

BETWEEN THE ITALIAN CRISIS AND THE TRANSYLVANIAN BORDERS OF THE REALM: BAYEZID II'S CAMPAIGN OF 1484 AND ITS HUNGARIAN AFTERMATH

One may say that a *weak* sultan, a diplomat, caused more damage to Christendom than his predecessor, the *godless* warlord as his son called the strategist. Bayezid II *Veli's* (the Holy) Christian career could justify such a surprising assessment, given the fact that his father was Mehmed II *Fatih* (the Conqueror), not only by the 'Djem affair', which should have been fatal to Bayezid. Under Bayezid's reign, for instance, Bosnia and Herzegovina were turned into Ottoman provinces (1482-1483), the harbors of Cetatea Albă (Akkerman) and Chilia were conquered (1484), Malaga was burnt (1487) and Modon was taken (1500)¹.

Such facts given practical substance to an assesment that applies to a reign, which was in fact a race for survival that ended badly, in the early 1510', due to Bayezid's sons, namely to the future Selim I *Yavuz* (the Cruel). During this political run, the great turning point seems to have been the summer of 1484. Contested by his own subjects, mocked by the Muslim world and despised by the Christian powers who debated over the custody of Bayezid's brother and rival, Djem, the sultan won his probably 'decisive victories'².

The Stakes of 1484. In late spring 1484, Venice, Naples, Rhodes, Buda (Ofen) and Suceava, felt threatened by the Ottoman war preparations. To different degrees, their fears were justified. Eventually, Moldavia, the harbors under her control, was the target of the attack. In fact, Moldavia had been the Porte's target since the beginning of the year. In spite of his costly power displays, Bayezid was not willing, at the time, to risk an open confrontation with a Catholic power³.

Domestic Challenges and Foreign Responses. Faced with major foreign and domestic troubles, Bayezid II was compelled to promise a highly profitable campaign for those that would have followed him. Namely the Janissaries, which had rebelled against him in the winter of 1483-1484, were asking for

¹ E. g. BNM, Cod. Ital. VII-421 (1067), f. 584r-585r (10th of August 1500; abstract: *Regesten Maximilian*, III-2, no. 14338, p. 890); *Historia*, p. 182-188; Beldiceanu 1964, p. 40-42; Masala 1983, p. 122-123.

² For instance, in this respect: HHStA, R.H.K, *Fridericiana*, fasc. 5-3, f. 75r (3rd of August 1482); Beldiceanu-Steinherr 1974, p. 35-37; Allouche 1983, p. 49-54.

³ For an overview of the question: *Campania*, p. 187-274; *Documente-Cairo*, p. 34-35; 22 *dispacci*; Beldiceanu 1960; Cristea 2004a.

money and for a proof of the sultan's military abilities. The unique privileges issued by Bayezid II on the occasion of this 'sudden' campaign also show that the campaign was a matter of survival⁴.

The campaign was a success. Within less than a month (5th of July-prior to the 2nd of August), Stephen III, lost between 3 (Chilia, Cetatea Albă, Sevastople) and 6 harbors (Chilia and Licostomo, Cetatea Albă and *Czernigrad, Sevastople* and Ilice). Moldavia lost its entire maritime façade, which, at the time, stretched, apparently, beyond the Dniestr Mounds⁵.

Ottoman-Moldavian negotiations and arrangements, namely those of 1486 and 1501-1503, failed to significantly change the situation in Moldavia's favor. Half of her urban population now belonged to the *Turk*. For a time, Stephen seems to have lost his capital city of Suceava too. He no longer held the *keys* to Hungary (Chilia) and Poland (Cetatea Albă)⁶.

Neither Poland, nor Hungary came to his aid, more than allowed by their own safety. He had requested Polish aid. But, in August 1484, when the harbors had already fallen, Poland still believed that the sultan would not attack Stephen. Due to the treaties of 1475, 1480-1482, Matthias Corvinus was bound to aid Stephen. Hungarian military rulings and the domestic context prevented him from rendering any useful support to his ally and vassal⁷.

Sounds and Signs of Silence and Blood. The events of 1484 were an embarrassment for the Christian powers of East-Central Europe, in particular. They had failed to defeat, to repel, or at least to contain, the 'weaking' Bayezid II. Still, he did not over-emphasize these matters. This was not so much a question of balanced tactics but of methods of conquest, contrary to Bayezid's diplomatic image⁸.

Stephen's army came to the rescue of Chilia and was crushed outside the city. The survivors were all executed (crucified?) at the city gates, which fell shortly after, if it had not already fallen prior to the clash. The mass-killings shocked the inhabitants of Cetatea Albă. They surrendered almost immediately after the sultan set foot in front of the city⁹.

⁴ E. g. *Turkish Documents*, p. 19-21; *Historia politica*, p. 54; *Oruç*, p. 43-44; *Hanivaldanus*, p. 212-215; *Löwenklau* 1588, p. 51; 1595, p. 29.

⁵ *Codex*, III, no. 224, p. 382; *22 dispacci*, no. 24a, p. 82; *Historia*, p. 187; *Cronici Turcești*, I, p. 99 (*Aşik Paşa Zade*); *Historia politica*, p. 54; *Malipiero*, p. 135; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 472; Andreescu, 1997, p. 185.

⁶ *22 dispacci*, no. 34a, p. 174; *Turkish Documents*, pp. 24-25; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 477; Beldiceanu-Grammont-Cazacu 1982, p. 50; Gemil 1983, p. 233-234.

⁷ *Codex*, III, no. 309, p. 330; MDE, III, no. 98, p. 135; *Wapowski*, p. 3-5; *Bonfini* 1936-1941, IV, p. 124, 129; Iorga 1899, p. 160-161.

⁸ In these matters, see also *Cronici Moscova*, p. 441-442; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 497; *Malipiero*, p. 181-182; Simon, 2005a, p. 234-242.

⁹ *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 472, 476-477 (edited also in *Hurmuzaki*, VIII, nos. 29-30, p. 27); see MHS, I-

The Ottoman sources kept a perfect silence on these events. The Venetians, which recorded had actually occurred, did not remind the sultan of them, but greeted his envoy with the news of his master's victory. Regardless, of their rite, for motifs that stretched from personal shame to collective failure, the Christians played along. As time went by the duration of the Ottoman sieges was prolonged, up to a month in later Ottoman sources¹⁰.

Back in Chilia, on the 2nd of August, Bayezid II had announced his complete victory to Ragusa. He soon realized that his victory could be detrimental to him, if he did not provide an alternative perspective. Other examples of such *Christian* acceptance of a *Muslim* story are hard to find. In time, several explanations were therefore offered for the events of 1484¹¹.

I. *Christian Troubles and Turkish Concerns.*

By his Moldavian campaign, sultan Bayezid had tried to settle the domestic and foreign troubles caused by his 'captive' brother and contender Djem. What was to become over time, in particular, a major Ottoman success seemed for the moment to have brought more reasons for concern for the Porte. Since early 1484, a clash with the Catholic world seemed unavoidable. The same appeared to be (more than) true at the end of the same year¹².

1. *The Continental Balance and Christendom's Ottoman Frontier.* Pope Sixtus IV wanted to exit the Italian corner in which he had been placed by the *War of Ferrara* (1482-1484). His gateway was the crusade, both to the West (Granada) and to the East. Yet, to the East, he basically had no ruler to rely on. Matthias was negotiating with Bayezid. Casimir (Kazimierz) IV and Frederic (Friedrich) III did the same, directly or by Venetian means. All three were hostile at the time to the dying pope. Still, prior to the 1st of April, Sixtus IV launched the crusade. Only a *Greek* seems to have responded in the East¹³.

The Lords of the Danubian Border. Christendom's Ottoman land and sea frontier was divided up between Rhodes, Venice, Hungary, Ragusa and Moldavia, the latter states being Buda's vassals. In 1483-1484, Rome could not rely on Venice, her Italian enemy and the Porte's (reluctant) ally. The Hospitaller Knights

1, no. 9, p. 554; I-2, no. 14, p. 134; EMC, no. 169, p. 216, *Documente Cairo*, p. 38-40.

¹⁰ E. g. 22 *Dispacci*, no. 34a, p. 174; MDE, III, no. 33, p. 36-37; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 476; *Cronicile*, p. 51-54 (*Letopisețul de la Putna I, II* [The Chronicle of Putna. I and II]); *Aşik Paşa Zade*, p. 99-101.

¹¹ E. g. Ghiță 1974, p. 120; Grigoraș 1982, p. 207; Székely-Gorovei 1998, p. 49-64; Pippidi 2004, p. 505; Simon 2005, p. 211-216.

¹² See, for instance, 22 *dispacci*, no. 28a, p. 124; *Historia politica*, p. 54; Inalcik 1989, p. 337, 339; Nyitrai 1999, p. 261-266.

¹³ ASV, Misc., Arm., II-30, f. 104 (109)v – 105 (110)r (1st of April 1484); ASVe, S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 30, cc. 65v, 93v; reg. 31, cc. 117r-v, 136v (23rd of March, 9th of June 1482, 16th of December 1483, 17th of February 1483 MV=1484); *Index*, no. 4435, p. 503; no. 4462, p. 506; MDE, III, nos. 9-15, p. 12-20.

kept Rhodes safe by their custody of Djem and had no intention of breaking their deal with Bayezid. Ragusa paid tribute to the Porte. This left Rome with Hungary and Moldavia¹⁴.

Matthias was in a Catholic dead-end. His Habsburg and Jagellonian conflicts had already severely limited his anti-Ottoman actions. Still, even if the circumstances had been different, his chances of success in a confrontation with the Porte would have been rather small. He therefore did what he had done for a least a decade. He threatened Rome with siding with her enemies both within and outside Christendom and negotiated with the Ottomans¹⁵.

Matthias talked to Bayezid who wanted to reach an arrangement with him. The king talked to Djem who wanted to be entrusted to the king, the only one he saw capable to place him on the Ottoman throne. Matthias also talked to Ottoman beys which wanted to poison Bayezid. The king's confidence grew as everybody seemed to turn to him. Though he was at war with Frederic, he avoided, over the first half of 1484, to seal a treaty with Bayezid II¹⁶.

Over the last four years, the king had kept a similar political line on Christendom's terrestrial Ottoman front, of which he controlled, directly, 75%. This had repercussions on his vassal Stephen III, who ruled over some 20% of the frontier area. In the summer of 1482, he nearly lost his throne. Still, he did not conclude any lasting official deal with Bayezid II. In spring 1484, Stephen even challenged the sultan. He apparently relied on Rome's calls and Buda's promises, which had in fact brought him to the desperate situation of 1482¹⁷.

Italian Aims and Compromises. The Christian context was inauspicious for such Moldavian gestures. Genoa's crusader enthusiasm of 1481-1482 had been lost due to Italian warfare. Still, the hope of retaking Caffa was kept alive. Venice had been excommunicated because of the Italian feuds (1483). Keeping peace with the Porte was more than ever a necessity for the republic. Bayezid exploited Venice's Ottoman weakness, like Mehmed II had done before. In 1480, he had taken Otranto from Ferdinand of Aragon, the king of Naples and Venice's arch-enemy¹⁸.

¹⁴ For instance: Thuasne 1890, p. 67-71, 268-271, 281-282; Setton 1976-1984, II, p. 378-384; Vatin 1997, p. 28-33, 100-101.

¹⁵ E. g. ASVe, S.S., *Senato Mar*, reg. 12, c. 12r (21st of June 1484); *Epistolae*, pars IV, no. 27, p. 56-57; MKL, II, no. 162, p. 273-275; no. 169, p. 286 (see also: no. 140, p. 244); MDE, III, no. 17, p. 23.

¹⁶ E. g. ASV, Misc., Arm., II-56, f. 356 (357)v – 357 (358)r (28th of October 1483); ASVe, S.S., *Delibera zioni*, reg. 31, cc. 10v, 45v (10th of April, 22nd of July 1483); HHStA, S.A., A.D.S., *Hungarica*, I, A.A., fasc. 1-A, f. 116r (26th of April 1483); MOL, DL 38886 (11th of April 1483); see also MHS, I-2, no. 14, p. 134.

¹⁷ UKB, Mk 9, *mikulovsky rukopis*, f. 276r-277r (20th of August 1482 and after); MDE, III, no. 33, p. 36-37; *Actae*, nos. 32-34, p. 34-37; *Oruç*, p. 37-38; *Hanivaldanus*, p. 200-201; *Historia politica*, p. 54.

¹⁸ E. g. ASG, A.S., *Materie Politiche. Scritti in lingua orientale ed africana*, 2737 D, nn. [Docu-

In 1484, king Ferdinand was still Venice's adversary. He was also Matthias' influential father-in-law. In spite of the mutual attempts of reconciliation (late 1483-early 1484), the king of Hungary was still at odds with Rome (however Naples' ally) and, namely, Venice. Nevertheless, he had to take consideration of Ferdinand's interests and also of his own. In both cases, the goodwill of the papacy was of considerable importance for Matthias¹⁹.

After the fall of Venetian Negroponte (1470), Ferdinand, Venice's friend at the time, broke off relations to Mehmed. He thus became a prime Ottoman target. In later years, the king unsuccessfully tried to restore his Ottoman ties. In particular after the 'crusade of Otranto' (1480-1481), his kingdom was a constant potential target for the Porte. The very contested monarch needed Rome's Italian and crusader support and Matthias' influence and military pressure, in order to be protected, by diplomacy and warfare, in front of the *Turk*²⁰.

Without Rome's consent, Matthias could not become master of Djem. Abducting the sultan's brother was no real option, though it was attempted. Furthermore, Ferdinand's downfall would have increased Matthias' isolation. Since 1481-1482, on the continental level, he could rely only on Bavaria and Moldavia. Already trapped between North and South on the political level, because of his dynastic conflicts, Matthias had to protect himself and Ferdinand from Bayezid whether by arms (the option favored by Rome) or by treaties²¹.

2. *Between Crises.* The only way out of the 'domestic crisis' that tormented Christendom, namely in the Italian Peninsula and in East-Central Europe, was an attack on the Ottoman sultan. It was also a far-fetched solution given the same context that called for her. The same was true for the Porte. Antonio Bonfini's words, used, 'from' the reign of Louis (Lajos) I of Anjou for Matthias' rule (*pacem domi foris bellum*), applied also for the politics of Bayezid II²².

The Porte and the Peninsula. Since 1402, the Ottoman Empire had not known such a crisis as that of the early 1480'. Such high-ranking Ottoman figure as Djem had never before been in *Christian* hands. Such facts diminished the proven practical advantages of the Ottoman Empire. By his attack on Moldavia,

menti Greco-Bizantini], [dos. G] (13th of September 1480, 2nd of February, 31st of December 1481); ASVe, S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 31, cc. 132r, 136r-137r (3rd, 17th of February 1483 MV=1484); *Malipiero*, p. 122, 133.

¹⁹ For instance: EMC, nos. 159-161, p. 206-207; no. 166, p. 212; *Frammenti*, p. 40; Cusin 1937, II, p. 213-214.

²⁰ See *Lega*, no. 119, p. 488; *Oklevelek-Hunyadiak*, no. 48, p. 362; no. 50, p. 364; Setton 1976-1984, II, p. 373-378; Simon 2005b, p. 11-43.

²¹ See also Szaklály 1979, p. 94-95; Nehring 1989, p. 151-152; Vatin 1997, p. 95-102; Simon 2004, p. 207-209, 218-219 (in particular).

²² HHStA, S.A., A.D.S., *Hungarica*, I, A.A., fasc. 1-A, f. 116r (26th of April; abstract: *Quellen*, no. 166, p. 113); MOL, DL 38886 (11th of April 1483); *Bonfini* (1936-1941), II, p. 249; Housley (1982), p. 192-208.

Bayezid took on a significant risk, but also fully exploited the misunderstandings that had already rendered inefficient the Moldavian and Hungarian attacks of 1481-1482, after Mehmed II's death and during the Ottoman civil war, fought namely in Asia Minor²³.

Since mid-May 1484, Venice knew that Moldavia was Bayezid's target. The information did not reach Naples. Ferdinand's kingdom was the other major Ottoman target, according to the rumors of those months. Still, Venice too was very cautious. The memory of 1480 was still vivid. Basically at the same time, the Ottomans had attacked Rhodes and Otranto. More over, the *Turk* usually indicated false goals before the actual attack took place elsewhere²⁴.

Venice's fears were illustrated also by her efforts to conclude, in her favor and in Rome's clear disadvantage, an Italian peace. The peace was sealed, at Bagnolo (7th of August), too late from a Moldavian perspective, and made out of the former enemies Venice and Naples allies. In late July, Venice had politely refused to accept the Ottoman fleet in her harbors, as requested by Bayezid. Nevertheless, the sultan had other important Italian supporters²⁵.

Florence and Milan were his other major Italian pillars. Milan's Ottoman tradition was no secret. Milan had endorsed the sultan more than it had supported the crusade. Florence was equally glad to welcome Ottoman envoys before Lorenzo di Medici clearly overstretched his abilities, trying to pressure Bayezid by his involvement in the Djem crisis. In such times, Frederic's, Cazimir's and Matthias' short-comings seemed to be only a bonus for the sultan²⁶.

Milan and Moldavia. The Ottoman question connected the Italian problems to those of Hungary and Moldavia. The connection had grown stronger since the mid 1470'. In the summer of 1484, due to the Djem affair and the parties involved in the War of Ferrara, it reached an all-time peak, prior to the events of 1497-1499, as Milan took detailed notice of the Ottoman plans, via Naples. In certain respects, Milan's network of spies and envoys was better even than that of Venice²⁷.

²³ ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, *Ungheria*, cart. 649, fasc. 3, nn (27th of April 1484); *Commynes*, II, p. 308; Babinger 1951, p. 349-388.

²⁴ ASM, A.D.S., Potenze Estere, *Napoli*, cart. 244, fasc. 2, nn (1st, 7th, 12th of July); BMC, *Manoscritti*, Mss. 364, f. 352r-367r (26th-29th of October 1483); *Sendschreiben*, no. 1, p. 91; *Campania*, no. 4, p. 228.

²⁵ ASVe, S.S. *Deliberazioni*, reg. 32, c. 68r (21st of July), 22 *Dispacci*, no. 36a, p. 188; no. 40, p. 224; *Campania*, no. 3, p. 224; *Da Volterra*, p. 136; *Malipiero*, p. 136; see also *Dokumente*, IV-1, no. 101, p. 87.

²⁶ E. g. Motta 1889, p. 145-148; Babinger 1963b, p. 311-312; 1976, p. 185-191; Theunissen 1998, 2, p. 137-138.

²⁷ ASM, A.D.S., Potenze Estere, *Napoli*, cart. 244, fasc. 2, nn (9th of July 1484; the document is highly damaged); MDE, II, no. 46, p. 76; IV, no. 129, p. 182; see *Sanudo*, II, cols. 289, 910, 953, 958.

[...] *Delle cose del Turco: aviso la Vostra Excellentia noviter essere venuto di Constantinopoli/ uno nepuote del conte camerlengo, che referisse essere partito da Constantinopoli trenta giorni fa, et lo Grande Turco essere levato da dicta cita per andare ad campersi contra/ lo Signor di Valachia, et questo per che era stato tre anni che non haveva pagato lo censo de/ certe castelle che tene censuario nomine da sua Signoria, et havendogli mandato ad offerire/ di pagarli di presente, lo ha recusato, con dire che vole le castelle, et ch'el prefato Signor di Valachia hagli risposto che le castelle non sono sue, ma sono del serenissimo Re di Ungaria. Questo/ medesimo etiam se affirma per lettere de Ragusei del primo del presente, per le quale refferiscono/ esse Gran Turco havere misso nel Mar Maggiore centocinquanta velle per volere debellare/ questo Signor di Valachia, dicendo che questa armata l'haveva instructa ad effecto di/ mandarla parte in Puglia ad instantia di Venetiani, et parte contra Rodiani, perche gli era significato suo fratello essere morto. Et che essendoli persuaso da uno grande/ maestro suo assistente de drizare questa armata contra lo Signor di Valachia haveva/ mutata sententia, et sequito il suo consiglio facilitando questa impresa, et persuadendoli/ <verso> [...]ta puoi poteria venire alla impresa di qua. Narrando apresso/ [...] Re di Ungaria havere mandati li soi ambasciatori per/ [...] pace et havere nominato in essi capituli per adherente lo dicto Signore/ [...] non haverli voluto consentire ne acceptare la pace; parendoci/ [...]gnosa cossa havere facto tante apparato contra esso Signore per ritrarsi puoi/ [...], et per questo lo prefato Re di Ungaria li haveva mandato/ [...] uno valoroso capitaneo con grande copia di gente per aiutarlo. Et che esso/ [...] sera munito et fortificato talmente che non temeva lo advento suo/ [...]evasi anchora in dicte lettere che la gentedarme del prefato Signore Gran Turco/ era malcontenta da la sua Signoria et che universalmente desideravano lo fratello/ confortaria essi Ragosei la sua Maiesta di havere esso fratello nelle mano/ per secureza dello stato suo et di tutta la Christianità, significandoli ch'el/ prefato Signor Gran Turco haveva preso gran sdigno ad emulatione che Venetiani/ havessero preso Galipoli, et intrati in questo reame [...]* (Naples, 9th of July 1484).

In early July, almost unique informations, even if a month old, since the first reports had been sent from Istanbul to Ragusa, reached Milan. The former Genoese colonies now under Moldavian control were viewed as 'the harbors of the Hungarian', a designation to be found only in late Byzantine and Ottoman sources. Matthias efforts to gather troops against the *Turk*, known in particular from his unsuccessful domestic calls of mid June or even late July, were no secret to Milan, due to the agency of its able 'spy' in Naples Branda di Castilione²⁸.

²⁸ Matthias troubles, in his attempts to come to Stephen's aid, both prior and after the conquest of the harbors (18th of June, 26th of July, 1st, 10th-11th, 16th, 18th of August, 16th of September):

The domestic problems of the sultan that had compelled him to order a campaign became known only six months later after they had reached their peak, in Milan. Venice had seemingly and naturally made a secret out of them. The delay is rather eloquent and befitting for the uncertainties and rumors that marked the plans, actions and events of 1484. In return, due to Stephen's provocations and Matthias' reluctance to sign a treaty with Bayezid, the sultan's lasting troubles were no secret in Buda and Suceava from early on in the year²⁹.

In terms of rumors, the data on the Venetian conquest of Gallipolis in the early summer of 1484 is intriguing. Venice would not have taken such a risk. However, after refusing to comply with the sultan's maritime demands and eager to retake possession over some of her Aegean possessions lost during the Ottoman-Venetian war (1463-1479), the republic was determined to make the most of the crisis of 1484. A conflict with the Porte was seemingly not excluded as an option. Still, this depended on the outcome of the eastern clashes³⁰.

II. The Fate of the Harbors

Bayezid conquered the harbors. The Christian powers both far and near failed to react. Venice kept her Ottoman course, which brought her, the same year, the island of Zante. The republic blamed Matthias I and Stephen III for the events. Matthias' double-dealings with the sultan and Stephen's military shortcomings were named as the disaster's main reasons³¹.

This predominantly negative Italian picture of Hungarian and Moldavian actions of 1484, though more true, than false, can also be ascribed to the Ottoman diplomatical channels in the peninsula. Bayezid II made use of Mehmed II's connections, as well as of his own, more recent ones, established during his combats with Djem. Venice's Ottoman concerns, Milan's and Florence's eagerness to protect their Italian stands, gave credibility to Ottoman speech³².

ESM, Acta radicalia, 27-2-15 (copy: MOL, DF 236551); JNSzML, Oklevelek, no. 2 (copy: DF 283754); MOL, DL 56173, 83909-83911, 83916, 101774, 102629; SOAB, B.V.L., *Középkori gyűjtés*, no. 2350 (copy: DF 215104); SOAL, A.C.L., *Mohács előtti oklevelek*, 17-59 (copy: DF 265307), VML, Szentgál, no. 74 (copy: DF 282709); Thálloczy 1879, Appendix, no. 71, p. 205; *Oklevelek-Hunyadok*, no. 50, p. 364; *Relationes*, no. 6, p. 287. *The harbors of the Hungarian: FHDR*, no. LXXII-5, 6, 7, pp. 560-562; no. LXXIII (*Manolis Slavos*), p. 567. In this last respect, it has to be stressed out also that, in December 1485, Cetatea Albă was also named *dy Deuthsche Weysenburgk* (*Acta Stanów*, I, no. 212, p. 392; see also *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 476-477).

²⁹ MHS, I-1, nos. 13-14, p. 554-555; I-2, no. 14, p. 134; *Katona*, IX (XVI), 1484, no. 185 (1095), p. 563; *Oruç*, pp. 37-38; *Hanivaldanus*, p. 200-201; *Historia politica*, p. 54; Vatin, *Sultan Djem*, p. 99-100.

³⁰ ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze Estere, Napoli*, cart. 244, fasc. 2, nn (9th of July); ASVe, S.S. *Deliberazioni*, reg. 32, cc. 20r-v, 25r, 49v, 67v-68v, 92r (28th, 31st of March, 14th of July, 21st of July, 16th of September).

³¹ ASVe, S.S., *Senato Mar*, reg. 12, c. 25r (2nd of November 1484); *Acta graeca*, III, nos. III-23, 24, p. 317-333; 22 *dispacci*, no. 24a, p. 96-100; no. 40a, p. 226-228; see also *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 497.

³² Babinger 1963, 3, p. 305-361; Setton 1976-1984, II, p. 379-385, 391-395; Fubini 2000, p. 25-48.

1. Rules of Engagement. Matthias jailed his chancellor, Péter Varádi, archbishop of Kalocsa, his chief-negotiator with the Porte (August-September 1484). He had just learned from Bayezid that he could not rely on any provisions in the drafted treaty in order to reclaim the harbors. Whether the *Turk* had bribed Varádi or the Hungarian version of the treaty had been stolen, it was a shock. The 1488 edition of Thuróczy's 'official history' of Hungary did not even mention these events³³.

Matthias stood under great domestic and foreign pressure. Throughout 1483, news of his anti-Ottoman war preparations reached Rome. Equally great attention however should have been given to Naples' Ottoman deals. In March 1483, when Bayezid II prepared an attack on Hungary, Ferdinand sent, without consulting with Matthias, a token of goodwill and a peace of fer to Istanbul. Italian-Ottoman arrangements could always backfire on the Danube frontier³⁴.

The Fortresses of the Hungarian. According to the Milanese report from Naples (early July 1484), Bayezid and Matthias, as well as Stephen, already, seemingly, nearing the end of his strength, viewed the harbors (*castelle*) as fiefs entrusted to the Moldavian ruler in exchange for a census. From Bayezid's point of view, the Porte had granted these 'fiefs' to the Ruler. In Matthias' and Stephen's perspective, the harbors were possessions of the Hungarian crown, granted to Suceava³⁵.

This concerned not only Chilia, but also Cetatea Albă, and nourished the formula of *the fortresses of the Hungarian* for two cities, a formula to be found in Byzantine and post-Byzantine short-chronicles. After the fall of the harbors, Matthias tried to reclaim, by diplomatic means, at least Chilia from the sultan. Bayezid politely refused any of the king's requests³⁶.

The 'Hungarian status' of the harbors went back to John (Ioan/ Iancu, János) Hunyadi's time if not sooner. However, unlike Chilia, retaken, from under Walachian-Ottoman control, by Stephen III, with Matthias approval (1465), Cetatea Albă had never housed a Hungarian garrison. It could well be, as in Messembria's case, requested by Hunyadi from Constantine XI and granted to him by the emperor (1452-1453), that Matthias' father requested, in order to support Byzantium and Hungarian interest, Cetatea Albă from one of the

³³ For instance: ASV, Misc., Arm., II-30, f. 88 (93)r-95 (100)r [Early 1485]; *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, nos. 18-19, p. 15-16; VIII, no. 30, p. 27; EMC, no. 175, p. 221; *Acte*, III, p. 63-65; 22 *dispacci*, no. 40a, p. 222.

³⁴ In these matters: *Grèce*, VI, *Dispacci da Napoli di Romania (1479-1483)*, p. 213 (1483); Kissling 1965, p. 42-45.

³⁵ ASM, A.D.S., Potenze Estere, *Napoli*, cart. 244, fasc. 2, nn (9th of July); MDE, III, no. 98, p. 135; *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, no. 18, p. 15; *Acte*, III, p. 85; 22 *dispacci*, no. 28a, p. 124; *Thuróczy* (1746 and 1985).

³⁶ For instance: *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, no. 19, p. 16; VIII, no. 31, p. 28; EMC, no. 169, p. 216; 22 *Dispacci*, no. 28a, p. 124; FHDR, no. LXXII-5, p. 560; Simon 2007a, p. 205-208, 531.

Moldavian rulers loyal to him, Peter (Petru) II, Bogdan II, Stephen III's father, or Alexander (Alexăndrel) II³⁷.

Amongst the provisions of Moldavian-Hungarian treaty of 1475, but only in its Hungarian version, was the return of the Moldavian-Walachian border to the course agreed by Mircea I and Alexander I in the early 1400'. The entire direct grand route connecting Transylvania to the Danube Mounds and at least the harbor of Licostomo, if still functional, was to be lost by Stephen's Moldavia in favor of Walachia easier to control by Buda. As the other Hungarian-Moldavian agreements, in Matthias' and Stephen's time (1462-1463, 1464-1465, 1466-1467, 1480-1482, in particular, or 1489), remain largely unknown, it is difficult to go any further³⁸.

Royal Plans and Actions. In the (late) spring and early summer of 1484, Bayezid II had refused to include Stephen in his treaty with Matthias, as the king requested it. Although, in March, Matthias' denial of his peace proposal had given him great reason for concern, the sultan was not willing to yield in to the king's demands. Initially Matthias had apparently not deemed Moldavia's or at least that of the harbors' explicit inclusion in the treaty as necessary, even though negotiations had started in the fall of 1483. Seemingly, Matthias did not want to ratify the (preliminary) treaty³⁹.

However, the king had given his formal approval of the treaty and Bayezid made use of it. The sultan claimed he had made far too large war preparations for him to give up on his Moldavian campaign. Scared by the fact that Bayezid had outmaneuvered him, diplomatically and militarily, Matthias sent troops, rather few in number, to Stephen's aid. A final version of the Hungarian-Ottoman treaty was therefore probably never concluded, in spite of rumors⁴⁰.

Matthias sent a *valoroso capitaneo* to support Stephen. He was neither Paul (Pál) Kinizsi, count of Timiș (Temes), nor Stephen (István) Báthory, voivode of Transylvania. Both had defensive tasks inside the realm as Matthias rightfully feared an attack on the kingdom (the Banate was raided). Nevertheless, in the fall of 1484, news had reached Venice that *Hungarians, Croats and Walachians*, had destroyed the Ottoman outposts near the harbors⁴¹.

³⁷ E. g. *Documente moldovenești*, II, nos. 215-216, p. 733-740, nos. 220-224, p. 749-755; Pall 1969, p. 123-124.

³⁸ For instance: *Documente Ștefan*, II, nos. 146-147, p. 335, 337; Papacostea 1973, 1, p. 148-150.

³⁹ ASM, A.D.S., Potenze Estere, *Napoli*, cart. 244, fasc. 2, nn (9th of July); MOL, DF 265307 (16th of September 1484); MHS, I-1, nos. 13-14, p. 554-555; I-2, no. 14, p. 134; *Akta Stanów*, I, no. 158, p. 231.

⁴⁰ MOL, DL 56731 (26th of July), 102629 (18th of June, edited in *Relationes*, no. 6, p. 287); Thallóczy 1879, Appendix, no. 71, p. 205; *Acta Beatrici*, no. 43, p. 64; see further Cristea 2003, p. 81-88.

⁴¹ *Ub.*, VII, no. 4559, p. 357; 22 *Dispacci*, no. 28a, p. 124; *Campania*, no. 7, p. 233; *Relationes*, no. 6, p. 287-288; *Bonfini* 1936-1941, IV, p. 129; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 476-477; Simon 2007, p. 346-347.

At that time however Matthias seemed more preoccupied in finding scapegoats for his failures and in planning his Austrian actions. More than before, after the summer of 1484, the capture of Vienna (Wien) had become his 'conquest of Byzantium'. To the south, the king thought to could do little to redeem his honor. Still, an anti-Ottoman success would have come to his advantage as Matthias' resources were consumed by his western actions⁴².

2. Between Istanbul and Buda. The Porte had a Serbian spy amongst the high-ranking officials of the royal Hungarian chancery. *Vuk* proved to be instrumental in the Hungarian-Ottoman affairs of 1486-1487. It may well be that he already made his impact on the relations between Buda and Istanbul in 1484. In terms of logistics too, Bayezid was in a better position than Matthias. In spite of his talks to Ottoman beys, Matthias had no gotten closer to Bayezid's inner circle of power⁴³.

Domestic Concerns and Foreign Targets. According to the Milanese report from Naples, the sultan had also an alternative plan, following the rumor that Djem had died. In April-May probably, he still thought of turning the troops gathered against Stephen III against Rhodes and Venice. Under the influence of a Muslim 'grand master' (probably a *lālā*), he decided to go along with the initial plan⁴⁴.

His soldiers' discontent forced him to attack quickly. The sultan's *gentedarme* wanted *universalmente* Djem as sultan. Besides, as it had become known in Ragusa too, if Djem, *per secureza dello stato suo et di tutta la Christianità* came into Matthias' hands, Bayezid's down fall seemed inevitable. However, Djem stayed in France and Bayezid crossed the Danube⁴⁵.

The Chilia massacre was only a mean to an end. The eloquent and elegant portrail of the victory that had saved his throne was not Bayezid's, but his envoys and writers task. Moreover, by Váradi's and probably *Vuk*'s actions too, Bayezid had made sure that Matthias could not use (Ottoman) documents against him but would turn to a mutual agreement⁴⁶.

Military rulings (1458 and 1468) prevented the king of using Hungarian

⁴² HHStA, R.H.K., *Fridericiana*, Fasc. 6-2, f. 114r-v (13th of November 1484); *Adalék*, no. 24, p. 257; Cristea 2004b, p. 231-232, 245-246

⁴³ For instance: *Topukapu*, no. 11, p. 294 (note 47); *Turkish Documents*, p. 21-22; Gemil 1985, p. 599-603.

⁴⁴ E. g. ASM, A.D.S., Potenze Estere, *Napoli*, cart. 244, fasc. 2, nn (9th of July); Fisher, (1948), p. 33-34; Vatin 1997, p. 45-46.

⁴⁵ See also MDE, III, nos. 26-30, p. 29-35; *Dokumente*, IV-1, no. 103, p. 90. *Oklevelek-Hunyadak*, no. 48, p. 362; no. 50, p. 364; *Oruç*, p. 35-37; *Malipiero*, p. 134-140; Cusin (1937), II, p. 229-230.

⁴⁶ In this respect, see also *Tursun Bey, Aşık Paşa Zade, Mehmed Neşri, Menaki-i Sultan Bayezid-Han Ibn-i Muhammed-Han, Tevarih Al-I Osman, Kemal Paşa Zade*, in *Cronici turcești*, I, p. 78, 95, 98, 127, 130, 137, 187, 208 (the events of 1474 and 1484 in parallel perspective); *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 472.

troops, other than those under his direct command, unless Hungary itself was under attack. In this respect, Moldavia was at best Buda's vassal-state, but not a member of the realm. Only the harbors could have been presented as Hungarian fiefs entrusted to Stephen. Matthias' conduct during the early stages of the Djem crisis and his tax-policies had already increased the discontent amongst the realm's elite. This situation further increased Bayezid's chances of success⁴⁷.

Questions of Military Support and Political Alternatives. In spring 1484, like in late 1474, when the Ottoman army of Scutari entered Moldavia, putting an end to the talks between Suceava and Istanbul, Stephen had not paid tribute to the Porte for three years. Unlike in 1474, in 1484, regardless of the anti-Ottoman intentions ascribed to the republic, Stephen could not rely on Venice. In return, in 1484, as in 1474, the military collaboration between Hungary and Moldavia was a political and logistical problem⁴⁸.

Transylvania had grown from an anti-Ottoman link into a negotiation channel between Buda and Istanbul. In 1484, Hungarian (Transylvanian) and Moldavian troops did not fight each other, as in 1474, for there were basically no Transylvanian troops to come to Stephen's aid. More than it had been the case in 1476, during Mehmed II's Moldavian campaign; the king was forced to send troops from the west. They reached the border after the harbors had fallen. The charges brought afterwards against Transylvanians did not change anything⁴⁹.

Because he had a *foedus* with Stephen III, who, *societatis iure*, had called for his help, Matthias had left, *societatis et catholicae fidei gratia*, with his royal army. He reached Oradea (Grosswardein, Nagyvarad) and stopped when he heard of the fall of the harbors. Troops, from Croatia too, however still arrived in Moldavia. Their actions were rather successful. Until the end of the year, the *Turk* apparently lost control over the *hinterland* of the harbors. The Tartars, instrumental during Bayezid II's summer campaign, failed now to support him⁵⁰.

De le novelle vi dano aviso l'altero giorno venne qua la galea de Rodos/ la quale menava il nepote del Summo Pontifico, e andava a la coia/ de Urbino; et qualo nepoto habbe a dire ch'el Gran Turcho haveva/ ordinato de fare tagliare le grano, per una gran quantita de le/ galee, che diceva per andare in Alexandria, che diceva in altrel et che diceva che non

⁴⁷ GVU, II, 1458 (24th of January), art. 2, p. 84; (8th of June), art. 2, p. 91; 1468, art. 3, p. 173-174; 1476, p. 232; Bonfini 1936-1941, IV, p. 75-79, 91-92; see also Simon 2005a, p. 235-238.

⁴⁸ For instance: *Raguza*, no. 385, p. 631; *Malipiero*, p. 42-43, 99; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 9-10; Simon 2007c, p. 99-112.

⁴⁹ E. g. MOL, DF 265307; *Ub.*, VII, no. 4559, p. 357; *Actae*, nos. 18-20, p. 20-23; *Cronica moldo-germană* [The Moldo-German Chronicle], in *Cronicile*, p. 31-32, 35-36; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 477, 497.

⁵⁰ ASM, A.D.S., Potenze Estere, *Illiria, Polonia, Russia, Slavonia*, cart. 640, fasc. 4, nn (31st of December 1484; the author's name is unreadable); EMC, no. 176, p. 223; Bonfini 1936-1941, IV, p. 124, 129; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 477 (the Croatians); see also: 22 *dispaci*, no. 40a, p. 226; no. 41, p. 228-230.

sapeva de certo. El nostro ambassatore e ritornato/ dal capitaneo di Bosta del Turcho vicino nostro, lo quale gli haveva dicto che il Gran Turcho faceva gran paregiamento per/ mare et per terre, et haveva ordenato gran numero de galee/ nove et recomenzato le vegie, et che andareno sopra il Signore/ de Moldonia zoe de Vlachia per caxare che quelli che foreno/ lassati in risguardo de le citta, quelli epse la Signoria sua/ e tutti quelli Turchi che farevo andati in correria tuti fuerono/ presi et amazati, senza essere campato alchuno Turcho; le quale due cittate sono rimaste senza alchuno risgurado.

Etiam come la Maiesta del Re de Ungaria ha fatto pace/ con el Turcho, che dice per anni duy, et che dice per anni tre,/ et che dicto Gran Signor ha ordonato de mandare ambasata/ a la Maiesta del Re de Ungaria con grandissimi doni, zoe/ de cavalli gamboille et multe; a la quale ambasata andara/ Inbrachor, zoe el magistro de la stala del Gran Signor./ Hieri fuereno venuti desegni, quel dixeva che la Maiesta/ del Re de Ungaria sta con la Regina in Posonia, zoe a le confine/ de lo Imperatore de Alamagna, ch'el tuto lo exercito suo/ sottovenire in obsidio de la prefata citta de Vienna [...] (Ragusa, 31st of December 1484).

Still, in December, in spite of this not too modest Hungarian-Walachian successes, king Matthias seemed to have finally reached an agreement with Bayezid II, according to the data sent once more from Ragusa to Milan. Matthias could not continue the conflict without giving up his war with Frederic and the conquest of Vienna, his major objectives. On the other hand, his anti-Ottoman actions and statements of August-November 1484 were enough to get him a better *Turkish* deal. When he took Vienna, he had genuine Ottoman troops too at his side⁵¹.

III. The Masters of the Harbors

Both prior and after Sixtus' IV death and the election of Innocent VIII as pope the Italian, Roman, Iberian and Ottoman crisis connected the continent in 1484. Crusader indulgences and bulls were granted to the East and the West in the first half of the year. The Iberian front, where *los Reyes Católicos* were in difficulties, was once more part of the same crusader unit as the Danube front. Bayezid tried to profit from this turmoil. A *Greek* envoy of the *imperial sultana* went as far as Bern. At that time, Ottoman efforts were in general more successful⁵².

I. Dealing with Defeat. In early 1484, the context, in spite of the Christian conflicts, and less the spirit, in spite of Sixtus' IV bullas, seemed to favor anti-

⁵¹ In this respect, see also *Topukapu*, no. 6, p. 291; Hazai 1986, p. 125-133; Rázsó 1986, p. 45-48; Wolf 2005, p. 151-152.

⁵² In this respect, e. g. ASV, Misc., Arm., II-30, f. 104 (109)v-105 (110)r (1st of April 1484); *Anshelm*, I, p. 257, 300; Sieber-Lehmann 2004, p. 88-90; Edwards 2004, p. 173-175.

Ottoman warfare. In late 1484, things changed. The Italian peace and the shock caused by Bayezid's victory enforced the crusader spirit, but did not bring any changes to the context, which had evolved in favor of the contested sultan⁵³.

Efforts and Exploits. Stephen III kept on fighting the *Turk* even after Matthias made it clear that he was more willing to reach an agreement with the sultan than to fight him. This placed Buda as well as Krakow, who tried to gain over Stephen's allegiance following Matthias' failure, in a delicate position. They wanted namely peace with the Porte. Stephen's actions of early 1485 proved equally disturbing to Venice as the crusade proclaimed by Innocent VIII had little effects⁵⁴.

*Additio data per Collegium litteris scriptis ad Johannem Darium [...].
Erga tuis litteris directivis ad capita consilii nostri ex significas
Illustrissimum dominum Turcum Andrianopoli digressurum ad/ solitas
ventiones sive aucupia et alias eius voluptates: et tamen missurum
dominos Bassades cum / exercitu versus Vallachiam, ut intelligas mentem
nostram, volumus omnino te conferas ubi persona sue (16th of May 1485).*

Following the mass-deportation undertaken by the Ottomans after the conquest of the harbors and trying to exploit the Hungarian and Walachian victories of late 1484, Stephen III attempted to retake Cetatea Albă in February 1485. He failed, but his action, as well as the strengthening of his ties to Tartar factions and Podolian lords, under Casimir's control only by name, made Matthias think that he could gain more from the sultan. He consequently postponed any responses to the Ottoman proposals, much to Bayezid's concern (March-April)⁵⁵.

Bayezid sent his troops to Moldavia. The clash was probably undecided. Still, alongside his renewed failure to retake Cetatea Albă and Matthias almost non-existing support, it forced Stephen to accept Casimir IV as his suzerain (September). He hoped for major Polish support. The aid Stephen III received, though useful, was well under his expectations⁵⁶.

Stephen's allegiance turned into a bitter victory for Krakow. It plunged her into a war with the Porte that the kingdom was not prepared to fight. Casimir only managed to exit it in early 1489. At that time, both Moldavia and Hungary

⁵³ For instance: Halecki 1964; Weber 2004, p. 315-318; see the ensuing Muslim and Christian events as depicted by Thuasne 1890; Har-El 1995 or Vatin 1997.

⁵⁴ ASVe, S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 32, c. 148r (16th of May 1485; extract from the addenda to doge Giovanni Mocenigo's instructions to Giovanni Dario, the republic's *secretary* in Istanbul); *Codex*, III, nos. 312-315, p. 332-335; *Index*, nos. 4476-4477, p. 507; see SD, XVI, no. 17, p. 123; XXIII, no. 89, p. 318.

⁵⁵ For instance. SD, XVI, no. 17, p. 123; *Akta Stánow*, I, no. 180, p. 273; no. 200, p. 288-290; *Campania*, no. 20, p. 267; *Aşik Paşa Zade*, p. 103-104; Beldiceanu 1964, p. 72-74, 84-86.

⁵⁶ See *Aşik-Paşa Zade*, p. 99-100; *Wapowski*, p. 5-9; Iorga 1899, p. 163-165; Beldiceanu 1964, p. 85-86; Cristea 2004a, p. 110-114.

had peace. With the aid of pope Innocent VIII, Stephen was once again Matthias' vassal, for, naturally, a new crusade was in planning. The sultan felt the threat. Urgent defensive works were commissioned at Cetatea Albă (1490)⁵⁷.

Hopes and Credits. Bayezid's Moldavian victory and the threat that lay on Rhodes, *the Turk's next target*, led to Innocent VIII' crusader call of November 1484. Allegedly, Sixtus IV, already sickened by the conclusion of the peace of Bagnolo, in the favor of Venice, had died immediately after receiving news of the Moldavian disaster. However, nothing happened. As Djem was in their custody, the Hospitaller Knights had an advantageous treaty with Bayezid (1482)⁵⁸.

In spite of talks and rumors, *Latins* and *Greeks* failed to react properly. In Naples, in early 1485, it was said that one harbor had been reconquered (after Stephen's first attempt to retake Cetatea Albă). In Pskov, in the distant Russian lands, monks wrote that Casimir IV, Matthias, Stephen and the Teutons had retaken the harbors and rode towards Istanbul (1486). Such a dream had not arisen after the victory of Vaslui. Disaster made it possible⁵⁹.

The fall of Venetian Scutari (1478) had brought the conclusion of the peace between the republic and the empire. In 1470, the fall of Negroponte had launched a shock-wave. Still, the Orthodox-Catholic-Muslim anti-Ottoman dealings of 1473-1474 were too remote in time and too fragile to be considered an immediate effective military response to the Ottomans⁶⁰.

Taking credit for non-existent 'crusader' actions, as long the truth had not come up to light, was easier. Before news of Stephen's Walachian failure reached the peninsula, Venice announced his action as a great success (1474). In late June 1484, Poles depicted the heroic actions of their riders at Chilia, in mid May, when *Turk* had not even crossed the Danube⁶¹.

2. God, His Men and Their Paths. Had it not been for the continental context, the events of 1484 would have been just a part, an important part nevertheless, of local anti-Ottoman warfare, which, as so often, ended badly for

⁵⁷ *Codex*, I, no. 265, p. 293; MDE, III, nos. 275-276, p. 435-437; *Weinreich*, p. 687-688; Pienaru 2004, p. 130 (note 26); see further Setton 1976-1984, II, p. 314-320 (mid 1470'), 383-384 (the 1480').

⁵⁸ E. g. ASV, Arm, XXXIX-18, f. 63 (74)r, 64 (75)r-65 (76)r, 101 (112)r-102 (113)r, 118 (129)r-v (30th of November 1484, 2nd, 23rd of February 1485; the Roman data from those months can be found also in *Raynaldus*, XIX (1693), 1484, nos. 64-68, p. 345b-346a; no. 71, p. 346b; 1485, nos. 3-5, p. 349b-350a); HHSStA, R.H.K., *Fridericana*, fasc. 5-3, f. 75r (3rd of August 1482); fasc. 6-2, f. 114r (13th of November 1484).

⁵⁹ See, in this respect, *Correspondenze*, II, p. 140-141, Panaitescu 1960, 2, p. 219-220; Pippidi 2004, p. 505-506.

⁶⁰ E. g. *Acta graeca*, III, nos. III-11, 12, 13, 14, p. 293-298; MHS, I-1, no. 4, p. 310; I-2, no. 18, p. 50; nos. 14-16, p. 101-104; *Malipiero*, p. 41-43, 98-99; Schmitt 2001, p. 604-612.

⁶¹ E. g. ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze Estere, Venezia*, cart. 361, fasc. 3, nn (25th, 28th of March 1474); Iorga 1899, Appendix, nos. [I]-2-4, p. 279-281; *Wapowski*, p. 5, 10-14; Beldiceanu 1960, p. 67-77.

the Christians. The conflict was a matter of belief too. It had not grown simply out of a sultan's hope to save his throne. The roots went deep into the late 1470' and early 1480'⁶².

Crusader Ways. The crusade of 1481 ended in disaster, in Walachia, for Buda and Suceava. Before the summer was over, Matthias quickly blamed Stephen for it in Rome. Visibly disturbed by the recent (Papal-Moldavian) political contacts, He was even more eager to stress out the fact that Stephen *was his and his crown's subject*. As he had lost several of his trusted boyars during the combats of June-July, Stephen' situation was critical at the end of the year, though, in late fall, king Matthias sent him men (300), but also asked him for mercenaries (1000)⁶³.

Stephen sought an arrangement with the divided Ottomans (probably in particular with Bayezid). Following Matthias' letter and the Walachian military fiasco, Sixtus IV had placed the Moldavians on the list of *schismatics*, alongside the Russians, who had rebelled against Casimir IV, which had to be fought by the Franciscans based in Poland. Innocent VIII did the same, after the Moldavian-Ottoman peace of 1486. Between angry Rome and troubled Istanbul, an agreement with Bayezid II would have been the safest option for Stephen III⁶⁴.

He did not resume himself to settling the old Walachian-Moldavian frontier dispute. His actions of spring 1482 turned into an attack on the Ottoman authority. The Ottoman response almost crippled him, leaving him, for the moment at Matthias' mercy (August 1482). In all this time, Djem and Bayezid were fighting each other in Asia Minor. Yet, Stephen III had failed⁶⁵.

The matrimonial alliance between Moscow and Suceava and the subsequent Hungarian-Moldavian-Russian arrangements against Krakow (1483), partially restored his political credit. Bayezid's troubles and Djem's escape to Rhodes made the Porte look weak. In this respect, Venice was quite right for blaming Stephen and his miscalculations for the disaster of 1484⁶⁶.

Churchly Roads. Monastic chronicles, which only recalled the Ottoman defeats of monarch Stephen III, entrusted his failure's explanation to divine signs that had made him give up the fight against *God's wrath*. Mysticism and

⁶² E. g. Setton 1976-1984, II, p. 319-322, 384-389; Housley 1992, p. 105-112; Cristea 2004a; Simon 2007b,c and 2008.

⁶³ UKB, Mk 9, *mikulovsky rukopis*, f 264bis r-v (17th of November 1481; abstract in *Quellen*, no. 152, p. 111; miseditied (?) for instance, under 1475, in *Epistolae*, pars IV, no. 75, p. 188; *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, no. 13, p. 11); *Actae*, nos. 33-34, p. 36-37; *Hurmuzaki*, XV-1, nos. 209-210, p. 116-117.

⁶⁴ For instance: *Codex Vilnensis*, I-2, no. 319, p. 376-378; no. 356, p. 416-417; *Letopisețul anonim*, p. 20; Mehmet 1967, 1-2, p. 265-274.

⁶⁵ E. g. UKB, Mk 9, *mikulovsky rukopis*, f. 276r-277r; *Hurmuzaki*, XV-1, no. 212, 214, 215, p. 118-119; *Cronica moldo-germană*, p. 34; *EI2*, II, p. 529-531 (H. Inalcik, 'Djem'); Thuasne 1890, p. 80-86.

⁶⁶ See, for instance: *Korrespondenz Breslau*, II, no. 393, p. 70; *Hurmuzaki*, XV-1, no. 217, p. 120; *Dispacci*, no. 40a, p. 224; Karge 1892, p. 327.

politics covered up facts. Very concerned about his *Christian* image Bayezid, 'agreed with it'. His means of conquest contradicted his desired image of just war. In Moldavia, Stephen III did his Orthodox penitence for his failed crusader actions. He took the blame on himself, far more than he should have done for his part in the defeat⁶⁷.

King Matthias' took brutal stands. He beat up and jailed Varádi, archbishop of Kalocsa. Varádi was not the first prelate to be beaten by him. John (János) Vitéz, Matthias' old mentor, had been the first. Matthias respected the Hungarian Catholic Church. But this Church was his institution and the king used it as he saw fit. He did the same with stars and the *Greek* churches, which he successfully used in his political gambles between Rome and Istanbul⁶⁸.

One event that increased the complexity of the actions of 1484 was the first official and undisputed rejection of the Union of Florence. In spring, the Greek rite patriarchs of the Orient, convened in a synod in Constantinople, declared the union for invalid and condemned Rome and those Greeks that followed her. The decision, taken under Ottoman patronage, marked a break without precedent over the last decades between Constantinople and Rome, as well as amongst the *Greek* members of the former Byzantine Commonwealth⁶⁹.

Mehmed II had used the patriarchate in his favor, as in late 1474. Simeon, the same patriarch that presided over the synod of 1484, had basically left with the Ottoman troops gone on campaign against Moldavia. Now it was Bayezid's turn to make an even better use, as it was best revealed by the actions of patriarch Joachim (1498-1499), of the Church. One could say that Bayezid had the blessing of the Great Church for his Moldavian campaign⁷⁰.

Imperial Borderlands. Like in the case of any major late medieval Christian-Muslim confrontation, the history of the clashes and sieges of 1484 is story about blood and money, this time namely a Christian one. Matthias had no major troops to display to Stephen's aid. Stephen lost most of his men in 1484. He equally lost up to 40% of his revenues by the fall of the harbors. Their fall costed Hungary much less, but forced Buda to rethink its Oriental policies for the next decades⁷¹.

⁶⁷ See, in this respect: *Tursun Bey*, p. 77-79; *Putna I, II*, p. 51, 62 (with the 'perspectives' of Székely-Gorovei 1998, p. 56-60); Simon 2007b, I, p. 64-67, 70-72.

⁶⁸ E. g. ASVe, M.A.C.R., *Podocataro*, I-3, no. 13 (12th of April 1488); *Korrespondenz Breslau*, I, no. 91, p. 66; *Nachträge*, no. 439, p. 452; *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, no. 19, p. 16; EMC, no. 180, p. 228; GVU, [II], 1481, arts. 3-4, p. 247-248; see also *Bonfini* 1936-1941, IV, p. 75-79, 129, 168.

⁶⁹ For instance: Arranz 1983, I, p. 84-85; Dragas 1999, 1-4, p. 240-241; Simon 2007a, p. 104-105 (nevertheless, little information on this synod has survived).

⁷⁰ E. g. *Vatopedi*, p. 10, 35 (no. 5); *Malaxos*, p. 139-140; *Historia patriarchica*, p. 42-43; Laurent 1968, p. 268-269.

⁷¹ *Bonfini* 1936-1941, IV, p. 211-212; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 472, 476-477; Biliarsky 2000, p. 291-305; Simon 2005a, p. 229, 265.

It is easier to say what led the *Turk* into battle than it is to see what made the *Christians*, the Moldavians namely, enter the confrontation (1484). However, the clash was unavoidable. Even without Stephen's provocations that very likely came after he heard of the *Turk's* 'need' to attack him, Bayezid II had to take the harbors. They were also the target that would have caused him, regardless of outcome, the least of troubles, compared to Rhodes or Naples⁷².

The Ottoman Gate. In 1484, news of the fall of Chilia and Cetatea Albă reached *Italia* as fast as the news of the fall of Byzantium (1453) or Caffa (1475), cities of far greater importance. It took at most a month for the information to reach Venice. It says a lot on the stakes involved by Bayezid's campaign. It says a great deal on the damages thus suffered by his *Christian* opponents⁷³.

One can only speculate as to the possible consequences of Bayezid's victory, compared also to the results of the fall of Belgrade (1521), if the Mamluk-Ottoman war (1485-1491) had not broken out. It is however certain that the chances of success of a crusade significantly decreased after 1484, the year which dealt a major blow to the regional pillars of crusading. Seemingly regardless of preparations and Ottoman weaknesses, victory was out of reach⁷⁴.

With Roman funding (1478), Stephen had done massive defensive works at Chilia and Cetatea Albă (1479). They proved of little use in 1484. It may well be that the anti-Ottoman warfare of the previous decade did not lead to an increase in actual Moldavian control over the harbors. In general, Stephen's control over Moldavia's southern parts was problematic⁷⁵.

Charges of treason surround the fall of the cities. They involve the Moldavian castellans too. In Chilia's case, they might explain Stephen's defeat. Moreover, accepting the Ottoman rule seemed more profitable after the fall of Caffa (1475) for the local merchants. For those who were not deported it probably was, in time. Besides, it was apparently not the first time the Turk took the cities during Stephen's rule. In 1475, at least, he had managed to retake the cities after defeating the *Turk* in battle. In 1484, he thus prepared for battle, not for siege⁷⁶.

The Moldavian Bridge. The last time Stephen III had the audacity not to pay for three years his tribute the result had been his victory of Vaslui. His future audacities, namely in the early 1480', based equally on broken Ottoman

⁷² For instance: Bogdan 1891, p. 507; Fisher 1948, p. 33-35; Inalcik 1989, p. 333-334; Vatin 1997, p. 44-45.

⁷³ E. g. ASVe., S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 32, c. 92r; *Caduta*, p. LXXXVIII; *Vite 1474-1494*, p. 472, 476; see Cristea 2004a, p. 61, 153 (note 191); Simon 2007a, p. 386-387.

⁷⁴ For instance: *Topukapu*, nos. 1-4, p. 288-291; *Acta Beatrici*, no. 61, p. 95; Har-El 1995, p. 38-42; Szakály 1979, p. 92-97.

⁷⁵ *Hurmuzaki*, VIII, no. 21, p. 17; nos. 24-26, pp. 21-23; 22 *dispacci*, no. 24a, p. 82; no. 28a, p. 128; no. 40a, p. 222; *Cronica moldo-germană*, p. 34; Simon 2007a, p. 554-555.

⁷⁶ MDE, III, no. 98, p. 135; *Acte*, III, p. 15, 65, 89-90; 22 *dispacci*, no. 21a, p. 48; *Campania*, no. 13, p. 248; no. 15, p. 253-254; Beldiceanu 1960, p. 68, 79; Cristea 2004a, p. 113.

deals, as Bayezid II too accused him, were short-lived and very costly successes. In 1484, even though the context was more favorable to him than in 1474-1475, Stephen failed to profit, as the rest of Christendom, from the Djem crisis. One major reason for it seemed to be the lack of Venetian money and Hungarian troops, at his side in 1475⁷⁷.

He received the needed Hungarian and Venetian feudal, financial and military support in fact only in 1492. At that time, he had peace, since 1486, with Bayezid II. Besides from cleverly exploited Moldavian challenges and provocations of the Porte, in particular during the new Venetian-Ottoman war (1499-1503), Stephen III kept this peace until the end of his reign. The Ottoman experience gained over the last decades and the fact that Bayezid II was not compelled to attack Moldavia, which had lost a great deal of its strategic value following the conquest of the harbors, made sure that he was not going to experience another 1484⁷⁸.

The year had been a key moment in the history of Ottoman bridge between Europe and Asia Minor. Had Bayezid's campaign been a failure, he would have probably lost his throne. In return, his success brought Stephen near to the end of his political career. After two years of clashes with domestic rivals and Ottomans (1484-1486), Stephen III eventually managed to save his crown. Due to the size of his state and the forces against him, in particular after a failure in Moldavia, it is rather unlikely that Bayezid could have done the same in Istanbul⁷⁹.

In 1484, Stephen III took one for the last time the active role of the *Greek* spearhead of Christendom against the *Turk*. In later years, he still made successful use, in Rome, Venice, Buda, Istanbul, of this peculiar status, but he acted as one of the 'classic retired' late medieval crusaders. Not only according to appearances, more active crusader style actions and stands were needed. In 'Djem's world', 1484 had significantly enlarged the way for quite 'modern' and 'normal' political relations between the Christian powers and the lands of Islam⁸⁰.

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⁷⁷ E. g. MHS, I-1, nos. 13-14, p. 554-555; *Actae*, no. 8, p. 8; *Documente turcești*, I, no. 3, p. 3-4; Mustafa 1967, p. 267-269; Guboglu 1969, p. 70-79.

⁷⁸ See also MHS, I-2, no. 15, p. 137; *Actae*, nos. 40-45, pp. 41-54; Cazacu 1973, 1, p. 164-166.

⁷⁹ E. g. *Campania*, no. 14, p. 251; no. 20, p. 267; *Wapowski*, p. 5-11; *Cronica moldo-germană*, p. 36; *Cronici Moscova*, p. 443-446; Simon 2005a, p. 244-249.

⁸⁰ Beldiceanu 1964; Cristea 2004c, p. 25-36; Simon 2005b, p. 24-29; 2007b, p. 77-78.

ÎNTRU CRIZA ITALICĂ ȘI FRONTIERELE TRANSILVANE ALE REGATULUI UNGARIEI: CAMPANIA LUI BAIAZID II DIN 1484 ȘI URMĂRILE EI UNGARE

REZUMAT

Ca în cazul oricăreia dintre confruntările majore creștino-musulmane de la sfârșitul Evului Mediu, istoria asediilor și luptelor din 1484 este o poveste despre sânge și bani, de această dată, în primul rând o poveste creștină. Matia Corvin nu avea nici o unitate militară majoră pe care să o poată trimite în ajutorul lui Ștefan III al Moldovei. Ștefan și-a pierdut cea mai mare parte din oaste în 1484. A pierdut și cam 40% din veniturile sale în urma căderii porturilor. Din acest punct de vedere, cucerirea otomană a vechilor orașe genoveze a costat Buda mult mai puțin, dar a obligat-o să-și regândească politica orientală pentru următoarele decenii. Privind costurile *creștine*, este mai ușor să spui “ce-l mâna pe *Turc* în luptă”, decât să vezi ceea ce i-a motivat pe creștini, în particular pe moldoveni, să intre, strict la 1484, în luptă.

Oricum, confruntarea nu mai putea fi evitată. Chiar și fără provocările lui Ștefan III, care, foarte probabil, au venit după ce a aflat despre nevoia *Turcului* de a-l ataca, Baiazid II trebuia să cucerească porturile. Ele erau și acele obiective care i-ar fi provocat, indiferent de soarta campaniei, cele mai puține probleme, în comparație cu un atac asupra Rhodos-ului sau a Neapolelui, fapt destul de evident în planul raționamentelor și reacțiilor de factură apuseană.

În mod ciudat, în mediul otoman, își făcuse loc, mai ales în ultimele două decenii, ideea că, dincolo de Roma muribundului Sixt IV, adevăratele mize și probleme erau la linia Dunării. Un eșec moldav l-ar fi costat probabil domnia pe Baiazid II (deși nu este nici exclus ca el să mai fi “primit” o șansă tocmai datorită valorii asociate și mental de otomani acestor porturi din sudul Moldovei), dar, indiferent de persoana, nouă sau veche, a sultanului, otomanii ar fi atacat încă o dată porturile, dacă nu în 1485, “sigur” în 1486. Datorită Belgradului (1456) și a Vasluiului (1475), Ungaria și Moldova erau afaceri de onoare. În raport cu lumea apuseană și cu *mărul roșu* de la Roma, Înalta Poartă nu avea asemenea datorii aproape istorice.

Abridgements

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- ASV - Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City. Armaria, Armarium (Arm.), [series] XXXIX, [reg.] 18, *Innocenti VIII brevia. 1484-1485*. *Miscellaneorum Armarium/ Miscellanea Armadi* [also known as *Varia Politicorum*] (Misc.), *Armarium* (Arm.), [series] II, [reg.], 30, 56.
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- BMC - Biblioteca Museo Correr, Venice. *Manoscritti*, Mss. 364 (= Archivio Morosini e Grimani 461).

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- SOAB - Státny Okresný Archiv Bardejove [State Archive of the Bradejove District], Bardejove (Bártfa). Archiv Mesta Bardejove/ Bártfa Város Levéltára [The Archive of the City of Bardejove] (B.V.L.), *Középkori gyűjtemény* [Medieval Deposit], no. 2350 (copy: MOL, DF, section U 425).
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- UKB - Masarykovy Universitni knihovny [The Library of the "Masaryk" University], Brno. Mk 9, *mikulovsky rukopis* [The Mikulov Manuscript], ff. 210r-283r (copy: MOL, FT, *Nehring*, rols. 30173-30174).
- VML - Veszprém Megyei Levéltár [The Archives of the Veszprém County], Veszprém. Szentgál, no.74 (copy: MOL, DF, section U 970).

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- BSL - Byzantinoslavica. Revue internationale des études byzantines, Prague, 1929-
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- CL - Convorbiri Literare [Literary Conversations], Iași-Bucharest, 1867-1945
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- OCP - Orientalia Christiana Periodica, Rome, 1935-
- OGS - Osmanische Geschichtsschreiber, Graz-Vienna-Cologne, 1955-1981, NS, 1982-
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