

ANTI-OTTOMAN WARFARE AND CRUSADER PROPAGANDA IN 1474: NEW EVIDENCE FROM THE ARCHIVES OF MILAN

ALEXANDRU SIMON

In 1474, ten years had passed since the last major royal Hungarian anti-Ottoman action. In 1464, king Matthias Corvinus' second Bosnian campaign had been a relative success. Six years before (1468), an Ottoman-Hungarian truce had been reached. The truce was valid probably for two years and was renewed in 1470 and 1472. The Ottoman-Hungarian negotiations of 1473 failed however. Hungary was once more on collision course with the Porte. The realm's eastern neighbor, Moldavia, was already on this course. For the territorial 'link' between Hungary and Moldavia, the royal province of Transylvania, a clash with the Ottomans was by far no priority. The memory of the devastating campaign led by sultan Murad II (1437–1438) or that of more recent Ottoman raids into the Voivodate of Transylvania that had occurred in spite of the Ottoman-Hungarian truce, namely in 1469 and 1470, was still vivid¹.

TRANSYLVANIA AND THE OTTOMAN QUESTION

Since the death of John Hunyadi (1456), Transylvania had not taken center stage in the confrontations between *Christendom* and the *Turk*. Still, even in Hunyadi's time, whether as voivode of the province (e.g. 1444–1445) or as

¹ Iván Nagy, Albert B. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek. Mátyás király korából 1458–1490* [Hungarian Diplomatic Monuments. The Age of King Matthias (1458–1490)] (=MHH, IV, 1–4), II, [1466–1480] (Budapest, 1876) (MDE), no. 46, pp. 75–76; [Jan Długosz], *Jan Długosii Senioris Canonici Cracoviensis Opera omnia*, edited by Alexandr Przewdziecki, XIV (=Historiae Polonicae libri XII, II) (Cracoviae [Krakow] 1887, pp. 495–497, 510, 517, 525, 537, 546; [Antonio Bonfini] Antonio de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, edited by Iosephus [József] Fögel, Ladislaus [László] Juhász, Béla Iványi, IV (Lipsiae [Leipzig], 1941), pp. 15–23; Ferenc Szakály, 'Phases of Turko-Hungarian Warfare before the Battle of Mohács. 1365–1526', *AOASH*, XXXIII (1979), pp. 88–94; Gyula Rázsó, 'Die Türkenpolitik Matthias Corvinus', *AHASH*, XXXII (1986), 1–2, pp. 19–23, 41–44; Pál Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary. 895–1526* (London, 2001), pp. 306–311; Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin. O coexistență medievală* (Cluj-Napoca, 2005 [2007]), pp. 201–210; Ioan-Aurel Pop, 'Relations between Transylvania and Stephen the Great', in *Between Worlds, I, Stephen the Great, Matthias Corvinus and their Time* (=MHG, NS, I, 2006, 1), edited by László Koszta, Ovidiu Mureșan, Al. Simon (Cluj-Napoca, 2007), pp. 126–129.

governor (e.g. 1447–1449) and later captain-general of the realm (e.g. 1454–1455), or even earlier, during king Sigismund of Luxemburg's rule, namely at the turn of the century (e.g. 1398–1401), anti-Ottoman Transylvanian involvement had been a problem. During king Matthias's first 15 years of rule, some Ottoman raids had viewed, in an altogether exaggerated fashion, as devastations of Transylvania, a manner in which Jan Długosz too described the Ottoman attacks of the late 1460' and the early 1470'. Nevertheless, also on the basic level of the relations between Buda and Istanbul, the Transylvania zone was no real priority, in terms of war (a late proof for it was also the fact that until 1493 no real major Ottoman attack took place), but not in those of late medieval diplomacy².

Due in particular to the rather flexible policies of the Transylvanian Saxon cities of Braşov (Kronstadt, Brassó) and Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Szeben) towards sultan Mehmed II and his transalpine favorite, Radu III *cel Frumos* (the Handsome), ruler of Walachia, Transylvania had grown into a communication channel between Buda and Istanbul. This political feature of the voivodate, mainly in its southern areas, best came to light in the second half of the 1470' and in the 1480', during the rules of Basarab III Laiotă, Basarab IV *Țepeluş* (the Little Impaler) and Vlad IV *Călugărul* (the Monk). The feature had already been noticed in the early 1450', but also during the Ottoman campaign of Murad II, in 1437, at times when, both for the dying king Sigismund and, later, for John Hunyadi, Transylvania should have played a rather different part in the realm's politics towards the empire. Transylvania turned thus from a major anti-Ottoman factor into a 'balance factor' between the colliding powers³.

² Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor* [Documents regarding the History of the Romanians], XV–1, *Acte și scrisori din arhivele orașelor ardelene Bistrița, Braşov, Sibiu, 1358–1600* [Charters and Letters from the Archives of the Transylvanian Cities of Bistrița (Bistriz, Besztrece), Braşov and Sibiu], edited by Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest, 1911), no. 64, p. 37; nos. 106–107, pp. 61–62; nos. 115–116, p. 66; nos. 123–124, pp. 70–71; nos. 131–132, pp. 75–76; *Długosz*, pp. 525, 537; Gustav Gündisch, 'Siebenbürgen in der Türkenabwehr 1396–1526', *RRH*, XIII (1974), 3, pp. 426–435; Halil Inalcik, 'The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1451–1522', in *A History of the Crusades*, general editor Kenneth M. Setton, VI, *The Impact of the Crusades on Europe*, edited by Harry W. Hazard, Norman P. Zacour (Madison, 1989), pp. 317–325; Al. Simon, 'Stephen the Great and his Involvement in Transylvania', *TR*, XIII (2004), pp. 39–44; Idem, '*Valahii și Imperiul Otoman în primăvara anului 1474*' [The Walachians and the Ottoman Empire in Spring 1474], *Apulum*, XLIV (2007), pp. 409–421 (with further data).

³ Grigore G. Tocilescu, *534 documente slavo-române din Țara Românească și Moldova privitoare la legăturile cu Ardealul 1346–1603. Din arhivele orașelor Braşov și Bistrița* [534 Slavico-Romanian Documents from Walachia and Moldavia regarding <their> Relations to Transylvania. 1346–1603. From the Archives of the Cities of Braşov and Bistrița] (Bucharest 1931 [Vienna, 1905]), no. 130, p. 126; Jakob Unrest, *Österreichische Chronik (=MGH, NS, [B], XI)*, edited by Karl Grossman (Weimar, 1957; reprint Munich, 1982), p. 108; Alexandru Lapedatu, 'Radu cel Frumos (iunie 1462–ianuarie 1474)' [Radu the Handsome (June 1462–January 1474)], *Transilvania*, XXXIII (1902), pp. 20–27; A[lexandru]. D[imitric]. Xenopol, 'Lupta între Drăculești și Dănești' [The Fight between the Houses of Dracul and Dan], *AARMSI*, 3rd series, XXX (1907–1908), pp. 207–211; 243–

Prior to the battle on the 'Field of Bread' (*Câmpul Pâinii, Kenyérmező*), in 1479, and prior, mainly, to the Ottoman raid of 1493, major, but temporary, alterations were brought to the Transylvanian status by Moldavian means, especially by the conflict between Moldavia and Walachia that re-irrupted at the end of the 1460'. The feud, at the time, between Radu III and Stephen III *cel Mare* (the Great), involved both the zone of the Mounds of the Danube and Moldavia's Lower Country. The conflict was also a major challenge for the Hungarian kingship, for it touched the important areas of the Transylvanian Szeklers and Saxons, and for the Ottoman Porte, because it put an end to the equilibrium between the 'buffer states' of Walachia and Moldavia that separated in the Lower Danube area the Hungarian Kingdom from the Empire. The situation was particularly tense after Matthias sided, once again, as he had done also during the events of 1465–1466, with Stephen III, his former enemy, in 1471⁴.

Nevertheless, major problems existed between Buda and Suceava, despite their mutual agreements and official tokens of trust. The problems were best revealed in the fall of 1474 when the *Hungarian* (i.e. Transylvanian) and Moldavian troops, which should have worked together against the Ottomans and the Walachian party loyal to the sultan, fought each other over the Walachian throne. The problem was more than obvious, given also the fact that Matthias Corvinus and Stephen the Great had pushed each other into the open conflict with Mehmed II. Since 1471, at the 'crusader *Reichstag*' of Regensburg, it had been

251; Olga Zirigiević, 'Die türkisch-ungarischen Kriege. Zusammenstosse und Streifzüge (1459–1526)', in *Habsburgische-Osmanische Beziehungen. Relations Habsbourg-ottomanes. Wien 26–30 September 1983*, edited by Andreas Tietze (Vienna, 1985), pp. 2–7; Constantin Rezachevici, *Cronologia critică a domnilor din Țara Românească și Moldova a. 1324–1881* [The Critic Chronology of the Rulers of Walachia and Moldavia. Prior to 1324 till 1881], I, *Secolele XIV–XVI* [The 14th–16th Centuries] (Bucharest, 2001), pp. 109–118; Șerban Papacostea, *Ștefan cel Mare, domn al Moldovei (1457–1504)* [Stephen the Great, Ruler of Moldavia (1457–1504)] (Bucharest, 2004^[3]), pp. 34–40; Al. Simon, 'În jurul bătăliei de la Vaslui (1474–1475). Considerații asupra relațiilor dintre Regatul Ungariei, Moldova și Țara Românească' [Around the Battle of Vaslui (1474–1475). Thoughts on the Relations between the Kingdom of Hungary, Moldavia and Walachia], *SUBBH*, XLIX (2004), 2, pp. 9–10, 17–21.

⁴ Vilmos Fraknói, *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae Regis epistolae ad Romanos Pontifices datae et ab eis acceptae* (=MVH, I, 6) (Budapest 1891; reprint 2000), no. 60, p. 80; no. 62, p. 82; *Urkundliche Nachträge zur Österreichisch-Deutschen Geschichte im Zeitalter Kaiser Friedrich III.* (=FRA, II, 46), edited by Adolf Bachmann (Vienna, 1892) no. 147, p. 163; no. 255, p. 273; *Actae et epistolae relationum Transylvaniae Hungariaeque cum Moldavia et Valachia* (=FRT, IV, VI), edited by Andreas [Endre] Veress, I, *1468–1540* (Budapest, 1914), nos. 30–31, pp. 31–33; MDE, II, nos. 11–13, pp. 20–25; *Hurmuzaki*, XV–1, no. 123, p. 70; no. 131, p. 75; no. 137, p. 80; no. 141, p. 82; Leodrisii Cribelli, *De expeditione Pii Papae II adversus Turcos* (=RIS, XXIII (1948), 5), edited by Giulio C. Zimolo (Bologna, 1950), p. 85; *Dlugosz*, pp. 478, 510, 525, 537, 540, 550–551; Ș. Papacostea, 'Politica externă a lui Ștefan cel Mare: opțiunea polonă (1459–1472)' [The Foreign Policy of Stephen the Great: The Polish Option (1459–1472)], *SMIM*, XXV (2007), pp. 13–28; Gündisch, 'Siebenbürgen in der Türkenabwehr', pp. 433–440.

stated that the *Walachians* would take arms against the Ottomans, in case the Hungarian king took the field against the sultan. Meanwhile, in the same year, Stephen the Great refused to support the Polish attack on Matthias Corvinus and offered his support to the contested Hungarian king⁵.

I. WARFARE ON THE LOWER DANUBE

Between 1462 and 1484, Stephen III the Great invaded Walachia at least 13 times (the maximal number of invasions would be 17). In average, his troops entered the *other Walachia*, inhabited by those *worse than the Turks*, as Stephen himself put it, every year and half. The Moldavian attacks on Walachia intensified beginning with February 1470. Stephen III's raids did not displease Buda or the Transylvanian Saxon cities, on the contrary. The commercial policy of Radu had grown increasingly protectionist, dramatically reducing thus the royal and Saxon profits from the southern trade of the Transylvanian cities. Meanwhile, the political gap between Suceava and Buda was bridged by the common foreign threats that added extra pressure for Stephen and Matthias, already faced with great domestic troubles. The conflict of 1473 was thus no Walachian-Moldavian border conflict as previous military clashes⁶.

⁵ ASV, Misc., Arm., II-7, ff. 387 (391)^v-390 (394)^f, 469 (473)^f-473 (477)^f (6th of May, 13th of July 1472); HHStA, M.E.A., 1b, fasc. 1, ff. 157^f-170^f (14th of May 1471); 2, fasc. 1, ff. 32^v, 40^f-46^f [May-June 1471]; MDE, II, no. 167, p. 233; Ioan Bogdan, *Documente privitoare la relațiile Țării Românești cu Brașovul și Ungaria în secolele XV și XVI* [Documents regarding Walachia's Relations to Brașov and Hungary in the 15th and 16th Centuries] (Bucharest 1905), no. 272, p. 328; *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Sachsen in Siebenbürgen (Ub.)*, VI, 1458-1473, edited by Gustav Gündisch, Hertha Gündisch, Konrad G. Gündisch, Gernot Nussbächer (Bucharest 1981), no. 3843, p. 479, *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III.* (=DRTA, A, XV-XXII), VIII-2, 1471, edited by Helmut Wolf (Göttingen 1999), nos. 94-95, pp. 323-327; *Hurmuzaki*, XV-1, no. 133, p. 77; *Letopisețul anonim al Țării Moldovei* [The Anonymous Chronicle of the Land of Moldavia], *Cronica moldo-germană* [The Moldo-German Chronicle], in *Cronicile slavo-române din secolele XV-XVI publicate de Ioan Bogdan* [The Slavic-Romanian Chronicles of the 15th-16th Centuries published by Ioan Bogdan], edited by P[etre]. P[etre]. Panaitescu (Bucharest 1959), pp. 15-17, 30-32; Simon, 'În jurul bătăliei de la Vaslui', pp. 8-11, 19-21.

⁶ *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, 1451-1575, edited by Nicolae Densușianu (Bucharest 1890), no. 5, p. 4; V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei. Külügyi Osztály* [The Letters of King Matthias: The Foreign Department], I, 1458-1479 (Budapest 1893), no. 211, p. 296; N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente cu privire la istoria românilor* [Documents and Fragments regarding the History of the Romanians], III [-1], [1399-1499] (Bucharest 1897 [1898]), p. 54; Idem, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XV^e siècle*, IV, 1453-1476 (Bucharest, 1915), no. 275, p. 352; I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ștefan cel Mare* [The Documents of Stephen the Great], II, *Hrisoave și cărți domnești 1493-1503. Tractate, acte omagiale, solii, privilegiu comerciale, salv-conducte. Scrisori 1457-1503* [Princely Charters and Deeds. 1493-1503. Treaties, Acts of Homage, Embassies, Trade Privileges, Safe-conducts, Letters. 1457-1503] (Bucharest, 1913), nos. 146-150, pp. 331-339; MDE, II, no. 183, p. 263; Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, pp. 150-153, 496-497.

In the late fall of 1473, after an apparent one year truce with the Walachian ruler, Stephen the Great re-entered Walachia, more determined than ever. A major role in his decision must have been played by political power play in the area, namely the result of Venice's efforts to find aid in the East against the Ottoman Empire. Stephen the Great's marriage of 1472 with Mary of Mangop had, on one hand, fortified his position and interests in the Black Sea region, and, on the other hand, had technically, but also partially, annulled the domestic effects of the sending of his and his first wife's, Evochia of Kyiv, son, Alexander, as an hostage to Istanbul, probably as a result of his Walachian actions of 1470–1471. Stephen III stopped paying tribute to the Porte. This fact increased his Ottoman problems, well summed up in sultan Mehmed's demands of 1476. One of those problems was the harbor of Chilia, at the Danube Mounds. The harbor had been taken in 1465, with the consent of Matthias Corvinus, from Radu III⁷.

In 1473, Stephen III had two major targets: the dethronement of Radu and the creation of a new anti-Ottoman front. The first goal was quickly achieved. Radu III, of the House of Dracul, was replaced with Basarab III Laiotă from the rival House of Dan, prepared by Stephen for the throne since 1472. Basarab lost his throne a month later. This was however not the greatest of anti-Ottoman problems. The real target of the Moldavian attack was very likely in Albania. Prior to the end of 1473, it was known that a Moldavian attack on Walachia would determine the Ottomans to levy the siege of Scutari and turn against Moldavia. Venice had already promised Matthias 30,000 ducats if he succeeded in diverting the Ottoman attack on Scutari. A year later, in the fall of 1474, the king's men in Venice cashed in only half of the amount. The other half had probably been sent to Moldavia. In view of the very costly anti-Ottoman involvement of Stephen III, it was an advantageous deal for the Republic. Therefore, Moldavian actions captured, by (naturally) Venetian means, the political attention of the Italian Peninsula⁸.

⁷ E.g. ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze estere, Ungheria*, cart. 650, fasc. 3, nn (23rd of May 1476); Enrico Cornet, *Le guerre dei Veneti nell' Asia, 1470–1474. Documenti cavati dall'Archivio ai Frari in Venezia* (Vienna, 1856), no. 43, p. 44; no. 85, p. 106; no. 90, p. 112; Silviu Dragomir, *Documente nouă privitoare la relațiile Țării românești cu Sibiul în secolii XV și XVI* [New Documents regarding the Relations of Walachia to Sibiu in the 15th and 16th Centuries] (offprint from *AIINC*, IV, 1926–1927) (Cluj, 1927), nos. 1–2, pp. 11–12; *Letopisețul anonim*, pp. 17–18; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 30–32; P.P. Panaitescu, 'Ștefan cel Mare și orașul București' [Stephen the Great and the City of Bucharest], *Studii*, XII (1959), 1, pp. 8–9, 12–15; Franz Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit. Weltentstürmer einer Zeitenwende* (Munich, 1959), pp. 372–373; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571*, II, *The Fifteenth Century* (=MAPS, CXXVII) (Philadelphia, 1978), pp. 319–320; Rezachevici, *Cronologia critică*, I, pp. 108–129; Al. Simon, 'Quello ch'e apresso el Turcho. About A Son of Stephen the Great', *AIRCRO*, VI–VII (2004–2005), pp. 141–169; Dan-Ioan Mureșan, 'La place de Girolamo Lando, patrician vénétien et titulaire du Patriarcat de Constantinople (1474–1497), dans la politique orientale del'Église de Rome', *AIRCRO*, VIII (2006), pp. 153–258.

⁸ ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze Estere, Turchia-Levante*, cart. 647, fasc. [3], nn (16th of January 1474); cart. 649, fasc. [2], nn (15th of February 1474); ÖNB, Codices, cod. 6216, Stefano Magno, *Annali veneti*

Item a le nove avema cuj fresche de preso Pera fresche, se ha/ como lo Grant Turcho manda Turchi XX mille contra la Velachia Bassa; et d'altra parte se dice prepara de fae questo state gallie nove/ CL^{ia}, car quelle ha sono vegle [...] Et se dice de certo per la dicta lettera mandata de Sio ha/ Monsegnor lo Mestro, et erj lecta cuj in lo consiglio/ como/ lo Turcho ha facto pace con Usson Cassan (16th of January 1474).

Nove oretenus referite al Magnifico Misser Marco Barbo Dignissimo Baylo et Capitano de Corfu/ per Misser Zuan de Tricho sopracomito de la galia Zaratina venuto à Corfu adi 15 frevere 1474

Dice esser partito da Sio a di 26 del passato dove veneno nave 3 de Pera et da Constantinopoli partino/ de li adi 19 et 20 del ditto, per lequal scriveva l'ambasiador de Sio, % altri merchadanti, non obstante/ che per loro fosse scripto de di 10 del ditto mexe dela paze seguita tra el Signor Uson Cassan, cum el/ Signor Turcho per ditte ultime scrivevano ditta paze non esser seguita; ne non erano per seguirla, perche/ i fioli del Signor Usson Cassan volevano vendicarsse dela morte di lor fradello morto in Bactria. Item scrivevano el Signor Turcho haveva levato totalmente de lavorar la sua armata.

Item scrivevano i Valachi haver cridato guerra contra el Signor Turcho; et come el ditto Turcho haveva fato/ commandamento per tuto el suo paexe che tuti da anni 15 fin 60 se dovesseno a presentar ala sua porta./ Et come el Signor Turcho fazea passar zente in le parte de Natolia; et questo perche se diceva/ i fioli del Signor Usson Cassan fevano zente contra del Signor Turcho.

The optimistic tone of these reports, partially motivated by the time spans needed by information in order to travel from the frontline to the center, was contradicted by the events. Prior to the Christmas of 1473, Basarab Laiotă had been chased away. Radu III was once again the ruler of Walachia. The Ottoman troops raided southern Moldavia, as far as Vaslui. Stephen could not intervene. His

*e del mondo [1443–1478], Ad annum 1473, ff. 561^v, 576^v [May, October–November]; *Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae regasane cum regno Hungariae. Ragusa és Magyarország összeköttetéseinek oklevéltára*, collected by József Gelcich, edited by Lajos Thálloczy (Budapest, 1887), no. 385, p. 631; *I libri commemoriali della Republica di Venezia. Regesti* [edited by Ricardo Predelli], V, [Registri XIV–XVII] (Venice, 1901), no. XVI–65, p. 213; no. XVI–73, p. 215; [Domenico Malipiero], *Annali veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500 del Senatore Domenico Malipiero ordinati e abbreviati dal senatore Francesco Longo*, edited by Agostino Sagredo, *Parte Ia e Ila degli Anali-Guerra co' Turchi-Guerre d'Italia, ASI*, 1st series, VII (1843), 1, pp. 41, 43; Radu Constantinescu, 'Documente ragusane în colecția de microfilme a Arhivelor Statului' [Ragusan Documents from the Microfilm Collection of the <Romanian> State Archives], *RA*, LVIII (1981), 1, p. 37; Magda Jászay, 'Contrastes et diplomatie dans les rapports de Matthias I^{er} Corvin et la République de Venise', *AHASH*, XXXV (1989), 1–4, pp. 19–23; Simon, Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin, pp. 209–211.*

military response came in spring 1474. Stephen entered Walachia and *burnt the country almost entirely*. His action was not as successful as expected, maybe because of the burnings too, for in 1481, after another failed Moldavian (and Hungarian this time) action in Walachia, the failure of the campaign was attributed to the cruelty of the Moldavian army. The ruler of Moldavia had to retreat. He completed his return to Suceava by the execution of 700 of the numerous prisoners that he, according to the chronicle, had taken. This was vengeance, probably a gesture of domestic power, due to the political climate, and not a symbolic act meant to impress his Ottoman and Walachian, adversaries⁹.

II. MOLDAVIAN ACTIONS AND ITALIAN NEWS

Decades later, Stephen III the Great's propaganda in German blamed the bad weather in Walachia for the failure of spring 1474 on. Stephen's 'official chronicle' however did not however make any reference on these events. The Moldavian raids into Walachia, of August and October, the same year, were also unsuccessful. Then, in November, a joint, in theory, Hungarian-Moldavian military action was staged. So far, Stephen seemed to have pushed, by his campaigns, his relation with the Porte to the point of no return, in spite of the, altogether questionable, proposals of settlement made by sultan Mehmed II. Still it seems that, for the moment, given the situation in Asia Minor, even after the defeat of Usun Hassan, the combats in Albania and also the on-going talks between Venice and Istanbul, the Porte did not want to create a major front north of the Danube. Given these aspects, the need of Stephen's propaganda in German to excuse his failure appears in a different light. The events, as well as their later image, are also placed in a different perspective by some Italian sources¹⁰.

⁹ HHStA, S.A., A.D.S., *Hungarica*, A.A., I–2, fasc. 2–4, f. 30^{r-v} [March–April 1474; copy: MOL, DF 276099]; *Letopisejul anonim*, pp. 18–19; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 31–32; Constantin A. Stoide, 'Legăturile dintre Moldova și Țara Românească în a doua jumătate a secolului al XV-lea' [The Relations between Moldavia and Walachia in the Second Half of the 15th Century], *SCȘI*, VII (1956), pp. 62–69; Mayer J. Halévy, 'Les guerres d'Etienne le Grand et d'Uzun Hasan d'après la "Chronique de la Turquie du candiote Elie Capsali (1520)", *SAO*, I (1957), pp. 190–193; Eugen Denize, 'Ștefan cel Mare și luptele cu turcii. O nouă abordare' [Stephen the Great and the Fights with the Turks: A New Approach], *SMIM*, XIX (2001), pp. 120–122; Al. Simon, 'The Arms of the Cross: The Christian Politics of Stephen the Great and Matthias Corvinus', in *Between Worlds*, I, *Stephen the Great, Matthias Corvinus and their Time* (=MHG, NS, I, 1), edited by László Koszta, Ovidiu Mureșan, Al. Simon (Cluj-Napoca, 2007), pp. 48–50.

¹⁰ ASVe, S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 26, cc. 22^r, 31^r–32^v 101^{r-v} (5th of July, 13th of September 1473, 15th of June 1474); Lajos de Thallóczy, *Frammenti relativi alla storia dei paesi situati all'Adria* (offprint from *ArchT*, 3rd series, VII (1913), 1) (Trieste 1913), p. 24; Andrea Navagero, *Storia della Repubblica Veneziana*, in *RIS*, XXIII (1733), cols. 1142–1144; *Cronaca di Anonimo Veronese 1446–1488*, edited by Giovanni Soranzo (Venice, 1915), p. 307; Antonio Hyvani Sarzanensis, *Historia de volaterrana calamitate* (= *RIS*, NS, XXIII, 4), edited by Francesco Luigi Mannuci (Città di Castello

Illustrissimo Signor mio

Questa Signoria m'ha fatto intendere una lettera che novamente hanno ricevuto da messer/ Alyyse Quirini, lor capitaneo in Corfu, et per partecipare el tuto cum la Vostra Sublimità mene hanno datto/ copia et cussi la mando aquella qui alligata.

Ulterius questa matina, essendo di officii divini, el duce me disse che per altra via digna di fede erano/ advisati ch'el Turcho era in oppinione de soprafedere per questo anno circha li apparati ch'el havena [astfel în original; corect: haveva]/ ordinati per mare et divertere tute le forze soe contra li Valachi. Et el prefato duce mostra de/ credere che cossi l'habia afare et questa brigata nie sta molto de bona voglia.

Me ricomando humelmente ala Vostra Sublimità.

Ventiis, XXV Martii 1474.

Illustrissimi domini domini vestri servus Leonardus Botta etc.

Illustrissimo Signor mio

Questa Signoria m'ha fatto vedere uno capitulo d'una lettera, gli scrive el suo/ ambasciatore de Ungaria, continente la rotta data per li Valachi al Turcho, dovi adcio/ la Vostra Sublimità intenda il tuto, li mando qui aligato la copia d'esso capitulo.

Preterea, heri in queste persone Venetiane pasò de questa vita presente messere Antonello dale/ Corne, et la prefata signoria è sta contenta che l'abia fatto testamento, et ha lassato il suo agli/ figlioli soy. Altro non ce dinovo.

Me ricomando humelmente ala Vostra Illustrissima Signoria.

Venetiis, die XXVIII Martii 1474.

Illustrissimi domini domini vestri servus Leonardus Botta etc.

The Milan of the Sforza family was very far away from the first line of the Late Crusades. Moreover, in particular due to its contested 'suzerainty' over the more than questionable, in terms of anti-Ottoman stands, city of Genoa, Milan had been closely linked to the 'crusader treasons' and the subsequent 'crusader disasters' of Nicopolis (1396) and Varna (1444). In return, the Duchy of Milan was very interested in any political event and plan that might have affected the Italian

1913), pp. 42–43; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 31–32; N. Iorga, 'O cronică munteană în grecește pentru secolul al XV-lea' [A Walachian Chronicle in Greek for the 15th Century], *AARMSI*, 3rd series, XIX (1936), pp. 149–150; Ilie Minea, 'Lucrări istorice mărunte 2. Evenimentele moldovenesti din anul 1474' [Minor Historical Works. 2. The Moldavian Events of 1474], *CI*, XIII–XVI (1940), p. 687; Andrei Pippidi, 'Noi izvoare italiene despre Vlad Țepeș și Ștefan cel Mare' [New Italian Sources on Vlad the Impaler and Stephen the Great], *SMIM*, XX (2002), pp. 17–19; Simon, 'În jurul bătăliei de la Vaslui', pp. 10–14.

schemes of the Sforzas. In the cases of the relations to namely Rome, Genoa, Venice and Naples, the Ottoman question was such a factor, but also the Hungarian matter played a major part, even before talks (1474–1476), favored by Rome, begun between Naples and Buda for the marriage of Matthias Corvinus with Beatrice of Aragon. The reports of Lodovico il Moro's spies or official ambassadors, such as those of Milan's experienced representative in Venice, Leonardo Botta, were thus of crucial importance¹¹.

The first of the two reports sent by Leonardo Botta, edited above confirmed and developed the information that had already been sent from Ragusa to Buda in the month December 1473. Less than half year after sultan Mehmed II had crushed Usun Hassan, the 'great Muslim hope' of Christendom, the Ottoman troops, only those from Albania at that time, were expected to leave against Stephen III the Great, the ruler of Moldavia. The second report is perhaps even more interesting. The Venetian ambassador in Buda had reported the news of victory of the Walachians over the Ottomans. It was a victory for which Suceava never took credit. On the contrary, it could be said, the Moldavian authorities, with strong ties, at the time of Stephen's first major attack on Walachia, to Matthias' arch-rival, emperor Frederic III, too, who also tried to exploit the anti-Ottoman climate, searched for explanations for their military failure. But this seems to have been of little importance in the Italian Peninsula¹².

¹¹ ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze Estere, Venezia*, cart. 361, fasc. 3, nn (25th, 28th of March 1474); [Marino Sanudo II Giovanne], *Vitae Ducum Venetorum Italice feriptae ab origine Urbis, sive ab anno CCCCXXI usque ad annum MCCCCXCIII*, in *RIS*, XXIII (1733), col. 1183; Idem, *Le vite dei dogi (1474–1494)*, edited by Angela Caracciolo Aricò [II] (Padua 2001), pp. 41–45, 61–62; Franco Catalano, 'Il ducato di Milano nella politica dell'equilibrio', in *Storia di Milano*, VII, *L'età sforzesca* (Milan 1956), pp. 318–319; Karl Nehring, *Matthias Corvinus, Kaiser Friedrich III und das Reich. Zum Hunyadisich-Habsburgischen Gegensatz im Donauraum* (Munich, 1989²), pp. 39–44, 61–64; Emanuel C. Antoche, 'Les expéditions de Nicopolis (1396) et de Varna (1444): une comparaison', *MT*, IV (2000), 1–2, pp. 42–43; Riccardo Fubini, 'Diplomacy and Government in the Italian City-States of the Fifteenth Century: Florence and Venice', in *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice*, edited by Daniela Frigo (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 39–40; Al. Simon, 'October 1444–April 1455: Two Moments in the Relations between John Hunyadi and Genoa', in *Between Worlds*, II, *John Hunyadi and his Time* (=MHG, NS, I, 2), edited by Ana Dumitran, Loránd Mády, Al. Simon (Cluj-Napoca, 2007), pp. 314–315.

¹² HHStA, Hs.S., Hs. W. 529, f. 261^r (6th of November 1473; edited in *Regesten Kaiser Friedrich III. (1440–1493). Nach Archiven und Bibliotheken geordnet* (= JFBRI, XIII), general editors Heinrich Koller, Paul-Joachim Heinig <and Alois Niederstätter>, suppl. II–I, *Das Taxregister der römischen Kanzlei 1471–1475* (Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien, Hss. "weiss 529" und "weiss 920"), edited by P.-J. Heinig, Ines Grund (Vienna-Cologne-Graz-Weimar, 2001), no. 3539, p. 523); Simeon Ljubić, *Dispacci di Luca de Tollentis vescovo di Sebenico e di Lionello Cheregato vescovo di Traù nunzi apostolici in Borgogna e nelle Fiandre 1472–1488* (Zagreb, 1876), no. 1–13, p. 46; *Ragusa*, no. 385, p. 631; Aşık Paşa Zade, *Mehmed Neşri*, in *Cronici turceşti privind ţările române. Extrase* [Turkish Chronicles regarding the Romanian Countries. Selections], I, *Secolul XV–mijlocul secolului XVII* [15th Century–Mid 17th Century], edited by Mihail Guboglu, Mustafa A. Mehmet

The Hungarian news was strange also for another reason. In February 1474, the city of Oradea, a small Saint-Denis to the realm, had been burnt and ravaged by the Ottomans. The royal and common shock caused had been immense. King Matthias' already contested domestic prestige had been dealt a considerable blow. However, he managed to turn the tables in his favor and pushed the Hungarian Diet to approve the 1 florin tax *per porta*, even under the reserve that the money thus collected was to be used only against the *Turk*. On the foreign political level, under the same less auspicious circumstances, Matthias too had already tried to turn the situation in his favor, by attempting and partially succeeding in using Stephen III's Walachians and their actions to his advantage. In this case, Matthias could count also on the troubles of the Venetian republic, under great pressure both in the peninsula and in the East¹³.

III. VENETIAN CONNECTIONS AND ORIENTAL EFFECTS

The fall of Negroponte (1471), the failure of the 'Muscovite plan' (1472), Usun Hassan's defeat (1473), the difficult talks held with the Tartars in view of their anti-Ottoman action (1473–1474), the even more difficult negotiations with Mehmed II (in particular between 1471 and 1473), the failed 'palace coup' attempted by the Venetian republic in Istanbul placed Venice in a very delicate position. Her relation with Rome was still tense, while her relation to Milan could always turn into an open conflict. The republic needed a success in the East, at

(Bucharest, 1966), pp. 95–96, 127–128; Angelo Michele Piemontese, 'La représentation d'Uzun Hasan sur scène à Rome (2 mars 1473)', *Turcica*, XXI–XXIII (1991), pp. 191–203; Al. Simon, 'The Use of the *Gate of Christendom*. Hungary's Mathias Corvinus and Moldavia's Stephen the Great Politics in the late 1400's', *QCR*, III (2004), pp. 204–206; Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Die venezianischen Jahrbücher des Stefano Magno (ÖNB Codd. 6215–6217) als Quelle zur albanischen und epirotischen Geschichte im späten Mittelalter (1433–1477)*, in *Südosteuropa von vormoderner Vielfalt und nationalstaatlicher Vereinheitlichung. Festschrift für Edgar Hösch*, edited by Konrad Clewing, O.J. Schmitt (Munich, 2005), pp. 169–171, 175–180.

¹³ HHSStA, S.A., A.D.S., *Hungarica*, A.A., I–2, fasc. 2–4, f. 30^{r-v} [March–April 1474]; *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns*, edited by Ferenc Döry, György Bónis, Géza Érszegi, Zsuzsa Teke, Vera Bácskai, [II] 1458–1490 (Budapest, 1989), 1474, art. 8, p. 215; *Chronicon Dubnicense cum codicibus Sambu ci Acephalo et Vaticano, cronicque Vindobonensi Picto et Budensi accurate collatum* (= HHFD, III), edited by M[átyás] Florián (Pécs, 1884), pp. 199–201; *Kemal Paşa Zade*, in *Cronici turceşti*, I, pp. 306–307, Şerban Papacostea, 'Venise et les Pays Roumains au Moyen Age', in *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, edited by Agostino Pertusi, I–2, *Storia-Diritto-Economia* (Florence, 1973), pp. 602–605; Aurel Decei, 'Incursiunea (Akîn) a lui Mihaloglu Ali Beg asupra Orăzii în anul 1474, pe temeiul istoriei lui Ibn Kemal' [Mihaloglu Ali Beg's Raid on Oradea, in the Year 1474, based on the History of Ibn Kemal], in *Sub semnul lui Clío. Omagiu Acad. Prof. Ştefan Pascu* [Festschrift for Ştefan Pascu] (Cluj, 1974), pp. 296–301; Szakály, 'Phases of Turko-Hungarian Warfare', pp. 94–96; Rázsó, 'Die Türkenpolitik Matthias Corvinus', pp. 10–14, 35–39, 45; Jászay, 'Contrastes et diplomatie', pp. 22–24.

least with the title of an anti-Ottoman hope. Matthias Corvinus, to which relations had been rather bad over the last five-six years, since the failed German-Hungarian crusader plan of 1466–1467, was the one most likely to provide this success for the republic. The king of Poland, Casimir IV, was on friendly terms with the sultan and at odds with the Hungarian monarch. Stephen of Moldavia was equally a promise and a liability for the crusade, due to his previous actions and changes of policy, namely in 1462 and in 1467¹⁴.

Milan was well aware of these Venetian problems. The ducal authority was also familiar with Venetian propaganda and disinformation. Such knowledge had a direct influence on the Italian, namely Milanese, reception of the anti-Ottoman victory of Vaslui, in January 1475. A series of Milanese reports from Venice, authored by the same Leonardo Botta (March–April 1475), are marked by several doubts regarding this victory. It took more than a month and supplementary data in order for Milan to accept Stephen's victory of Vaslui and his 'encyclical' letter sent throughout Europe. Previously his Walachian actions had been viewed, as in the case of the report sent from Genoese Chios, on the 3rd of October 1474, as part of a (personal) conflict with Radu III (who, nevertheless, contrary to what was stated in the report, died probably only at the beginning of the next year). The anti-Ottoman aims of Stephen's actions were quite unknown. Except for the report sent from Venetian Candia to Milan, on the 4th of October, there were rather few contemporary evidences that established a link between Stephen's combats and general continental anti-Ottoman warfare¹⁵.

*Lo Signore de Volaquia Alta et morto, lo Segno de la Velaquia
Basa et intrato dentro lo paese et a/ un Signore a lo so modo, lo quale
metra apertene a lo Turco, lo qualle ge ne mandato uno con grande*

¹⁴ ASV, Misc., Arm., II-7, ff. 472 (476)^{r-v} (13th of July 1472); Viaceslav Makusev, *Monumenta Historica Slavorum Meridionalium vicinorumque populorum e tabularis et bibliothecis italicis derompta*, I-2, Genua, Mantua, Mediolanum, Panormus et Taurinum (Belgrade, 1882), no. 14, p. 46; *Le guerre dei Veneti nell' Asia, 1470-1474*, no. 90, p. 112; MKL, I, no. 211, pp. 296-297; *Długosz*, pp. 597-600, 603; Gy. Rázsó, 'Una strana alleanza. Alcuni pensieri sulla storia militare e politica dell'alleanza contro i turchi (1440-1464)', in *Venezia e Ungheria nel Rinascimento*, edited by Vittore Branca (Florence, 1973), pp. 95-96; Lajos Tardy, *Beyond the Ottoman Empire. 14th-16th Century Hungarian Diplomacy* (Szeged, 1978), p. 59; Mihailo Popović, *Mara Branković - Leben und Wirken einer Frau an der kulturellen Schnittstelle zwischen Serben, Byzantinern und Osmanen*, PhD Thesis (Vienna, 2005), pp. 144-146; Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer*, pp. 366-375; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, II, pp. 299-302, 311-317; Simon, 'The Use', pp. 207-210, 218.

¹⁵ ASG, A.S., *Diversorum Communis Januae*, 3055, nn (11th of January); ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze Estere, Ungheria*, cart. 649, fasc. 2, nn (3rd, 4th of October 1474; for other examples of doubt: *Venezia*, cart. 361, fasc. 3, nn; 2nd, 5th, 11th, 16th, 18th, 25th of March 1475); ASVe, S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 26, c. 101^r (15th of June 1474); *Nachträge*, no. 234, p. 257; no. 251, p. 266; no. 255, p. 273; no. 280, p. 298; Theocharis Stavridis, *The Sultan of the Vezirs. The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453-1474)* (Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2001), pp. 232-234.

pessansa/ lo aceterano, sera contento caxo que no se terne ara goera con lo Segno<re> da la Velaquia Basa et con quello que o facto,/ laqualle cossa fosse teneamo no poria fare, ny attendere a l'armata que de sopra dicto e; quello que ne seque que/ Vi aviserò sempre la Exellentia Vostra maxime se yo intendo quea Voy piace (3rd of October 1474).

Ut que hic vere et indubie habentur nota sint Excellentie Vestre nonnulla dicam; Usun Cassanus potentissima/ manu descensus est in Asiam, & nisi divina dispositione turbetur, maxima facile subsequetur/ Turchus Constantinopolis munitioni invigilat, trirèmes & classem potentem parat de meo iudicio/ ex exhis que secretius percepi, preparationem habeant in ostentationem potius, & in maiorem opinionem de/ se principialis incutiendam, ac ut hostium suorum pecunias consummant, quodin verum rei effectum & executionem/ fieri autumo. Sentitur enim res suas maxime declinasse. Cenidere nanque multa millia hominum &/ potioribus & expectioribus, quos habbeat apud Usun Cassanum, apud Walachos & apud Scutarum, qui/ vix possunt una etate renovari tantum hec sunt in manu Dei. Ipse disponat quod bonum sit in oculis/ Suis & salubre ecclesie Sue Sancte (4th of October 1474).

Moreover, from the Milanese point of view, Buda and king Matthias, in spite of their Venetian or Ottoman usefulness, were not regarded as trustworthy political partners. Until the real panegyric wrote by Lodovico II Moro at king Matthias' death, Milan was no real supporter of the Hunyadis, not even during the talks that led to the marriage contract for the wedding, which never took place, of John Corvinus with Bianca Maria Sforza (1487–1490). Besides, already in 1473–1474, Milan had refused to establish a matrimonial connection with Matthias, of whom, for political and dynastic reasons, the Sforzas had a rather poor opinion. To a certain extent, this opinion was shared by Venice, but, namely, for Ottoman reasons, that, on the other hand, frequently compelled the republic to financially and politically support Matthias Corvinus¹⁶.

¹⁶ ELTEK, *Codices, Kaprinai*, B, LXVIII, nos. 4–5, pp. 11–12 (7th of September 1474); MDE, IV [1488–1490, 1458–1490] (Budapest, 1878), no. 129, p. 182; *Acta in consilio secreto in castello Portae Jovis Mediolani* (= AI, IV, IX, XVII), edited by Alfio Rosario Natale, II, 11 aprile 1478–22 dicembre 1478 (Milan, 1964), 1478 die XII novembris de mane, p. 311; 1478 die 16 novembris, post prandium, pp. 315–322; Iacopo Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere (1444–1479)*, edited by Paolo Cherubini, III, *Pontificato di Sisto IV* (Rome, 1997), no. 755, p. 1875; no. 767, p. 1891; Thallóczy, *Frammenti*, pp. 16–18; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, II, pp. 204, 213; Nehring, *Matthias Corvinus*, pp. 188–192; Simon, 'În jurul bătăliei de la Vaslui', pp. 12–14; Idem, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, p. 111; see also the Milanese data recently edited by Péter E. Kovács, 'A leggazdabb Magyarok 1472-ben. Egy követjelentés és a valóság' [The Richest Hungarians in 1472. An Embassy and its <Historic> Value], *Sz*, CXXXIX (2005), 2, pp. 426–428;

For these reasons, amongst other, Venice shaped and promoted the ‘crusader image’ of the, previously ‘untrustworthy’, Stephen III of Moldavia, not yet as a direct challenge to the ‘crusader front seat’ of Matthias of Hungary. The news that arrived, with Venice’s consent, in Milan, in March 1474, can be viewed as a first step in this political direction. Furthermore, it is highly improbable that the news of a Moldavian action in Walachia, regardless of its outcome, could have arrived in Buda and from there in Venice, until the 28th of March. According to the Moldavian-German Chronicle, Stephen ‘burnt’ Walachia on the 14th of March. For news to travel from Târgoviște to Buda it usually took two weeks. The same time span was need for a message to arrive from Buda to Venice. Venetian propaganda however ‘speeded’ things up. It was a political feature meant to last for decades in the Venetian-Moldavian case¹⁷.

THE ‘TRANSYLVANIAN BRIDGE’ IN ANTI-OTTOMAN AFFAIRS

Under these circumstances, Stephen III of Moldavia made his great anti-Ottoman debut and Matthias Corvinus of Hungary re-entered the anti-Ottoman stage. It was a highly delicate context that still poses several questions. For instance, we might presume that the Venetian report, arrived, in part, in Milan, regarded the events of November 1473. Then, although we do not know that Radu III had Ottoman support from the beginning, Stephen had been victorious, placing Basarab III Laiotă on the Walachian throne. Thus the information would have arrived with a rather great delay in Venice, towards the end of March 1474, without any data on Radu’s return to the throne (23rd of December 1473). Not even the news on the victory of Vaslui (on the 10th of January 1475) arrived too quickly in Venice (on the 6th of March 1475), though unofficially the victory was known in Venice already on the 17th of February. However, in this case, the delay was caused by the ‘fight’ between Stephen and Matthias for the monopoly on the promotion of the victory. Yet, if we do not accept the hypothesis of a delay in case of the data

¹⁷ For instance: ASG, A.S., *Diversorum Communis Januae*, 3056, nn (21st of January 1474); *Cronica moldo-germană*, p. 32; M.A. Mehmet, ‘La politique ottomane à l’égard de la Moldavie et du Khanat de Crimée vers la fin du règne du sultan Mehmed II *le Conquerant*’, *RRH*, XIII (1974), 3, p. 527–530; N. Iorga, ‘Veneția în Marea Neagră. III. Originea legăturilor cu Ștefan cel Mare și mediul politic al dezvoltării lor’ [Venice <’s Involvement> in the Black Sea <Area>], in Idem, *Studii asupra evului mediu românesc* [Studies on the Romanian Middle Ages], edited by Ș. Papacostea (Bucharest 1984), pp. 239–242; for further data on such topics, see also some of our own studies, based namely on Italian archival data, ‘Masimiliano I, Venezia e il problema ottomano (1493–1503), in *L’Europa Centro-Orientale e la Penisola italiana: Quattro secoli di rapporti e influssi tra Stati e civiltà (1300–1700)*, edited by Cristian Luca, Gianluca Masi (Brăila-Venice 2007), pp. 91–109, as well as ‘Stăpânii porturilor. Problema moldavă între Napoli și Milano în vara anului 1484’ [The Masters of the Harbors: Naples, Milan and the Moldavian Question in the Summer of 1484], *SMIM*, XXVI (2008), forthcoming.

contained by the report of March 1474, the 'signs' for the fate of this new anti-Ottoman engagement appear more than clear from the start¹⁸.

Given this context, even the reserved attitude in practice, enthusiastic in writing, of the Transylvanian nobility towards the anti-Ottoman actions of the 1470', in this case, towards the actions of their king, Matthias, and towards those of their neighbor, Stephen, could be viewed as quite justified. In this respect, we recall only the fact that, both in 1476 and in 1484, Matthias had to bring troops from Hungary proper in order to aid Stephen. This worked rather well in 1476, but proved to be a disaster in 1484. He could not count on Transylvanian support and had troubles also in gathering troops from the Banate. This was the case in particular in 1484, when, in spite of the pressures made by Stephen Báthory, the acting voivode of Transylvania, and Matthias, nobody in Transylvania seems to have taken action in favor of Stephen III. A likely explanation for this Transylvanian attitude might be also the fact that Matthias, even though he tried, at times (in 1469–1470 or 1476), to gather troops from the voivodate, via the traditional congregational channels, never called in the increasingly powerful Transylvanian assembly of estates, after the rebellion of 1467, until his death (1490)¹⁹.

The Transylvanian attitude that, for documentary and logical reasons, should be viewed only as a 'political dominant' and not as a defining 'character feature', can be placed in a wider *Christian* context, given also the data from the archives of

¹⁸ E.g. *Hurmuzaki*, II-2, 1451–1510, edited by N. Densușianu (Bucharest, 1891), no. 202, p. 224, Iorga, 'Veneția în Marea Neagră. III', no. 11, p. 255; no. 16, p. 257; *Malipiero*, p. 111; Sanudo, *Le vite dei dogi*, II, pp. 12, 14; Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, p. 568; see also *Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Georgio. MCCCCLIII–MCCCCLXXV (=ASLSP, VI–VII)*, edited by P.A [Raimondo Amedeo] Vigna, II-2, [1473–1475] (Genoa, 1879), no. 1117, pp. 195–196; Ș. Papacostea 'Moldova lui Ștefan cel Mare și genezeii din Marea Neagră' [Stephen the Great's Moldavia and the Genoese from the Black Sea <Area>], *AIIX*, XXIX (1992), pp. 70–72; Andrei Pippidi, *Lettres inédites de Leonardo III Tocco*, RESEE, XXXII (1994), 1–2, pp. 69–70. Leon Șimanschi, Dumitru Agache, 'Moldova între anii 1469 și 1473: program de guvernare și conjuncturi politice' [Moldavia between the Year 1469 and 1473: Governance Program and Political Circumstances], *AIIX*, XXXV (1998), pp. 14–17.

¹⁹ E.g. MOL, DL 27714 (21st of October 1479); Lajos Elekes, *Il bastione ungherese e le porte rumene dell' Europa* (Budapest 1940), pp. 11–14; I.-A. Pop, 'Privilegii obținute de români în epoca lui Matia Corvinul' [Privileges received by the Romanians in the Age of Matthias Corvinus], *RI*, NS, II (1991) 11–12, pp. 667–677; Ioan Drăgan, 'Aspecte ale relațiilor dintre români și puterea centrală în timpul domniei lui Matia Corvinul (1458–1490)' [Aspects of the Relations between the Romanians and the Central Power during the Reign of Matthias Corvinus], *RI*, NS, III (1992), 9–10, pp. 905–916; P.E. Kovács, 'Magyarország és Nápoly politikai kapcsolatai a Mátyás-korban' [The Political Relations between Hungary and Naples in Matthias' Time], in *Tanulmányok Szakály Ferenc emlékére* [Studies in the Memory of Ferenc Szakály], edited by Pál Fodor, Géza Pálffy, István György Tóth (Budapest, 1998), pp. 229–231, 236; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650. The Structure of Power* (New-York, 2002), pp. 31–34; see also our study 'Acceptance and Rejection in Medieval Transylvania. Romanians and Hungarians before 1600', *TR*, XIV (2005), 1, pp. 63–65, and Idem, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, p. 212–216 (in particular).

Milan. The military policies and the tax policies generally associated with crusader style actions as well as the non-Ottoman rivalries and interests favored namely a reserved attitude towards anti-Ottoman endeavors. This reserved attitude is quite eloquent if we take into account the fact that, unlike the Italian or German powers and cities, the Voivodate of Transylvania was no far away from the 'Ottoman front', from which the Transylvanian area was separated only by the unstable state of Walachia. Matthias' attempted reform of the realm's southern defense system, mainly after 1479, focused on the establishment of three major defense units (Slavonia, the Banate, Transylvania), was jeopardized from the start in its eastern part. Here regional security was better assured by diplomatic means and arrangements, than by military acts and measures²⁰.

²⁰ E.g. ASV, Arm. XXXIX-10, ff. 256 (276)^f-257 (277)^v [1459-1460; cf. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, II, p. 262, nota 111; Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, p. 483-484]; Stoica Nicolaescu, *Documente slavo-române cu privire la relațiile Țării Românești și Moldovei cu Ardealul în secolele XV și XVI. Privilegiu comerciale, scrisori domnești și particulare din arhivele Sibiului, Brașovului și Bistriței din Transilvania* [Slavo-Romanian Documents regarding the Moldavia's and Walachia's Relations to Transylvania in the 15th and 16th Centuries. Commercial Privileges. Princely Charters and Private Documents from the Archives of Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Szeben), Brașov (Kronstadt, Brassó) and Bistrița (Bistriz, Besztrece)] (Bucharest, 1905), no. 55, pp. 136-137; no. 57, p. 140; M. Guboglu, 'Le tribut payé par les Principautés Roumaines à la Porte jusqu'au début du XVI^e siècle d'après les sources turques', *REI*, XXXVII (1969), 1, p. 69-73; see also the assessments made by Géza Pálffy, 'The Origins and Development of the Border Defence System against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (up to the Early Eighteenth Century)', in *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe. The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, edited by Géza Dávid, P. Fodor (Leiden-Boston-Cologne, 2000), pp. 10-13.