

## Military Justice, Regulations and Discipline in Early Modern Transylvanian Armies (XVI-XVII Century)

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### Abstract

*In the early modern period the military organization of European states suffered significant changes, some of them regarding the internal regulations of armies. The state tried to impose a more efficient control on armies by issuing regulations on matters of: discipline, maintaining security in military camps, organizing the marches, provisioning and last but not least reducing the negative impact on civil population. This tendency was also manifesting in the principality of Transylvania, a state with a rather short period of existence coinciding with this period of transition towards modernity (1541-1691). Regulations such as those issued by Steven Báthory or those from the second half of the XVII century, together with occasional articles issued by the estate assemblies tried to impose measures of internal organization meant to increase the control of the prince on the military structures of the country.*

In the early modern period armies became an efficient instrument of central authorities, contributing to the development of absolute monarchies. Decreasing the power of privileged estates and their representative political institutions (estate assemblies) was a process that also involved aspects regarding military organization. The shift of power from estates to monarch, in the matter of military authority, affected the inner organization of armies during the XVI-XVII centuries. During this period, a general tendency of increasing the control of the state over armies can be perceived throughout Europe, with specific developments for each region of the continent.

Early modern monarchs were preoccupied, more than their medieval predecessors, with imposing military regulations in order to improve their control over the armies mobilized to pursue their political objectives and ambitions. These internal regulations were also determined by innovations in tactics, weapon technology and other aspects that changed the nature of warfare during the early modern age. An increase in the number of soldiers, the longer duration of military campaigns, and a new tactical approach due to the spreading of fire arms (volley fire and countermarch)<sup>1</sup> required rigorous rules and regulations in order to maintain discipline, both on the battlefield and in military camps.

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Limits to Revolutions in Military Affairs: Maurice of Nassau, The Battle of Nieuwpoort (1600), and the Legacy*, in „The Journal of Military History”, nr. 71, 2007, p. 337-338.