female subjects were outside the academic research, and appeared purely episodic until the turn of XX-XXI centuries. Only in the last decade, women's history has become one of the new interdisciplinary research directions in the modern historiography of Moldova. The subject aroused a true interest, mostly by the appearance of a number of papers dedicated to the new social history. The main priority in women's history in the Middle Ages and modern times³⁴

Преступление и наказание. Очеркии истории обычного права и законодательства средневековой Молдавии [Crime and punishment. The History of the Medieval Moldavian Common Law and Jurisprudence], in "Stratumplus", nr. 6, 2001-2002, St.Petersburg- Chişinău-Odessa-Bucharest, pp. 26-152.

³⁰ Andrei Galben, *Din "obiceiul pământului" al Moldovei feudale (sec. XVIII – prima jumătate a sec. al XIX)* [From Feudal Moldavia's "land customs" (XVIII-th – first half of the XIX-th century)], Chişinău, 1986; Idem, *Из истории феодального права XVIII - начала XIX вв.* [Medieval History of the 18th – beginning of 19th Centuries], Chişinău, 1988.

³¹ I. Eremia, *Relațiile externe ale lui Vasile Lupu (1634-1653)* [Vasile Lupu's Foreign Relations (1643-1653)], Chişinău, 1999.

³² A. I. Eşanu [A.I. Eşanu], *Школа и просвещение в Молдавии (XV- начало XVIII в.)* [Schooling and education in Moldova (15th – beginning of 18th century)], Chişinău, 1983, pp. 66-77; A.I. Eşanu, V. Eşanu, *Maria – Oltea, mama lui Ştefan cel Mare* [Maria-Oltea, Mother of Steven the Great], in „Accente” [Accents], Chişinău, 2004, 4 martie, p. 5; Idem, *Doamnele și descendenții lui Dimitrie Cantemir* [The Ladies and the Descendants of Dimitrie Cantemir], in *Dinastia Cantemireștilor. Secolele XVII-XVIII* [The Cantemir Dynasty. 17-18th centuries], Chişinău, 2008, pp. 444-490.

³³ Alina Felea, *Impactul otoman în viața cotidiană și mentalitatea orașenilor din Moldova în perioada mijl. sec. XVII- mijl. sec. XVIII* [The Ottoman Influence on the Everyday Life and Mentality of Moldavian townspeople during the mid 17th – mid 18th Centuries], in "Revista de istorie a Moldovei" [History Review of Moldova], Chişinău, 2000, n. 3-4, pp. 76-85; Idem, *Unele aspecte din cotidianul și mentalitatea orașului medieval din Moldova în a doua jumătate a secolului al XVII-lea - secolul al XVIII-lea* [Some aspects regarding the daily life and mentality of Medieval town of Moldova during the second half of the 17th – 18th centuries] in "Restitutio in integrum", Chişinău, 2000, pp. 47-50; Idem, *Testamentele din Țara Moldovei – continuare a tradiției bizantine* [Wills from Moldavia - the extension of the Byzantine Traditions], in *Tradiție și reformă în dreptul românesc* [Customs and Reforms in the Romanian Law], Iași, 2008, pp. 20-29.

³⁴ Lilia Zabolotnaia, *Situația femeilor din Moldova în Evul Mediu. Imaginea, statutul social, drepturile și obligații (secolul al XVI-lea - mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea)* [Women's condition in Middle-aged Moldova. The image, social status, rights and responsibilities (16th C – mid 17th C)], in *ROMANIA: A Crossroads of Europe*, The Center for Romanian Studies. Iași-Oxford-Palm Beach-Portland, 2002, pp. 43-45; Idem, *Femeile în Moldova medievală (sec. XVI-XVII)* [Women in Medieval Moldova, 16th -18th centuries], in „Revista de Istorie a Moldovei”, nr. 4, Chişinău, 2007, pp. 74-85; Idem, *Правовое положение женщин в средневековой Молдове* [The legal status of Middle-aged Moldavian Women], in *Гендерное равенство в России. Материалы международной конференции Правовое положение женщин в России: вчера, сегодня, завтра* [Gender equality in Russia. Proceedings of the International Conference "The legal status of women in Russia: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow". Program of the International Conference], St. Petersburg, 2008, pp. 128-132.

are: the image of the woman³⁵, women's daily life³⁶, the legal status of women and its reflection in the regulatory acts and documents³⁷, woman and power³⁸, social and legal status of the women³⁹, the role and the forms of women's participation in social and political and public life⁴⁰, family relationships⁴¹, etc.

³⁵ Idem, *Chipul femeii din Moldova reflectat în documentele interne și relatările străinilor (sec. XVI-XV)* [The Moldavian Women's Appearance reflected in inland writings and foreigners' statements (16th-17th centuries)], in „TYRAGETIA”, Chișinău, 2006, pp. 149-157; Ibidem, *Images of man and woman. Medieval Moldova as described by the missionaries (XVII-XVIII)*, in *Celebration and every day life in the Grand of Lithuania and its context*, Papers abstracts, Vilnius, 2006, pp. 31-33/

³⁶ Idem, *Unele considerații asupra testamentului Mariei Cneajna, fiica lui Ștefan cel Mare* [Some considerations on Maria Cneajna's, daughter of Stephen the Great testament], in *Rumuni i Polacy w Europie. Historia i dzień dzisiejszy* [Romanians and Polish in Europe's History], Suceava, 2006, pp. 253-264.

³⁷ Idem, *Impactul dreptului bizantin asupra legislației Țărilor Române* [The influence of the byzantine law on the legislation of the Romanian Principalities], in *Materialele conferinței „Relațiile moldo-elene din adâncul secolelor”* [Materials of Conference *Moldo-Greek Relations, from the bottom of the centuries*], Chișinău, 2006, pp.38-42; Idem, *Considerații privind divorțul lui Alexandru cel Bun cu Ryngalla-Anna* [Reflections on the divorce of Alexander the Good and Ryngalla-Anna], in „Revista de Istorie a Moldovei”, nr. 1, Chișinău, 2008, pp. 144-152.

³⁸ Idem, *Raporturile dinastice și rolul „diplomației de mariaj” în relațiile moldo-polone în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIV-lea – mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea* [The Dynasty Affairs and the Role of the “Marriage Diplomacy” in the Moldo-Polish matters during the second half of the 14th –mid 17th century], Chișinău, 2004, 192 p.; Idem, *Între politică și destin. Ruxandra, fiica lui Vasile Lupu, văzută prin prisma seculară a istoriei* [Between Politics and Destiny. Ruxandra, daughter of Vasile Lupu, seen by Secular History], in “Revista de Istorie a Moldovei”, nr. 3, Chișinău, 2008, pp. 16-45; Idem, *Unele fragmente din viața privată a Movilencilor Maria și Anna* [Some excerpts from the private life of Maria and Anna Moghila], in *W kręgu relacji polsko-rumuńskich. Materiały z sympozjumu* [In the world of Polish-Romanian Relationships. Materials of symposium], Suceava, 2008, pp. 54-68.

³⁹ Idem, *Les droits des femmes de Moldavie en Moyen Âge*, in „Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny” [Eastern Yearbook of Humanities], Tom II, Lublin-Radzyń Podlaski-Siedlce, 2005, pp. 55-61; Idem, *Dreptul femeilor la proprietate și moștenire* [Women's Right to Property and Inheritance], in “Revista de Istorie a Moldovei”, nr. 1-2, Chișinău, 2006, pp. 17-28.

⁴⁰ Idem, *Movilencele și descendenții. Pagini necunoscute. Unele contribuții la genealogia descendenților al lui Ieremia Movilă* [The unknown sides of the Moghila female descendants. A number of contributions to the Ieremia Moghila family line], in “TYRAGETIA”, vol. I [XVI], nr. 2, Chișinău, 2008, pp. 27-42.

⁴¹ Idem, *Condiții de încheiere a căsătoriei în Evul Mediu. Studiu comparativ* [The Medieval Marital Union Settlements. A Comparative Analysis], in “TYRAGETIA”, vol. I [XVI], nr. 2, Chișinău, 2007, pp. 107-113.; Idem, *Femeia și condițiile de încheiere a căsătoriei în Evul Mediu* [The Woman and the conditions for Marriage in the Middle Ages], in *Satul românesc în contextul european* [Romanian village in the European context], Bacău, 2007, pp. 205-208; Idem, *Între lege și obicei* [Between law and custom], in *Civilizația medievală și modernă în Moldova* [Medieval and Modern Civilization in Moldova], Chișinău, 2006,

Argumentation

In this study, special attention is paid to the influence of the Ottoman factor on the women's life style, such as: clothing, behaviour, food, etc. The information on women's clothing, hairstyles in the Romanian principalities, is quite controversial. Besides, in the statements of foreigners of the XVI century it was frequently mentioned the difference between women in Moldova and Wallachia in this regard. A diplomat from Dalmatia, Anton Verancsics (Verantio) (1504-1543), in his work entitled *Description of Transylvania, Moldavia and Wallachia*, said: "*Their customs are barbaric. As to the clothing, they do not look like the Wallachian, who practically took over the fashion of the Turks, while Moldovans firmly adhere to their own clothes and if someone, tried to take over anything from clothing or weapons from the Turks, was to be punished by death*"⁴². Continuing, Anton Verancsics highlighted the fact, that "*The Wallachians has no rules on clothing [...] almost all are dressed like Turks, while the Moldovan boyars adorn themselves with numerous rings, dress in clothes made of silk, embroidered with gold thread, colourful fringed, wear chain around the neck and bracelets and various other decorations that are hung from the left shoulder, across the chest, the right hand to the foot*"⁴³. A similar description left Nicolaus Olahus, who wrote that "*Moldovans are the same language, traditions, customs, and the same religion, but they differ in the clothes to a certain extent*" (in comparison with the Wallachians, our note)⁴⁴.

John Newbery visited two cities, Iasi and Renee (Tomarovo) in 1582, and left a lively description of them. These cities were significantly different from each other in terms of administrative and functional significance, ethnic, religious, etc. In particular, he wrote: "*In Tomarovo children are like Indians, with small earrings. Women wear huge silver buttons, which hung over the ears and cloth, twisted in a large wreath on the head, which is very similar to the Turkish turban, and on top of it, a smaller blade, the upper part of the garment is decorated around with large silver buttons. And young girls are wearing braided hair, over which hung silver coins, and on top of the head a round silver clasp, adorned with precious stones; the sleeves are*

pp. 404-420; Idem, *Dreptul femeilor la divorț în Moldova medievală (secolele XVI-XVII)* [Women's right to divorce in Medieval Moldova, the 16th-17th centuries], in "*TYRAGETIA*", Chișinău, 2005, pp. 148-154; Idem, *Un document necunoscut despre viața privată. Un act de divorț din 1795* [An unknown document about privacy. A divorce act from 1795], in "*Revista de Istorie a Moldovei*", nr. 3, Chișinău, 2007, pp. 86-92.

⁴²M.M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (eds.), *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign Travellers about the Romanian Countries], vol. I, București, 1968, p. 404.

⁴³*Ibidem*, p. 407.

⁴⁴*Ibidem*, p. 488.

*wide and short, on the shoulders they wear two large silver circles, the belt they have five or six knives, and the neck is no jewellery. Common people are mostly barefoot*⁴⁵. We are of the opinion that the compilers of the first volume of the collection *Foreign travellers about the Romanian Countries*, who claim that John Newbery, describes children and women of Tatar origin. At the same time, on his visit in the city of Iasi, John Newbury, wrote that there, “*Women wear Turkish dresses and big turbans with 2-3 discs, decorated with stones on all sides by a turban, dress at the front bottom, are decorated with stones and they wear earrings like large disks with a string of fine pearls, well-fixed to both ears, and the girls wear with the decoration on the head, like the church mitre, on which the hair is laid across, and some children wear with a twisted thread in their ears like the Indians*”⁴⁶.

Considering the John Newbury notes, we can assume that the author was likely to describe urban women of superior social condition, upper classes from the cities of Reni and Iasi, who probably belonged to the aristocratic homes of Turkish origin, possibly, Moldovan, who imitated and dressed accordingly, with the Turkish fashion. This is evidence from the sources of the first half of the XVII century. The description of children, is rather unexpected, especially their likeness with Indian children, which finds no confirmation in the sources of the era.

The Italian monk, Niccolo Barsi (1633-1639)⁴⁷ pointed out that women in Moldova dressed in the Turkish fashion: “*Moldovans dress like the Turks, from which they differ only in that the latter are a forelock of hair, which begins from the crown of the head and reach the forehead on the width of three fingers somewhere. The Moldavian women, as I say, don't cover their faces, while Turkish women always have the face covered [...]*”⁴⁸. In his writings Niccolo Barsi also compares women of different faiths: “*Moldavian women differ from the Catholic ones with the fact that they wear earrings*”⁴⁹. This description is deeply confusing, because in this period, the whole of Europe wore earrings, including men, especially of aristocratic origin. It is interesting that the *earrings as a decoration never played a central role in worship*.

The famous Marco Bandini who lived for many years in Moldova and knew the traditions, customs and manners of the Moldovan people, wrote about the imitation of the eastern fashion. In particular, during 1646, he wrote: “*The clothes are long to toe in the Turkish custom, and other eastern nations. They especially like to wear silk, and though they often do not have enough bread to somehow satisfy a*

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, vol. II, București, 1970, pp. 515-516.

⁴⁶ The following portray does not relate to Moldavian female's clothing (see the remarks of the authors, *Ibidem*, p. 517).

⁴⁷ Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu – Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (eds.), *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign Travelers about the Romanian Countries], vol. V, București, 1973, pp. 69-72.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 80.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 78.

*hungry stomach, but as to the clothing they are very demanding, they all look like small barons. Silver and gold buttons sparkle on the chest and sleeves. Outerwear or <toga> with long sleeves is especially worn. A quilting (lining) of sable fur is often worn not only by the boyars, but by merchants, too. Women and girls garments are similar, but not with long sleeves. Women and girls of aristocratic origin wear expensive rings, belts, bracelets, stones and pearls, but men only rings*⁵⁰.

We believe that these discrepancies in the description of foreigners are due to various reasons. First of all, the descriptions are rather subjective, since each of them, had their own vision of the things. Secondly, it's important to mention that foreign travellers described different cities, which are heterogeneous by their ethnic and social composition, as well as the various time intervals. Besides, we should take into consideration, that the travellers spent a different period of time, short for some, and on the contrary, long for others, who lived for many years in certain areas. There also was a natural and regional difference between the cities. Third, it was important, whether foreigners dwelled in the area. There was also a big difference between king's palace, aristocratic estate (house), common urban areas, craftsmen or agricultural districts, and home of the poorest segments of the population.

Conclusions

In summary, I would like to emphasize that the present state of historical literature of Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova on women's history can be divided into three thematic categories:

- General works on the Middle Ages;
- Research into the private life of the era;
- Thematic monographs and articles on women's history.

There are no specific studies on the influence of the Ottoman factor on the status of women:

I. First, in countries which the Islamization of the population occurred – for example, Bulgaria – the women who converted to Islam changed not only religion, but also the status: a. familial; b. social; c. legal (property-legal relations).

II. Second, in the unincorporated and non-Muslim countries, presence of Ottoman domination was noted. Particularly, in Moldova, in some cases, Moldovans rulers had to ask permission to marry for themselves and their daughters. An illustrative example is the ruler Vasile Lupu, who had to get approval from the Sultan for his second marriage to Catherine of Circassia. The youngest daughter of Vasile Lupu for years was held hostage in Istanbul (where, incidentally, got excellent education!), and then only with the permission of the Sultan got married.

⁵⁰*Ibidem*, p. 330.

III. Third, as sources indicate the era, the Ottoman factor affected the way of life of the conquered peoples: clothes, food, hairstyle etc.

However, in our view, the topic deserves special attention and requires united efforts for publishing a collective work of researchers in the field of women's history, from the countries conquered by the Ottoman Empire. In particular, on the example of women's history through the prism of historical, anthropological and interdisciplinary approach will permit to:

- avoid asymmetrical interpretation of historical events and processes;
- identify aspects of national and cultural identity of the conquered peoples;
- include in the study the problems of everyday life, spirituality and the role of the individual;
- consider the process of crossing, interpenetration and interaction of cultures, the exchange of cultures;
- avoid politicization and reinterpretation of history.

Research in the field of women's history, will help researchers to move out of the plane of political area into the anthropological research.