

BRANCHO'S SON AND THE WALLACHIANS: A MILANESE PERSPECTIVE ON THE BATTLE OF BAIA (II)

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II. The Domestic Authorities of Buda and Suceava in the Ottoman Framework of 1467

Quite soon it turned out that not only Venice's designs, but also Vienna's and Buda's anti-Ottoman plans were far-fetched. First, the campaign initially scheduled for 1467 had to be postponed until 1468. Then, as it became clear that, regardless of the costs, the campaign had to take place in 1467, foreign and domestic problems escalated for Matthias. The foreign context (in particular the ties between Prague and Krakow and Krakow and Buda) provided very few guarantees for the success of the plan. Matthias' offer for the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia could no longer be viewed as a valid alternative by the latter. According to this offer, Radu (and/or Basarab initially, who seems to have been enthroned, for a few months, in Radu's place by Matthias and maybe Stephen in the second half of 1466), should have received Amlaş and Făgăraş, the old Transylvanian estates of the Wallachian rulers, confiscated by Hunyadi. Stephen should have received (at least) Rodna.¹

¹ See, for instance, Iván Nagy, Albert B. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek. Mátyás király korából 1458-1490* (hereafter: MDE), vol. II [1466-1480], Budapest, 1877, no. 23, p. 41; no. 39, p. 56; no. 144, p. 204; W. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei. Külügyi Osztály* (hereafter: MKL), vol. I 1458-1479, Budapest, 1893, no. 36, p. 47; nos. 78-79, pp. 144-145; N. Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XV^e siècle*, vol. IV 1453-1476, Bucarest, 1915, nos. 162-179, pp. 250-270; *Regesten Kaiser Friedrich III. (1440-1493)*. *Nach Archiven und Bibliotheken geordnet*, ed. by Heinrich Koller, Paul Joachim Heinig, vol. XV *Die Urkunden und Briefe aus den Beständen "Reichsstadt" und "Hochstift" Regensburg des Bayerischen Hauptstaatsarchivs in München sowie aus den Regensburger Archiven und Bibliotheken*, ed. by Franz Fuchs, Karl Friedrich Krieger, Köln-Wien-Graz, 2002, no. 212, p. 164; *Joannis Dlugosii Senioris Canonici Cracoviensis Opera omnia*, ed. by Alexandr Przewdziecki, vol. XIV *Historiae Poloniae libri XII*, Cracoviae, 1887, pp. 469-470, 495-496; Antonio de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, ed. by József Fögel, László Juhász and Béla Iványi, vol. IV, Lipsiae, 1941 [Budapest, 1944], pp. 11-12, 15; Josef Macurek, *Zwei Entwürfe aus der 2. Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts für die Organisation Europas des böhmischen Königs Georg von Podiebrad und des moldauischen Fürsten Stephan des Grossen*, in "Revue roumaine d'histoire" (hereafter: RRH), VIII, 1969, 3, pp. 501-513; Antonin Kalous, *Italská politika, Matyáš Korvín a české země*, in "Husitský Tábor," XV, 2006, pp. 153-156. For the estates and the Wallachian question of 1466: Petronel Zahariuc, *Documente inedite din Țara Românească (secolul XV)*, in "Studii și

Stephen re-became one of the most important threats to Matthias' power. In 1459, he had already sworn loyalty to Frederick III, as king of Hungary, who was to promise him Wallachia in return for his support against Matthias (1473-1474). In 1467, however, this Habsburg connection favored Matthias' plan. The ties established, via Krakow too, between Suceava and Prague seemed nonetheless more important in that context. The moment he had found out about Matthias' action against him, Stephen dispatched envoys to Podiebrad. But, at that time, he was on the verge of losing everything. His wife, an important link to both Kyiv and Krakow (Casimir was her uncle), died when Matthias entered Moldavia. He was furthermore apparently unprepared for what was to come. At the beginning of the year, with Matthias on one side and Mehmed on the other, both interested in having him on their side, as well as with a Transylvania in growing turmoil in front of him, Stephen seemed to have nothing to lose, but only to profit, in particular if he sided with Mehmed II.²

1. Official and 'Hidden' Actors and Patrons of the Transylvanian *Coup* of Summer 1467

In August 1467, Transylvania exploded. Nobody thought that the royal authority over it was strong, especially after the attitude of the Transylvanian Estates in 1459 or 1463. Still, a rebellion seemed impossible. In May, Matthias had announced the city of Braşov that he was leaving in person against Mehmed II who was threatening his positions in Serbia. At the same time, he had acted in favor of the

materiale de istorie medie" (hereafter: SMIM), XXVI, 2008, *Appendix*, no. 2, p. 169; Al. Simon, *Valahii la Baia (1467)*, in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie A.D. Xenopol," XLVI, 2009, p. 127 sqq., *Appendix*, II.

² Magyar Országos Levéltár (hereafter: MOL), Diplomatai Levéltár (hereafter: DL) 29051, 29 October 1467; abstract in Zsigmond Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei*, vol. I 1284-1484, Budapest, 1990, no. 1763, p. 650; Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Wien (hereafter: HHStA), Staatenabteilungen, Ausserdeutsche Staaten, Hungarica, A.A., I-2, fasc. 2-4, f. 30^{FV}, March-April 1474; copy: MOL, Diplomatai Fényképgyűjtemény (hereafter: DF) 276099; *Letopiseţul de la Putna I*, in vol. *Cronicile slavo-române din secolele XV-XVI publicate de Ioan Bogdan*, ed. by P.P. Panaitescu, Bucureşti, 1958, p. 49; Constantin Rezachevici, *Ştefan cel Mare, Ivan III, Sofia Tomincina (Paleolog) şi Elena Stefanovna Voloşanca – Legături dinastice şi politice*, in SMIM, XXII, 2004, pp. 53-55; Al. Simon, *The Hungarian Means of the Relations between the Habsburgs and Moldavia at the End of the 15th Century*, in "Anuario del Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica," VIII, 2006, pp. 259-296. Given also Stephen's ties to Prague, it is interesting to notice the similarities and differences between the events of 1467 and the Habsburg-Moldavian conspiracy of 1497 against Wladislaw II (I.-A. Pop, Al. Simon, *Moldova şi celălalt Imperiu: Preliminariile şi consecinţele conspiraţiei lui Maximilian I de Habsburg şi Ştefan cel Mare (1497)*, in vol. *Vocaţia istoriei. Prinos profesorului Şerban Papacostea*, ed. by Ovidiu Cristea, Gheorghe Lazăr, Brăila, 2008, pp. 331-406).

trade with Wallachia. There was apparently no trace of rebellion. His decision to retain the disputed estates Amlaş, Făgăraş and Rodna under the crown's direct control seems to have constituted the final straw. According to his trustee, Janus Pannonius, bishop of Eger, he had taken that decision just after Christmas 1466. In view of the anti-Ottoman campaign, these estates were to be given to the Wallachian rulers in case they lost their throne. In fact, the estates were their rewards, but king Matthias could not risk such an expression prior to the campaign.³

Matthias' decision to conserve the estates, approved by the Diet nonetheless (March 1467), was a most unwelcome addition to the tax reform initiated by the king at the same time. Though the reform did not have the results expected by the king, it caused serious hostilities. A few months later, in August, from Cluj-Mănăştur, the rebels called on all elites to come and join them in their fight for the defense of their ancient privileges. This was more than *ius resistendi* and resembled an armed insurrection against the monarch. Moreover, a redefinition of the political and administrative ties between Buda and the Voivodate of Transylvania was no longer a remote perspective. The king's failure to comply with the demands of August brought forth even the possibility of secession. Much of the hostility, and irony as well, put into Matthias's subsequent messages on the rebellion and Stephen III, by Pannonius' quill, seems to have been more than a humanist product.⁴

³ Biblioteca Capitulă Colomăiana, Sevilla, Codices, Cod. 82-4-8, Pannonius, f. 94^v, 2 January 1467; copy: MOL, DF 290346; it is interesting to note how many of Matthias' quite famous letters from the 1460's actually came from Pannonius' quill; *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. VI 1458-1473, ed. by Gustav Gündisch, Herta Gündisch, Gernot Nussbächer, Konrad G. Gündisch, Bukarest, 1981, no. 3544, p. 294; no. 3576, p. 314 (the correct editions of the documents of 1467); Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. XV/1 *Acte și scrisori din arhivele orașelor ardelen (Bistrița, Brașov, Sibiu): 1358-1600*, ed. by N. Iorga, București, 1911, nos. 109-110, pp. 62-64; Martyn Rady, *Voivode and Regnum: Transylvania's Place in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, in vol. *Historians and the History of Transylvania*, ed. by László Péter, Boulder-New York, 1992, pp. 67-70; Mária Pakucs, *Și nici vămile nu mai sunt cum au fost, ci ați mărit și vămile ... Matia Corvin și reforma sa din 1467*, in SMIM, XXII, 2004, pp. 217-220. For the context: Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. II/2 1451-1510, ed. by Nicolae Densușianu, București, 1891, nos. 153-158, pp. 172-178; *Urkundenbuch*, vol. VI, ed. by Gustav Gündisch, Herta Gündisch, Gernot Nussbächer, Konrad G. Gündisch, nos. 3544-3584, pp. 292-317.

⁴ MKL, vol. I, no. 149, pp. 211-213; *Urkundenbuch*, vol. VI, ed. by Gustav Gündisch, Herta Gündisch, Gernot Nussbächer, Konrad G. Gündisch, no. 3544, p. 294; no. 3576, p. 314; E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. XV/1, nos. 111-112, pp. 64-66; Johannes de Thurocz, *Chronica Hungarorum*, vol. I *Textus*, ed. by Erzsébet Galántai, Gyula Kristó, Budapest, 1985, pp. 286-287; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 14-15 (see also MKL, vol. I, no. 124, pp. 182-184; no. 133, p. 194); *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns, [II] 1458-1490*, ed. by Ferenc Döry, György Bónis, Géza Erszegi, Zsuzsa Teke, Vera Bácskai, Budapest, 1989, 1467, pp. 162-168; Jenő Abel, *Adalékok a*

Szekler leaders and Benedict Roth, the count of the Saxons, seemed to support the extreme forms of rebellion, but not the lower nobility. Peasant uprisings like in 1437 were out of the question. Cities were divided. Cluj, Bistrița and Brașov tried to remain neutral. The last two leaned towards the rebellion, supported by Sibiu. The rebellion had potential. Długosz wrote of the tears shed by Transylvania when it found out that it was not going to come under Krakow's rule according to the provisions of the Hungarian-Polish treaty of 1474. This poetic license indicates that local tensions remained high after 1467. Besides in 1467, Emeric and Stephen Szapolyai, the masters of northern and southern Hungary proper, were amongst the official warrants of the rebels against the *tyrant* (unpunished, they joined other conspiracies, as in 1471). Prelates were also involved. As he tried to extend his control over the Church, Matthias underlined this aspect in front of Paul II (March 1468).⁵

In fall 1467, he quickly reacted. With 12,000 soldiers in total (according to Bonfini) gathered against the *Turk*, he entered Transylvania in late September. The same swift move was to save his throne in 1471. He annihilated the opposition and calmed the situation in Cluj, Sibiu, Sighișoara, Bistrița and Brașov. The rebels fled, mostly to Moldavia. By early November, he had made up his mind. The campaign was to continue in Moldavia. Stephen was viewed as the main foreign responsible for the crisis. Radu was guilty too, but he was also Mehmed's favorite and hard to get (he was thus able to intervene in favor of Sibiu in front of the king). Stephen was basically caught off guard by the king's decision. The main responsible for the crisis was however the sultan. He had been able to both virtually destroy all of Skanderbeg's power and to create a Hungarian (-Moldavian) trap for Matthias.⁶

Humanismus történetéhez Magyarországon, Budapest, 1880, p. 31; A. Kubinyi, *Die Staatsorganisation der Matthiaszeit*, in Idem, *Matthias Corvinus: die Regierung eines Königreichs in Ostmitteleuropa (1458-1490)*, Herne, 1999, pp. 19-24.

⁵ V. Fraknoi, *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae Regis epistolae ad Romanos Pontifices datae et ab eis acceptae*, Budapest, 1891, no. 47, p. 78; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, p. 603; A. Kubinyi, *Erdély a Mohács előtti évtizedekben*, in vol. *Tanulmányok Erdély történetéről*, ed. by István Rácz, Debrecen, 1988, p. 70; Zs. Jakó, *Mátyás király erdélyi társadalom-politikájáról*, in "Korunk," n.s., I, 1990, 3, pp. 425-428; Idem, *A Farnasi Veres család. Az 1467 éve erdélyi lóadás kutatásához*, in vol. *Emlékkönyv Imreh István születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*, ed. by András Kiss, Gyöngy Kiss Kovács, Ferenc Pozsony, Kolozsvár, 1999, pp. 221-222; Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin. O coexistență medievală*, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, pp. 180-181.

⁶ For an overview: Jovan Radonić, *Thyrath Kastriot Skenderbeg i Arbanija y XV beky (istoriska iratha)*, Beograd, 1942, no. 383, p. 207; O.J. Schmitt, *Skanderbegs letzte Jahre. West-östliches Wechselspiel von Diplomatie und Krieg im Zeitalter der osmanischen Eroberung Albanies (1464-1468)*, in "Südost-Forschungen: internationale Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Kultur und Landeskunde Süd-osteuropas," LXIV-LXV, 2004-2005, pp. 56-123, Appendix, no. 53, p. 120; K.G. Gündisch, *Participarea sașilor la răzvrătirea din anul 1467 a transilvănenilor*

2. The Hungarian and Wallachian Coordinates of the Rebellion of Moldavia's Lower Country

In late 1467, Matthias apparently thought of dividing Moldavia into two loyal units. He had two contenders for the throne with him (Peter Aron and Berindei). In early 1448, Hunyadi may have had a similar plan. The division of Moldavia matched both the Hungarian-Polish plan of Lublau (1412) and the partition of Moldavian power between the brothers Elias I and Stephen II (1435-1442). Such a partition followed the old line (1370's-1380's) of division between Moldavia's Upper and Lower Countries (*Țara de Sus* and *Țara de Jos*). It was also a prequel to Matthias' Wallachian plans and actions of 1475-1476, when he supported both Basarab IV and Vlad III as contenders for the transalpine throne. For decades the East (*Muntenia*)-West (*Oltenia*) division of Wallachia had been deepened by the conflicts between the Houses of Dan and Dracul. Still, Matthias insisted less on this division, on which the Habsburgs (namely Maximilian I) focused after 1490.⁷

In the Moldavian case (in 1467 at least), Matthias had the advantage that Stephen's policy had caused unrest in the Lower Country. When Matthias entered Moldavia, the Lower Country, *turned towards Hungary*, as Casimir IV's agents underlined, rebelled against Stephen. The plundering tours conducted by Matthias' soldiers did not affect the stand of the Lower Country. Until the late summer of 1471, when he reached a more enduring compromise with Matthias, Stephen most likely lost the control over the entire Lower Country. As German records, based on

împotriva lui Matia Corvinul, in "Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai," Series Historia, XVII, 1972, 1, pp. 21-30; Idem, *Das Patriziat siebenbürgischer Städte im Mittelalter*, Köln, 1993, pp. 332-334; Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Matthias Corvinus and the Development of the Transylvanian Cities and Towns in the Second Half of the 15th Century*, in vol. *Between Worlds*, vol. I *Stephen the Great, Matthias Corvinus and Their Time*, ed. by László Koszta, Ovidiu Mureşan, Al. Simon, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, pp. 190-192 (in particular).

⁷ HHStA, Reichshofkanzlei, Maximiliana, fasc. 34-III.12, ff. 23^r-24^v, 40^r-41^r, after 14 May 1501; E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. XV/1, nos. 162-163, pp. 92-93; I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ştefan cel Mare*, vol. II [1493-1503, 1458-1503], Bucureşti, 1913, no. 139, p. 314; no. 182, p. 458; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, p. 495; A.D. Xenopol, *Lupta între Drăculeşti şi Dăneşti*, in "Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secţiunii istorice" (hereafter: AARMSI), 3rd series, XXX, 1907-1908, pp. 207-211, 243-251; Ş. Papacostea, *Un épisode de la rivalité polono-hongroise au XV^e siècle: l'expédition de Matia Corvin en Moldavie (1467) à la lumière d'une nouvelle source*, in RRH, VIII, 1969, 6, pp. 970-973, *Appendix*, nos. 1-2, pp. 976-979; Sergiu Iosipescu, *Contribuţii la istoria Moldovei lui Ştefan cel Mare*, in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie A.D. Xenopol," XXIX, 1992, pp. 54-55; Al. Simon, *În jurul Carpaţilor. Formele şi realităţile genezei statelor româneşti*, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, pp. 435-438, 455-456. For about a year after the battle of Vaslui, in January 1475, Vlad III 'failed' to receive the 'approval' of Stephen III and of Braşov for a third Wallachian reign.

Polish sources, too stated, Stephen *did not dare* to enter the Lower Country. In 1467, he had been forced to retreat from Trotuș, the town in the Lower Country in front of the Oituz pass, because he had felt threatened. Matthias crossed the Oituz pass and took possession of Trotuș without major opposition. The situation was very delicate for Stephen III, who probably still had followers in that area.⁸

His mother's family came from the Lower Country. From here, he had recruited most of his armed forces when he had taken the throne in 1457. Given the old pro-Latin and pro-Hungarian political dominant of the area, Stephen's entente with the anti-unionist and pro-Ottoman party, most necessary under the circumstances of spring 1457, an entente then turned into a sort of domestic political hegemony of the latter party, may have well contributed to the discontent of the Lower Country.

At any rate, at the end of 1467, Stephen was in the same situation as king Matthias a few months before. He had been abandoned by the political and administrative unit which, theoretically, should have been the most loyal to him. Like Moldavia's Lower Country, Transylvania, with its inner divisions, had turned against its monarch, the son of Hunyadi, he too often accused of being a tyrant, also after he had become perpetual count of Bistrița (1453).⁹

The Transylvanian and Hungarian compensations received by John Hunyadi, after he had been compelled to resign his office of governor, had gradually turned against him (1454-1456) and against his party, throughout Matthias' years of troubles, as a prisoner and as very young king (1457-1460). The rebellion of 1467 had been the result of more than a decade of mounting tensions between (part of the) Transylvanian traditional powers and the Hunyadis. The outcome of this clash could have been most detrimental to the latter. Even so, in comparison, the danger faced by Stephen in late 1467 still seemed greater than that confronted by Matthias in mid 1467. He risked losing his throne, not only part of his power or land. Regardless of camp, more and more political figures viewed him as a double-

⁸ Felix Priebatsch, *Politische Correspondenz des Kurfürsten Albrecht Achilles, 1470-1486*, vol. I 1470-1474, Leipzig, 1894, no. 721, p. 555; *Korrespondenz Breslaus im Zeitalter des Königs Matthias Corvinus*, ed. by Berthold Kronthal, Heinrich Wendt, vol. I 1469-1479, Breslau, 1893, no. 59, p. 37; Ș. Papacostea, *Politica externă a lui Ștefan cel Mare: opțiunea polonă (1459-1472)*, in SMIM, XXV, 2007, pp. 13-28; Al. Simon, *În jurul Carpaților*, pp. 439, 500-512.

⁹ For instance: Ș. Papacostea, *Aux débuts de l'État moldave. Considérations en marge d'une nouvelle source*, in RRH, XII, 1973, 1, pp. 148-150; Al. Simon, *Moldova între Vilnius și Moscova. Anii trecerii de la Roma la Constantinopol (1386-1388)*, in "Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai," Series Historia, XLVIII, 2003, pp. 3-56; Idem, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, pp. 73-74, 208-210; D.I. Mureșan, *Teoctist I și ungerea domnească a lui Ștefan cel Mare*, in vol. *România în Europa medievală (între Orientul bizantin și Occidentul latin)*. Studii în onoarea profesorului Victor Spinei, ed. by Dumitru Țeicu, Ionel Căndea, Brăila, 2008, pp. 303-416 (here pp. 408-412).

dealing trouble-maker that had to be dethroned. All these were emphasized by Matthias in his response to the Polish (feeble) protests after his campaign.¹⁰

3. The Stand of the Ottoman Empire on the Events of Transylvania and Moldavia

From spring 1467 on, Mehmed II had constantly attacked Skanderbeg, his old enemy and the spearhead of the action planned by Matthias and Frederick III. Skanderbeg should have received aid from Matthias. Like in 1462, 1476 or 1484, Ottoman troops were grouped around Belgrade to block a Hungarian intervention in the south-west or the south-east. When Mehmed's Albanian campaign neared its climax, the Transylvanian rebellion broke out. Any action which might have hindered the plans of the sultan had thus been rendered impossible. With or without Buda's and Vienna's anti-Ottoman plan of 1466-1467, as well as whether or not one accepts that Hunyadi actually did install the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia *as it pleased him* (this was Matthias' official post-Baia statement), there was one matter, at least, north of the Lower Danube in which the sultan could not give in, namely the expansion of Hungarian direct or indirect control over Wallachia and Moldavia.¹¹

In late fall 1467, Matthias felt, on the one hand, the Ottoman threat, and, on the other, he was encouraged by his Transylvanian successes and by Stephen's Moldavian weaknesses to cross the Eastern Carpathians. He was probably overconfident. In case his Transylvanian supporters had followed him *en masse* after

¹⁰ For instance: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Armarium XXXIX-10, f. 257 (277)^v, 1459-1460; *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, vol. I 1384-1492, ed. by August Sokolowski, Józef Szujski, Cracoviae, 1876, no. 35, pp. 40-41; MKL, vol. I, no. 149, pp. 211-213 (re-edited in vol. *Acta et epistolae relationum Transylvaniae Hungariaeque cum Moldavia et Valachia*, ed. by Endre Veress, vol. I 1468-1540, Budapest, 1914, no. 5, pp. 5-6); E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. II/2, no. 76, p. 87; no. 80, p. 92; K. Nehring, *Quellen zur ungarischen Außenpolitik in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts (I)*, in "Levéltári Közlemények," XLVII, 1, 1976, nos. 5-8, no. 4, p. 88; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIII, 1883, p. 368; vol. XIV, pp. 496-497; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 17-18; Al. Simon, *The Lion in Winter: John Hunyadi from Kossovopolje to Belgrade*, in vol. *Between Worlds*, vol. II *Extincta est lucerna orbis. John Hunyadi and His Time*, ed. by Ana Dumitran, Loránd Mádly, Al. Simon, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, pp. 509-512.

¹¹ Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Könyvtár (hereafter: ELTEK), Codices, Kaprinai, A, XV, no. 126, p. 104, spring 1467; Lajos Thallóczy, *Frammenti relativi alla storia dei paesi situati all'Adria* (offprint "Archeografo Triestino," 3rd series, VII, 1), Trieste, 1913, pp. 36-38; MKL, vol. I, no. 149, p. 211; Viaceslav Makušev, *Monumenta Historica Slavorum Meridionalium vicinorumque populorum e tabulariis et bibliothecis italicis deprompta*, vol. I/1, Varsaviae, 1874, no. 13, p. 553; vol. I/2 *Genua, Mantua, Mediolanum, Panormus et Taurinum*, Belgradi, 1882, no. 3, p. 25; no. 11, p. 233; no. 1, p. 238; J. Radonić, *Thyrath Kastriot Skanderbeg*, nos. 346-347, pp. 195-198; O.J. Schmitt, *Das venezianische Albanien (1402-1479)*, München, 2001, pp. 604-612; Idem, *Skanderbegs letzte Jahre*, pp. 64-69.

the rebellion, he had at best 15,000-20,000 men when he entered Moldavia. But Stephen's troops most likely did not exceed 12,000-15,000 men. Yet, Matthias had not solved the Ottoman matter. Negotiations between him and Mehmed II had been initiated after the first signs of the Transylvanian unrest that year. When he entered Moldavia, the Ottoman army was ready to cross the Lower Danube. If Stephen lost, the Ottoman troops were to intervene (apparently, unlike Matthias, Mehmed did not underestimate Stephen's military abilities). Further to the west, Croatia and the Bosnian areas under Matthias' rule had already been attacked by the Ottomans.¹²

Matthias' Moldavian victory would not have reduced Ottoman pressure on him. Mehmed II had basically resorted to the same solution as his father, Murad II. When the proceedings of the council of Ferrara-Florence were about to begin, a council of union, much feared by Murad II, in particular after Sigismund of Luxemburg apparently overcame his initial reluctance towards the council, Murad II struck in Transylvania and paralyzed the Hungarian kingdom already in spring 1437. Besides, like his son later, Murad could always rely on the enduring hostility between Buda and Venice (in spite of several formal and real ententes). In his frequent negotiations with the republic, Mehmed did not hesitate to present the son of the 'Christian businessman' John Hunyadi as a crook, who deceived *Christians* and Muslims alike. By the mid 1460's, Matthias Corvinus had already concluded, used and then broken several arrangements with both Istanbul and Venice.¹³

¹² ELTEK, Codices, Kaprinai, A, XV, nos. 3-6, pp. 3-8 (30 March, 26/27, 29, 30 April); no. 18, p. 17 (2 October; late medieval copies: Esztergomi Főszékesegyházi Könyvtár, Kézirattár, Mss. II-393, pp. 4-8; in MOL, DF 290345); Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Budapest, Cod. Lat. 211, ff. 250^v-257^r, 20 August 1467; copy: MOL, DF 252468; F. Pall, *I rapporti italo-albanesi intorno alla metà del secolo XV*, in "Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane," LXXXIII, 1966, no. 67, p. 208; no. 72, p. 213; no. 80, p. 219; N. Iorga, *Notes et extraits*, vol. IV, no. 17, p. 25; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 14-15; Emanuel C. Antoche, *L'expédition du roi de Hongrie, Mathias Corvin en Moldavie (1467). Qui remporta finalement la bataille de Baia (14/15 décembre 1467)?*, in "Revue internationale d'histoire militaire," LXXXIII, 2003, pp. 137-142. These 'moderate' military figures too may have been significantly lower (by up to 50%), namely those of the former. He had to leave troops behind him in the recently pacified province, where he had entered with 12,000 men if we are to fully trust Bonfini. Besides, under those circumstances, the loyalty of Transylvanian soldiers could not have appeared to be very solid to the king.

¹³ For an overview: MDE, vol. I, 1876, nos. 123-124, pp. 178-179; no. 213, p. 348; no. 211, p. 342; vol. II, no. 23, p. 41 (in the Venetian peace project of October 1466, Skanderbeg was also listed as one of the Republic's *recommandati*); no. 31, p. 52; vol. IV [1488-1490, 1458-1490], 1878, *Appendix*, nos. 5-6, pp. 291-292; MKL, vol. I, no. 48, p. 77; *Annali veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500 del Senatore Domenico Malipiero ordinati e abbreviati dal senatore Francesco Longo*, ed. by Agostino Sagredo, in "Archivio Storico Italiano," 1843, pp. 40-41; Franz Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit. Weltenstürmer einer Zeitenwende*, München, 1959, pp. 352-353; Virgil Ciociltan, *Între Sultan și Împărat: Vlad Dracul în 1438*, in "Revista de istorie," XXIX, 1976, 11, pp. 1767-1790; Theoharis Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453-1474)*, Leiden-Boston, 2001, pp. 212-216.

By early 1467, Matthias' Wallachian and Albanian conduct, as well as Mehmed's unwillingness to accept (expensive in effect) compromises crushed Venice's hope of securing a peace between itself, Istanbul and Buda, based on Matthias' rather well-known Bohemian intentions and Mehmed's growing concerns in Asia Minor caused by the lasting rise of Uzun Hassan's Turkmen power. Mehmed could not miss the opportunity of crushing Skanderbeg, whom Matthias had promised to aid. He could also not afford to lose (or in fact share) control over Wallachia and Moldavia. But, their rulers, in particular Radu, were, in the first place, the Porte's subjects. If Matthias did not leave in person against the Ottomans, Wallachia and Moldavia (most likely) would not have made a move against the empire. They would have moved (only) if the king went to war against the sultan. The equation, as outlined by the crusader *Reichstag* of Regensburg in 1471, was already valid in 1467.¹⁴

III. The Military and Diplomatic Confrontations of November and December 1467

Ottoman pressures and Matthias' much diminished chances of success following the campaign against Skanderbeg and the intensified challenges to his Hungarian authority altered the Wallachian stands. It was no wonder that, after Baia, he emphasized more than ever Stephen's 'status' of traitorous Hunyadi creature and that more than half a decade elapsed before real political Hungarian-Moldavian relations were restored. Still, like Matthias, apparently surprised by Stephen's capacity to resist, Stephen had not expected the king to win in Transylvania (definitely, not that quickly). In return, like in the case of his assessment of Stephen's strength, the sultan had taken into account that possibility. By the time the king entered Transylvania, he had redirected his troops to the north and pressured the king until spring 1468. Throughout his Transylvanian and Moldavian campaigns (in particular in the first half of the latter), Matthias therefore constantly negotiated with Mehmed II.¹⁵

¹⁴ ELTEK, Codices, Kaprinai, A, XV, no. 129, p. 105, November 1467; *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III.*, vol. VIII/2 1471, ed. by Helmut Wolf, Göttingen, 1999, nos. 94-95, pp. 323-327; O.J. Schmitt, *Actes inédits concernant Venise, ses possessions albanaises et Skanderbeg (1464-1468)*, in "Turcica," XXXI, 1999, no. 53, p. 281; nos. 61-63, pp. 293-298; MDE, vol. II, no. 37, p. 64; no. 46, pp. 76-77; no. 167, p. 233; MKL, vol. I, no. 189, pp. 266-267; see also Francisc Pall, *Les relations entre la Hongrie et Skanderbeg*, in "Revue historique du Sud-Est européen," X, 1933, 4-6, pp. 136-139.

¹⁵ *Codice Aragonese o sia lettere regie, ordinamenti ed altri atti governativi de' sovrani aragonesi in Napoli riguardanti l'amministrazione interna del reame e le relazioni all'estero*, ed. by Francesco Thrinchera, vol. I [1467-1468], Napoli, 1866, no. 18, p. 28; no. 100, p. 139; no. 271, p. 374; J. Radonić, *Thyrath Kastriot Skenderbeg*, nos. 357-358, pp. 197-198; no. 362, p. 199;

Matthias' main concern seemed to have been the Porte, not his *Christian* adversaries. He was also running out of time. He had to defeat Stephen before Mehmed made his move. But Mehmed waited. He may have hoped that Stephen would fall, after inflicting the most damage possible to Matthias (in this respect, Stephen's Ottoman fears expressed in his letter to Casimir, after Baia, may have been more than just a matter of rhetoric). Mehmed had the upperhand and Matthias had to be careful. Though he had won the Lower Country, he did not venture in an attempt to conquer Chilia. Often, its fate was not decided at the Danube Mouths, but at a distance. Belgrade caused concerns too. Still, a deceitful truce was concluded for that area. While the king marched through Moldavia, fresh Ottoman troops gathered in *Bulgaria*. At the same time, the garrison of Belgrade apparently broke the local truce, attacked the Ottomans of Smederevo and killed 2,000 of them.¹⁶

1. King Matthias Corvinus' Advance through Moldavia's Lower and Upper Countries

Stephen first tried to halt Matthias at Oituz. He failed. He attempted to make a stand at Troțuș. He had to retreat. Matthias took the town and remained there a couple of days. Stephen and then Długosz stated that Matthias burnt Troțuș on his departure. If the town was not set on fire during a Moldavian surprise attack, it is unlikely that Matthias gave the order for its destruction. Even Długosz wrote that at Troțuș, gateway to the Lower Country that had rebelled against Stephen, the ruler had not felt at ease. Nevertheless, there were plenty of settlements to be burnt.

nos. 383-385, pp. 207-208; MDE, vol. II, nos. 42-44, pp. 72-74; MKL, vol. I, no. 149, p. 212; *Acta et epistolae*, ed. by Endre Veress, vol. I, nos. 1-2, pp. 1-2; E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. XV/1, no. 110, pp. 63-64; *Documenta Romaniae Historica* (hereafter: DRH), A *Moldova*, vol. II 1449-1486, ed. by Leon Șimanschi, Georgeta Ignat, Dumitru Agachi, București, 1975, nos. 146-148, pp. 212-216; I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ștefan cel Mare*, vol. II, no. 146, pp. 353-354; *Janus Pannonius összes munkái*, ed. by Sándor V. Kovács, Budapest, 1987, no. 375, p. 200; nos. 438-440, pp. 230-232; Tursun Bey, *La conquista di Constantinopoli*, ed. by Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont, Michele Bernardini, Luca Berardi, Milano, 2007, pp. 168-169; J. de Thurocz, *Chronica Hungarorum*, vol. I, pp. 287-288; *Annali veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500*, pp. 43-44.

¹⁶ Archivio di Stato di Milano, Archivio Ducale Sforzesco (hereafter: ASM, ADS), Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February 1468; MOL, DL 27916, 1 October, 21 November 1467; *Codex Diplomaticus Partium Regno Hungariae Adnexarum. Magyarország Mellékartományainak Oklevéltára*, vol. IV, Lajos Thallóczy, Sándor Horváth, *Jajca (Bánság, vár és város) története 1450-1527*, Budapest, 1915, nos. 33-34, pp. 42-43; MDE, vol. II, no. 37, p. 64; no. 42, p. 74; no. 46, p. 76; I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ștefan cel Mare*, vol. II, no. 133, p. 298; Al. Simon, *The Limits of the Moldavian Crusade (1474, 1484)*, in "Annuario del Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica," IX, 2007, pp. 165-196. This compelling haste may explain part of Matthias' apparent over-confidence in those days.

Matthias' army, like any other, was capable of great destructions (in 1444, on the way to Varna, Hunyadi's troops had burnt everything, including Christian settlements). Constantly harassed by Stephen, the king moved northwards, along the Siret river. He passed Bacău. There was no point in burning it, though Stephen and Polish circles, less those informed on the subsequent royal inquiry in Moldavia, later claimed the opposite.¹⁷

Bacău stood at the northern limit of the Lower Country. From there on, Matthias did not have to keep a tight grip on his army anymore. He had reached the Upper Country. Roman, the great obstacle on his road to Suceava, was conquered and burnt. From here on, the royal army left the main road, along the Siret, to Suceava. The king followed the Moldova river. His target was the Neamț County, Moldavia's anti-unionist and pro-Ottoman pillar that alone paid the state's Ottoman tribute (as Stephen admitted in his letter to Casimir). The county was burnt. It was a terrible blow for Stephen. Besides, Matthias proceeded in a selective manner. The monasteries were not harmed. It would have been an unnecessary provocation of the local population, very attached to them. He apparently did not attack the Neamț castle, later besieged by Mehmed II (1476), without any success (in 1467, the castle either surrendered to the king or it was not that important as a decade later).¹⁸

Matthias' safety decreased the deeper he got into Moldavia. He reached the region whose loyalty later allowed Stephen, deserted by 'a third' of his army and with another 'third' out on leave, to face Mehmed. Moreover Stephen's peace offers were meant to buy him time. The troops available to him under the circumstances were probably fully assembled only in December. As during the later major (namely Ottoman) invasions (especially those of 1476 and 1485 in this case), significant (if not decisive) support came from the troops gathered from the area between the upper courses of the Siret, Prut and Dniestr, an area with a rich Tatar military past, in particular to the east. Furthermore, between Roman and Suceava, the only town which could offer Matthias a minimum of protection was

¹⁷ See also Stephanus Katona, *Historia critica regum Hungariae ex fide domesticorum et exterorum scriptorum concinnata, Stirpis mixtae*, VIII, XV, *Ab anno Christi MCCCCLXV ad annum usque MCCCCLXXV*, Budae, 1792, 1467, no. 81 (991), pp. 239-240; Ilie Minea, *Un popas al regelui Mateiaș în Moldova*, in "Cercetări istorice," X-XII, 1934-1936, 1, pp. 89-94; P.P. Panaitescu, *Contribuții la istoria lui Ștefan cel Mare*, in AARMSI, 3rd series, XV, 1933-1934, pp. 66-69; Ș. Papacostea, *Un épisode de la rivalité polono-hongroise, Appendix*, no. 2, pp. 978-979.

¹⁸ See also *Rocznik Chotelskiego 1430-1576*, ed. by August Bielowski, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. III, Lwow, 1878, p. 214; Vasile Ursachi, *Inițierea cercetărilor arheologice sistematice la cetatea nouă a Romanului*, in vol. *Miscellanea Historica et Archaeologica in Honorem Professoris Ionel Căndea*, ed. by Valeriu Sârbu, Cristian Luca, Brăila, 2008, pp. 276-281; Al. Simon, *Porturile Moldovei. Ștefan II, Iancu de Hunedoara și Murad II în documente italice (1444-1446)*, in "Analele științifice ale Universității 'Alexandru Ioan Cuza.' Istorie," n.s., LII-LIII, 2006-2007, pp. 16-17; P.P. Panaitescu, *Contribuții la istoria lui Ștefan cel Mare*, pp. 66-67.

Baia, Moldavia's first capital, 30 km south-west of Suceava. Still, its (largely wooden) fortifications were in rather poor condition. Matthias urgently ordered expedient defensive work.¹⁹

Maybe he viewed Baia as more than just a stop on the way to Stephen's downfall. Most likely, news of the Ottoman deployments of troops had reached him. The Tatars, to which Stephen had probably turned already, were another potential threat. In mid December, there were enough reasons for the king to stay in Baia. He was only a day's march away from Suceava. 350 km of marches and a month of combats lay between his departure from Braşov (13 November) and his entry in Baia (14 December). Besides, Stephen had followed him closely with his *entire* army. The road to Suceava passed through an open combat or an ambush (two difficult options for both enemies), unless Stephen III attempted to crush Matthias in Suceava, between the princely castle and the Moldavian troops. In this context, Baia seemed a better option, namely for Matthias. But John Hunyadi's son did not expect Stephen to attack on the king's first night in Baia (14-15 December).²⁰

2. The Moldavian-Hungarian Combats at Baia in the Night of 14-15 December 1467

The night was Stephen III's chance. Five years earlier, during another, summer nonetheless, night, Vlad III had put on fire large portions of Mehmed II's camp, but he had missed the sultan. However, he considerably slowed down the

¹⁹ Kryzstof Baczkowski, *Nieznane listy Baltazara z Piscii do papieża Sykstusa IV z lat 1476-1478 ze zbiorów weneckich*, in "Prace Historyczne," LXXXIX, 1989, Appendix, no. 1, pp. 242-248; *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, vol. III 1392-1500, ed. by Antol Lewicki, Cracoviae, 1894, no. 226, pp. 246-247; I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ştefan cel Mare*, vol. II, no. 154, pp. 344-346; L. Thallóczy, *Frammenti*, pp. 38-39; *Chronicorum Bernardii Vapovii partem posteriorem 1480-1535*, ed. by J. Szujski, in *Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum*, vol. II, Cracoviae, 1874, pp. 6-10; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, pp. 644-646; Lucian Chiţescu, *Cu privire la cetăţile Moldovei în timpul lui Ştefan cel Mare*, in "Revista de istorie," XXVIII, 1975, 10, pp. 1533-1546; S. Iosipescu, *Ştefan cel Mare – coordonate de strategie pontică*, ibidem, XXXV, 1982, 5-6, pp. 649-650; Idem, *Contribuţii la istoria Moldovei*, pp. 59-60; E.C. Antoche, *L'expédition du roi de Hongrie*, pp. 153-161.

²⁰ Further data: *Codice Aragonese*, ed. by Francesco Thrinchera, vol. I, no. 18, p. 28; no. 100, p. 139; no. 271, p. 374; MDE, vol. II, nos. 44-60, pp. 74-95 (in particular, no. 42, p. 74, from 1 December 1467; the original data in Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Senato Secreta, Deliberazioni, reg. 23, c. 89^f); Ilona Czamańska, *Moldavia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Weigieri Turki w XIV i XV wieku*, Poznań, 1996, pp. 167-168; Nagy Pienaru, *Relaţiile lui Ştefan cel Mare cu Hanatul din Crimeea. O controversă: prima incursiune tătară în Moldova*, in vol. *Ştefan cel Mare şi Sfânt: Atlet al credinţei creştine*, ed. by Ştefan Sorin Gorovei, Maria-Magdalena Székely, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2004, pp. 298-302.

Ottoman advance. Stephen could not make do with such a result. As Matthias also had failed to aid Vlad III, the Wallachian ruler had lost eventually his throne, for the elite and the army could not hold on forever to Ottoman pressure and offers. Stephen faced the same risk from the Christian king of Hungary. He therefore prepared his army for a decisive attack on Matthias. He managed to get within less than a mile from Baia. The king did not react in any way. He was however aware of the approach of Stephen's troops. He had received news on the Moldavian advance from a Szekler. At first Matthias had not believed them.²¹

According to Bonfini, the Szekler had come to Moldavia to look after his wife's dowry. *Out of love of kind*, he had informed the king that the Moldavians were preparing to attack the Hungarian camp. Probably, like Moldavia's Lower Country, the Szekler Land too was divided between the supporters and the adversaries of its official monarch (at any rate, shortly after Baia, Stephen III raided the Szekler Land, which, if we are to trust Długosz, acknowledged him as its ruler in the name of Casimir IV, in 1471). Matthias was fortunate to be able to rely on his Szekler supporters in the decisive hour. Even so, the news he received and his subsequent battle orders came rather late. Part of his soldiers, especially those on watch, were drunk. Most of them were Szeklers. Very few survived the fighting in that night. Given the intensity and the violence of the Moldavian attack their chance of survival would have been quite small also under different circumstances.²²

A less than devastating Moldavian blow could have been gradually absorbed by the regrouped and better equipped Hungarian army. The attack came from the

²¹ For instance: Státny Ústredný Archív, Bratislava, L, Rody i panstavá, Rody, Révay spoločný archív rodu, Gyulay, 10.25, 10 September 1489; copy: MOL, DF 260135; Ion Bianu, *Ștefan cel Mare. Câteva documente din arhiva de stat de la Milano*, in "Columna lui Traian," XIV, 1883, 1-2, no. 4, pp. 40-41; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 16-17; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, pp. 542, 560; Zoltán Kordé, *Das Amt des Szekler Gespans und Kronstadt vor 1467*, in "Chronica," III, 2003, pp. 70-78; Idem, *The Voivodate of Transylvania from Matthias' Enthronement to the Rebellion of 1467*, in vol. *Between Worlds*, vol. I, pp. 79-87. As for Stephen, he planned and executed his attack along the east-west axis of the town.

²² For an overview: *Istvánffy Miklós magyarok dolgairól írt históriája Tállyai Pál XVII. századi fordításában*, ed. by Péter Benits, vol. I, Budapest, 2001, pp. 108-109 (relevant in particular in terms of the evolutions and constants of the Hungarian perspective, given namely the disappearances of both monarchs); Pietro Ransano, *Epithoma rerum Hungaricarum id est annalium omnium temporum liber primus et sexagesimus*, ed. by Péter Kulcsár, Budapest, 1977, pp. 168-169; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 17-19; J. de Thurocz, *Chronica Hungarorum*, vol. I, pp. 287-288; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, pp. 495-497; *Letopiseșul anonim al Țării Moldovei*, in vol. *Cronicile slavo-române din secolele XV-XVI publicate de Ioan Bogdan*, p. 17; *Cronica moldo-germană*, *ibidem*, p. 28. See also N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol. IV *Cavalerii*, ed. by Stela Cheptea, Vasile Neamțu, București, 1994, p. 124.

direction of Suceava. It broke the first lines of the Hungarian defense. Judging by its impact, Stephen had thrown into battle 5,000-7,000 men, leaving behind him a reserve force of around 2,000-3,000. The camouflaged Moldavians fought their way to the center of the town on two columns, led by Stephen and his uncle Vlaicu, from the Lower Country. They drew very close to Matthias' quarters, the local residence of the Latin bishop of Moldavia near the central market place. Resistance grew, as the king too had to fight in the first line. Soon the resistance should have become useless. Stephen avoided uniting the columns prior to the center of the town. Otherwise he could have been surrounded by the Hungarian army. He was ready for the decisive attack. It should have come from outside Baia, from the south-east.²³

Approximately a third of the Moldavian army, under, probably, the joint command of Isaia, Stephen's brother-in-law, and *dvornik* (marshal) Crasneș, should have attacked Matthias' rear. In the confusion created in the narrow streets of the town, Matthias was thought to have either died or fallen prisoner. Not a single rider moved. They watched. Stephen's odds decreased drastically. Victory was out of the question for him that night. Still, the riders did not side with Matthias. They just abandoned Stephen. At best half of the men who had entered Baia with him came out alive. The Hungarian counterattack was devastating. They fought not for honor, but for their lives. John Dároczy, count of the Szeklers, and Nicholas Sayó, ban of Croatia, died. Nicholas Csupor of Mónószló and John Pongrácz, the new voivodes of Transylvania, or Johann Bekensloer, bishop of Oradea, future archbishop of Esztergom, like the rest of the elite that had followed Matthias to Baia, were covered by wounds and ashes.²⁴

²³ See also Alexandru I. Gonța, *Strategia lui Ștefan cel Mare în bătălia de la Baia*, in "Studii. Revistă de istorie," XX, 1967, 6, pp. 1127-1144; V. Neamțu, *Istoria orașului medieval Baia (Civitas Moldaviensis)*, Iași, 1997, pp. 42-44, 67-69, 185; Andrei and Valentina Eșanu, *Vlaicu pârcălab (?-1484)*, in *Idem, Moldova medievală. Structuri executive și ecleziastice*, Chișinău, 2002, pp. 329-331. All figures (attacking troops or human losses) have to be lowered in case the estimates of the total forces are to be diminished by up to 50% (note 12). However, given the very violent nature of the combats, the diminishment of the losses should not be directly proportional to the diminishment of the armed troops.

²⁴ MOL, DL 59550; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 30-31; *Letopisețul anonim*, p. 17; V. Fraknoi, *Beckensloer magyar primás III. Fryges német császár szolgálatában 1459-1489 (I)*, in "Történelmi Szemle," VI, 1917, 1, pp. 163, 165-166; Jenő Gyalóky, *Mátyás király a hadszervező és hadvezér*, in vol. *Mátyás Király Emlékkönyv születésének ötszázéves fordulójára*, ed. by Imre Lukinich, vol. I, Budapest, 1940, pp. 259-260; L. Elekes, *Nagy István moldvai vajda politikája és Mátyás király*, Budapest, 1937, pp. 33-35; George Ciorănescu, *La bataille de Baia*, in "Ungarn Jahrbuch: Zeitschrift für die Kunde Ungarns und verwandte Gebiet," IX, 1978, pp. 27-28; Emanuel C. Antoche, *L'expédition du roi de Hongrie*, pp. 153-161.

3. The Final Phase of the Combats of December 1467 and Matthias Corvinus' Retreat

Death, like victory, was close to Matthias. The Moldavians were retreating. The king survived. Crasneș and Isaia's decision saved him and pushed Stephen towards defeat. According to Jan Długosz, Matthias escaped slaughter because of a Wallachian, who pulled him out. Stephen eventually caught Matthias' savior and had him beheaded. He was either a local, more likely, or a member of the royal Wallachian troops from Maramureș (which would give a supplementary symbolical edge to Stephen's violent attack on Maramureș in 1469, while the Ottomans raided the southern parts of the realm). At any rate, Matthias' escape was another major setback for Stephen. Nonetheless, the losses of human lives were comparable. They might have amounted to as much as 5,000 on each side. At best, this would have meant around a third of Matthias' and about half of Stephen's army. Except for his reserve troops, the latter probably had very few men to still count on.²⁵

Most Moldavians that had attacked Baia under Stephen III's and Vlaicu's command had died or were wounded. Stephen III had been abandoned by his riders. Given his losses, if they had moved against him, Stephen's fate would have probably been sealed. Still, they did not. Given, in particular, Stephen's subsequent military rebound and Isaia's political survival, while Crasneș was executed, at least Isaia's 'half' of the riders returned under Stephen's command (probably due to substantial promises from the ruler). Stephen's situation further improved. Most Hungarian survivors were wounded or scattered. A new confrontation would have most likely been fatal for the majority. The king was heavily wounded. Rumors of his death had already started to circulate. But like their adversaries they did not want to give up. The fact that there were no (reported) great numbers of prisoners on both sides indicates the levels of violence and determination reached at Baia.²⁶

²⁵ See *Diplome maramureșene din secolul XIV și XV*, ed. by Mihály de Apsa, Sziget, 1900, no. 289, p. 498; no. 299, p. 516; Barbu T. Cămpina, *Cercetări cu privire la baza socială a puterii lui Ștefan cel Mare*, in vol. *Ștefan cel Mare. Studii*, București, 1956, pp. 22-30, 39-42 (see the review by C. Cihodaru in "Studii și cercetări științifice. Istorie," VII, 1956, 1, pp. 169-182; especially pp. 177-179); L. Șimanschi, D. Agachi, *Înscăunarea lui Ștefan cel Mare: preliminarii și consecințe*, in vol. *Romania and Western Civilization / România și civilizația occidentală*, ed. by Kurt W. Treptow, Iași, 1997, pp. 212-214; Vasile Pârvan, *Relațiile lui Ștefan cel Mare cu Ungaria*, in "Convorbiri literare," XXXIX, 1905, pp. 911-915; Mór Wertner, *Magyar hadjáratok a XV-ik század második felében*, in "Hadtörténelmi Közlemények," XIII, 1912, 1, pp. 204-205; L. Elekes, *Nagy István moldvai vajda politikája*, pp. 27-29, 33-36; Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, pp. 210-211.

²⁶ *Letopisețul anonim*, pp. 17-18; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 29-30; G. Ciorănescu, *La bataille de Baia*, pp. 27-28; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 16-17; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, pp. 496-497; C. Cihodaru, review of B.T. Cămpina's article *Cercetări cu privire la baza socială*, loc. cit., pp. 178-179. With regard to Stephen III of

On the morning of the 15th, neither side had abandoned their hopes of victory. Combats continued for another day and night. The violence was only matched by the chaos that followed it. The image fits the madness and (opposed) victories revealed by the sources. Royal troops first pushed to the Siret line. Crossing the river towards Suceava posed major risks. Meanwhile, Stephen too had remained in the first line. While trying to regroup the rest of his surviving men, he was captured. The Hungarian he had learnt, in Transylvania or already in Moldavia's Lower Country, saved him. He managed to convince his guards to release him. They probably had not realized that they had the Moldavian ruler in their hands, which gives a rather clear impression of the way he looked after the fights. Matthias did not look any better. But his artillery was intact. Aiming for more seemed to be an illusion. Three days after the combats in Baia, he ordered the retreat.²⁷

Stephen III could not be satisfied. He attacked the Hungarian rear guard and destroyed it. His propaganda turned this rear guard into another army he had defeated. However, he had captured enough Hungarian flags in order to claim victory. And, the Hungarian army panicked. The canons which were slowing down the retreat were buried in the mountains. On Christmas Eve, part of the army and Matthias reached Gheorghieni, in the Szekler area loyal to him. His first and last Moldavian campaign was over. With an arrow in his rear and (not too) few Moldavian flags in his hand (14 of them were put on display in Buda), Matthias returned to Hungary proper some four months after he had left against the Transylvanian rebels. Some 15,000 dead, approximately 7,000 from his own ranks and maybe 8,000 from Stephen's army, remained behind him. About 40% of the men involved in the *forty-day* combats of Moldavia had perished. It is hard to find comparisons.²⁸

Moldavia's military recovery of 1467, we have to recall once more his exploits of summer 1476, fall 1485 or spring 1486 (in this respect, see also Al. Simon, *The Weak Sultan and the Magnificent Monarchs: Ottoman Actions in the Black Sea Area in 1484*, in "Il Mar Nero. Anali di archeologia e storia," VII-IX, 2009).

²⁷ MOL, DL 59550, 27 December 1467; ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February 1468; nonetheless, king Matthias Corvinus' most obvious wound seems to have been that on his arm; E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. XV/1, no. 171, p. 188; nos. 113-114, pp. 65-66; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 30-31; G. Ciorănescu, *La bataille de Baia*, pp. 27-28; I.-A. Pop, *Valoarea mărturiilor documentare despre expediția întreprinsă de regele Matei Corvin la 1467 în Moldova*, in "Revista de istorie," XXXV, 1981, 1, pp. 131-139; Andrei and Valentina Eșanu, *Manoil Greul (?-1467)*, in *Idem, Moldova medievală*, pp. 282-297.

²⁸ MOL, 27497, 25 December; 59550, 27 December 1467; *Acta et epistolae*, ed. by Endre Veress, vol. I, nos. 1-2, pp. 1-2; L. Elekes, *Nagy István moldvai vajda politikája*, pp. 33-35; Ș. Papacostea, *Un épisode de la rivalité polono-hongroise*, pp. 973-974; Al.I. Gonța, *Strategia lui Ștefan cel Mare*, pp. 1138-1142; E.C. Antoche, *L'expédition du roi de Hongrie*, pp. 153-161. Sources claiming that the Hungarian losses were as high as almost 10,000 or that the Moldavian casualties exceeded 20,000 have to be viewed with the utmost caution, and some as deliberate exaggerations.

Regional and Local Consequences and Portraits of the Battle of Baia

Stephen III had resisted when everything seemed lost. The situation repeated itself at almost equal time spans until the end of his rule. Matthias responded differently to Baia. Regardless of campaign, he never took on such risks. Like at his brother's beheading, he had felt like a common mortal. Retaliations began. By pikes and iron claws, the monarchs freed their anger, but not on those who were chiefly to blame. Except for Crasneș, no major boyar was executed, though more boyars seem to have lost their heads after the battle than during it. Isaia kept his until early 1471. Personalities like him (or the Szapolyais) remained untouchable. Still, Matthias executed a certain Michael, contender to the Wallachian throne. He seemed to have had enough of rulers and contenders (from Moldavia, he had returned with just one, as Berindei perished in battle). Like Stephen, he revealed, by blood, that he was great with the small and many. Glory was the task of the monarchs' envoys.²⁹

The Moldavian and Hungarian (as well as Ottoman) stakes remained political, as throughout the previous year. At Baia, the only way by which Stephen could have won was Matthias' death. The only road leading to royal victory passed through Stephen's disappearance. Neither road was eventually opened. Both adversaries thus lost. Abandoned, during combat too, by part of his land and his men, Stephen remained the ruler of a state, devastated in some of his most vital areas and marked by treason. Matthias returned wounded into a state where the threats continued to await him, on both sides of the borders. In 1467, he had twice come close to losing all. He returned to Buda with a pacified Transylvania and with the Moldavian flags. One by one, his family, his land and his army had collapsed around Stephen. He rose as the man who had challenged, stopped and even humiliated, in the eyes of not too few, the king of Hungary. He had made a name for himself.³⁰

²⁹ ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February 1468; MOL, DL 16853, 17 May 1469; 36393, 23 March 1468; 59550, 27 December 1467; Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Wien, Hofkammerarchiv, Hoffinanz, Ungarn, Rote 1B, no. 137, 31 December 1467; copy: MOL, DF 286351; *Diplomatarium Comitatus Sarosiensis*, ed. by Carol Wagner, Posonii-Cassoviae, 1780, no. II-20, p. 72; *Bártfa szabad királyi város levéltára 1319-1526*, ed. by Béla Iványi, vol. I 1319-1501, Budapest, 1910, no. 1689, p. 257; nos. 1703, 1705, p. 259; nos. 1710, 1715, p. 260; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 17-19; J. de Thurocz, *Chronica Hungarorum*, vol. I, p. 288; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, p. 497; G. Ciorănescu, *La bataille de Baia*, p. 27; L. Șimanschi, *Politica internă a lui Ștefan cel Mare*, in "Revista de istorie," XXIV, 1982, 5-6, p. 596; Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, p. 180, 272.

³⁰ See also Lajos Szádeczky, *A székely nemzet története és alkotmánya*, Budapest, 1927, pp. 90, 102-104; C. Cihodaru, *Observații pe marginea izvoarelor privind unele evenimente din istoria Moldovei între anii 1467-1474*, in "Studii și cercetări științifice. Istorie," VIII, 1957, 1, pp. 15-19; Al.I. Gonța, *Strategia lui Ștefan cel Mare*, pp. 1138-1142; Ș. Papacostea, *Politica*

1. “The Battle of Nations” between Medieval Perspectives and Modern ‘Standards’

Because Romanians were in both camps, as Ottoman auxiliaries, respectively as royal soldiers, the battle of Câmpul Pâinii (1479) was labeled *a battle of Romanians against Romanians*. But, of the more than 40,000 men which fought on that day of October, the Romanians (from Wallachia, Transylvania and the Banate) represented, at best, 10%. The others were Turks, Hungarians, Szeklers, Saxons, Serbs, maybe Albanians, Bulgarians. Had it not been for the standard Romanian perspective on Matthias, Baia would have been a better candidate for ‘Romanization.’ The *Valachorum reguli* had fought each other at Baia. The ‘title’ of *Valachorum regulus* had first been a charge of the Hungarian elite against Matthias. Bonfini recorded it, but as specialist in extracting Roman glory from his master’s Wallachian origins, made it part of his structure of Hunyadi praises. After Matthias’ death, he ‘granted’ the title to Stephen, when he halted an Ottoman attack on the realm (1492).³¹

Even so, ‘romanianizing’ Baia is hard. Wallachians were on both sides. Matthias had the support of most of the Lower Country. Royal Wallachian troops from Maramureș were at Baia and maybe also the elite forces from Hațeg (numbering in general 2,000 men, like at Câmpul Pâinii), in which the Hunyadis took great pride prior to the mid 1480’s and the full rise of the *Black Army*. But Szeklers too were in both camps. Stephen’s Hungarian language skills saved his life. One of his brothers-in-law, the castellan of Suceava, Șendrea (Sándor) was of Hungarian descent. Some Saxons had an arrangement with Stephen. Others supported Matthias prior to his Transylvanian intervention. Ethnicity and politics formed a peculiar structure around the battle. A report sent from Venice to

externă, pp. 19-21; A. Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, Budapest, 2008, pp. 82-84. It has to be underlined that, according to A. de Bonfinis (*Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, p. 18), at Baia, Matthias had been wounded by a Getic arrow, not by a Wallachian one (but the Getae too had been included in the list of the forefathers of the Wallachians ...).

³¹ A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. III, Lipsiae, 1936, pp. 224, 234, 243; vol. IV, pp. 14-18, 124, 129, 166, 188, 212; N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol. IV, p. 144 (for the label applied to the battle of 1479; see, in comparison, Idem, *Dovezi despre conștiința originii românilor*, in AARMSI, 3rd series, XVII, 1935-1936, pp. 264-265); P.P. Panaitescu, *Ștefan cel Mare în lumina cronicarilor contemporani din țările vecine*, in “Studii și cercetări științifice. Istorie,” XI, 1960, 2, pp. 210-211. See further Ferenc Szakály, Pál Fodor, *A kenyérmezői csata (1479. október 13.)*, in “Hadtörténelmi Közlemények,” CXI, 1998, 3-4, pp. 309-350; Al. Simon, *Antonio Bonfini’s Valachorum regulus: Matthias Corvinus, Transylvania and Stephen the Great*, in vol. *Between Worlds*, vol. I, pp. 207-224; I. Drăgan, *Câmpul Pâinii (1479) – O luptă dată de români contra românilor*, in vol. *Națiune și europenitate: Studii istorice. In Honorem Magistri Camilli Mureșanu*, ed. by Nicolae Edroiu, Susana Andea, Șerban Turcuș, București, 2007, pp. 76-78.

Galeazzo Maria Sforza, duke of Milan, in February 1468, is also an illustration of this structure. Written by Fidelfo Guitor, the message was based on the report sent from Hungary by the Venetian envoy.³²

Scripsi a li die passati como gia XL giorni in Ungaria non si sapeva novella del Re, ne del suo exercito et che si dubitava/ non li fuso acaduto qualche sinistro. Ogi me son abbochato con uno nostro intimo qual me ha dicto alcune novelle, tra le altre/ como la Signoria ha littere da lo orator d'Ungaria contente malle et pessime novelle del prefato Re. Essando ribellati alcuni populi a la/ Corona chiamati Seculi, lo prefato Re ando in quel paese con V^m cavalli et alter tanti a piede et essendo lo Brancho suo patre originario de/ dicti Seculi credeva debelare facilmente con pocha gente. Et a la prima sachezo alcune terre et abruzo. Vedendosi malmenati,/ <li Seculi> domandano aiuto a soy vicini chiamati Valachia, quali antichamente furo Romani et segono la lor parlare latina et romana fine in questo tempo,/ et sono valentissimi acavalo, et parte d'essi anchora che siano ultra lo Danubio dano tributo al Turcho, li altri piu lontani dal Danubio/ verso Polana vivano hodie so le sue lege quasi in liberta, et si ano alcuno Vayuoda per signore li dano pocha cossa de tributo. Costoro, si mosaro/ con grande multitudine et tagliano la via a li Ungari et funo ale mane in una silva, dove fereno facte d'arme octo giorni, che ogni giorno/ erano a le mane. Lo re, vedendosi inferior di gente, si reduzi le munitione de le sue carre, haveva cinquecento cazette dele quale si/ fece spaldo. Tandem fecero una ultima bataglia qual duro uni die et una nocte et si fu morto piu di XIII^m persone abutaque presente et infine obtene li Valachi et Seculi, et ano tagliato a pezi tuti li Ungari. Lo Re he stato forito di una lanza in uno brazo./ Ano pigliato le carre, le munitione, bandere, pamglone et ogni cossa, et solum he scampato lo Re con marchio di V^o cavali,/ con pocha reputatione et molto dampno. Et he reducto a Buda di qua dal Danubio. Lo Turcho, vedito questo, ando verso Bulgaria/ a Nichopoli preso lo Danubio per dar caldo et favori a questi inimici del Ungaro et per spetare si li po haver a sua obedientia (18 February 1468).

³² ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February 1468; it is difficult to distinguish between the data on the Wallachians and Brancho belonging to Guitor and the data coming from his source, and further how much data came in fact from the Venetian report from Buda; see, in comparison, the report in MDE, vol. II, no. 46, pp. 76-77; *Diplome maramureșene*, ed. by Mihályi de Apsa, no. 289, p. 498; no. 299, p. 516; *Cronica moldo-germană*, pp. 29-30; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 17-18, 20-21; Viorel A. Solocan, *Un document inedit despre orașul Baia-Mare*, in "Marmația," II, 1971, pp. 101-102; Ștefan Andreescu, *Amintirea lui Ștefan cel Mare în Țara Românească*, in "Revista istorică," n.s., XV, 2004, 3-4, p. 7 (note 13; for Șendrea's Hungarian name); Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, pp. 208-209, 278 (note 481), 300.

The author was no court poet, but a bureaucrat and a diplomat. He presented however things in a manner otherwise viewed as defining for humanists. He knew that the Wallachians lived also on the northern banks of the Danube, divided in two large countries, and that they were the descendants of the Romans and spoke *Latin and Roman* (a quite unique combination). On the other hand, he did not even mention Stephen, even though the Wallachians were portrayed as victors at Baia. He, like an *alcuno Vayuoda*, did not seem to matter in relation to the ‘Wallachian community’ and Matthias (in this respect, given his European ‘king size,’ Matthias suffered a great defeat at Baia). Guitor had the data that flatters as well as tangles a modern national pride. Moreover, he placed the Szeklers at the origin of the conflict. He said nothing about Transylvania. They had rebelled against the crown. Faced with the plundering of Matthias’ army, they had called the Wallachians to their aid.³³

There was more. Matthias had taken only 10,000 men with him (the lowest contemporary estimate of his forces). He thought that it would be an easy campaign because his father, that *Brancho* (one of the corrupt versions of the name by which Italians too knew John/Iancu/*Jancho* Hunyadi), had Szekler roots. The confusion might be seductive if we replace Szeklers with Wallachians. In fact, the non-Hațegan half of Hunyadi’s family probably came from northern Oltenia, from Gorj (this was also the way in which the Venetian bureaucracy had recorded Matthias who on his father’s side was *d’origine humile de progenie de Valacchia*. At any rate, Guitor’s text was, in essence, a well written mixture of veridical data and intriguing confusions, which indicates how present and how relative ‘Wallachian common places’ were in early 1468. They were only a part of a larger ensemble in which, even after the almost provocative battle of Baia, the pressing Ottoman matter took center-stage.³⁴

³³ For sources and perspectives: ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February 1468; A. Pertusi, *Martino Sgono di Novo Brdo vescovo di Dulcigno. Un umanista serbo dalmata del tardo Quattrocento. Vita e opere*, Roma, 1981, *Appendix*, pp. 99, 137; Enea Silvio Piccolomini, *Europa*, ed. by Günter Frank and Paul Metzger, Heidelberg, 2005, pp. 228-229; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. III, pp. 234-235, 243; Ș. Papacostea, *Les Roumains et la conscience de leur romanité au Moyen Âge*, in RRH, IV, 1965, 1, pp. 15-24; Adolf Armbruster, *La romanité des Roumains. L’histoire d’une idée*, Bucarest, 1977, pp. 49-54.

³⁴ ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Turchia-Levante, cart. 647, fasc. 1, nn, 10 October 1454; an example of *governatore Iancho*; Stefano Magno, *Annali veneti e del mondo [1443-1478]* (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, Codices, Cod. 6215-6217), II *Ad annum 1457* [MV 1458], f. 6^r (Matthias’ roots); P. Ransano, *Epithoma rerum Hungaricarum*, pp. 29, 34; Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin*, pp. 207-210. Starting from Guitor’s confusion, see for the Wallachians of Peonodacia, i.e. Transylvania (the Hungarians were the *Peons*, the Wallachians in the realm were the *Dacians*, while those of Transalpine Wallachia were usually called *Getae*, namely by the Byzantines): Laonikos Chalcocondylas, *Expuneri istorice*, ed. by Vasile Greuc, București, 1958, pp. 156, 200; Victor Spinei, *La signification des ethnonymes des Daces et des Gètes dans les sources byzantines des X^e-XV^e siècles*, in “Études byzantines et post-

2. 'The Ottoman Hegemony' and the 'Bohemian Challenge' at the Beginning of 1468

After learning of Matthias' crushing defeat (according to Guitor, only 500 riders had survived, the lowest contemporary estimate in this respect), the Turk hurried to win, by favors and gifts, the obedience of the king's victorious enemies (i.e. the Szeklers and the Wallachians, to Poland's south).

Preterea anche, <il nostro intimo> ha dicto ch'el Papa a li die passati, intendendo ch'el Re d'Ungaria, era a strecta praticha con lo Turcho di far la tregua, li/ scripsi una breve strenzandolo et comandandoli che non fecesse dicta tregua, primo che lui haveva la pace d'Italia in mano, et similiter/ quella de Franza, et che li fara ordo da poi voleva fare una Dieta, dove voleva stringere tute le pottere di Christiani, maxime/ quelle d'Italia, a farli uno grande adiuto contro lo Turcho. Et in dicta breve lo menazava che/ excomunicaria subito lo prefato Re. A questa tornata, ultra lo fracasso recente, <il Re> ha trovato questo breve. Et tornandosi de malla voglia/ et ha scripto qua a la Signoria voglia pregare lo Papa che sia contento ch'el faci tregua per che, altramente, va ad piccolo de perdere tuto lo reamo./ Et ha mandato per quello oratore dal Smedereo qual era venuto per fare corta tregua tra Belgrado et Smedereo, et, non havendo trovato lo Re, ho tornato a la porta del Turcho. Dubitasi pero ch'el non tornara piu pero che li Ungari da Belgrado, durando la praticha di dicta/ tregua, sono corsi al Smedereo et ano tagliati a peze II^m Turchi. Po mo considerare Vestra Excellentia qual ha maior bisogno di adiuto/ et qual feria miglor spesa ho adiutar lo Re d'Ungaria. Ho costolmico colcone, pero che s'il Turcho spontassi Iaiza et passasi la/ Sava, il poria venir a mano salva fino in Frioli.

Previously, these Wallachians, in particular if they had a certain voivode to lead them, had paid only a symbolic tribute to the Porte, unlike the other Wallachians. The last statement was however far from being accurate. Besides, the sultan apparently had other plans for Moldavia. Furthermore, other disturbing news had reached Venice: Skanderbeg had just died.

Preterea, <il nostro intimo> dice che la Signoria ha havuto per malla novella la morte di Skanderbeg, pero che la moglie et lo figliolo hano

byzantines," II, 1991, pp. 123-129. In view of a future useful discussion, we recall here the tradition of a Hunyadi-Székely family, of Hunyadi's (partially) Szekler origin, 'launched' (?) at the turn of the 18th century (in this respect: Radu Lupescu, *Istoriografia română și maghiară referitoare la Ioan de Hunedoara*, in SMIM, XXVI, 2008, p. 141).

abandonato tuto lo paesse,/ et lo Turchi anon pigliato ogni cosa si non Croya. La presenta Signoria li manda adesso ducati V^m et multe munitione et formanti per sustenire/ quelli amici di Skanderbeg (from the same Milanese report of Fidelfo Guitor).

Earlier Venice had done its best to weaken Skanderbeg's stand, during Mehmed's campaign too. It had its own Adriatic and Albanian profits in view. Now the Republic had to review its positions.³⁵

Its Italian lands were menaced. Venice thus wanted to send more money to Matthias so that he would not conclude a truce with Mehmed. But Matthias had made up his mind, not only in view of this part of Guitor's report, which echoed the information that Venice wanted to be known. Paul II's threat to excommunicate Matthias if he made peace with the sultan did not impress Matthias. The Roman claims (a settlement between Paul II and Louis XI and a general congress to prepare the long awaited anti-Ottoman crusade) were at best exaggerations. Paul II's future political course, similar to his previous one, substantiated Matthias' refusal to comply. He had apparently enough of playing the part of a Roman pawn and instrument for sums and profits that were no match for the real costs of the actions or for the actual political needs of the king. He was willing to act as Rome's soldier, but in Bohemia. In his turn too, Matthias pushed for the campaign against the *heretic king*.³⁶

³⁵ ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February; ELTEK, Codices, Kaprinai, B, V, no. 12, p. 41, 22 May 1468; V. Makušev, *Monumenta Historica Slavorum Meridionalium*, vol. I/2, no. 9, p. 34; *Annali veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500*, p. 59; *Joannis Dlugosii ... Opera omnia*, vol. XIV, pp. 500-505; Fabio Cusin, *Il confine orientale d'Italia nella politica europea del XIV e XV secolo*, vol. II, Milano, 1937, pp. 231-232; O.J. Schmitt, *Skanderbegs letzte Jahre*, pp. 75-78. Another interesting aspect of Guitor's report which nonetheless would require further research, which might bring other major changes to the perspective on Baia, is the fact that he implies that Matthias' men were outnumbered by the Wallachians (for the moment, this aspect has to be viewed with caution).

³⁶ ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 18 February; Iacopo Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere (1444-1479)*, ed. by Paolo Cherubini, vol. II *Pontificato di Paolo II*, Roma, 1997, no. 132, p. 683; no. 345, p. 1159; no. 377, p. 1230; Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, vol. II [1464-1484], London, 1898², pp. 79-91, 119-147 (no less than eight cardinals were created in September 1467, following the pressures of Louis XI, Ferdinand of Aragon and Matthias, amongst others); K. Nehring, *Herrschafts-tradition und Herrschaftslegitimität: zur ungarischen Aussenpolitik in der Zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, in *RRH*, XIII, 1974, 3, pp. 463-472; Benjamin Weber, *La croisade impossible. Étude sur les relations entre Sixt IV et Mathias Corvin (1471-1484)*, in vol. *Hommage à Alain Ducellier. Byzance et ses périphéries (monde grec, balkanique et musulman)*, ed. by Bernard Doumerc, Christophe Picard, Toulouse, 2004, pp. 309-321. In 1467, making use of the pretext of Ottoman attacks against him, Matthias also attempted to gain Louis XI's support, in the hope of distancing him from Podiebrad (ELTEK, Codices, Kaprinai, A, XV, no. 6, pp. 7-8, 30 April).

With Wallachia back on the sultan's side and Stephen's Moldavia bitter and covered with blood, Matthias' anti-Ottoman options were very limited. Further to the south, the number of his supporters was even lower in former Bosnia or Serbia, not to mention Albania. Partly due to the sultan's own policy, partly due to Matthias own ruthless and double-dealing political conduct, both of them making the most out of Rome's and Venice's shortcomings and changes of political pace, Mehmed II seemed to have the complete upperhand in regional (anti- and pro-) Ottoman affairs. If we are to fully trust and interpret another report sent from Venice in early 1468, he could have achieved even more.

Lo Turcho era mosso da la Sofia et ito in Bulgaria a Nichopoli et Moncastro presso al Danubio/ si extima l'abia facto, perche in questi giorni gela lo/ Danubio et sopra lo giazio fa passare turchi coradori et spoglia quella Transilvania et Valachia de/ anime (14 February 1468; the report, sent four days before that of Guitor, was authored by Gerardo de Collis, Milan's main informant in Venice).

An attack on Wallachia (i.e. Moldavia in this case) and an attempt to take Cetatea Albă (Moncastro), at the Dniestr Mouths, north of Chilia, at the Danube Mouths, would have matched Stephen's fears, expressed, on 1 January, in his letter to Casimir IV, and Mehmed II's general conduct in the second half of 1467. A weakened Stephen could not protect the altogether unreliable Moldavian harbors.³⁷

Stephen III's own political dealings between Buda, Istanbul, Prague and Krakow could have backfired, more than they did, on him. Even if the strength of the ties between Podiebrad and Mehmed, as presented in Philip of Burgundy's letter to Breslau of June 1467, can be questioned, it is quite clear that Stephen had gotten involved into conflicts, for which he still lacked the necessary power. As for Matthias, though Antonio Camera's (*Il planetario*) prophecy about a Hungarian rebellion against him had come true, with a year of delay nonetheless, he had another four years to wait before he overcame most of the challenges which had led to the events of 1467 (eventually, he also learnt how to make better use of the stars, namely in order to postpone unwanted receptions of envoys). In 1467, almost

³⁷ ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Venezia, cart. 354, fasc. 2, nn, 14 February 1468; because the document was misedited and misplaced in MDE, vol. II, no. 60, p. 95, it was assumed that the report dated from 1469: I. Căzan, Eugen Denize, *Marile puteri și spațiul românesc în secolele XV-XVI*, București, 2001, pp. 90-91; P.P. Panaitescu, *Contribuții la istoria lui Ștefan cel Mare*, pp. 66-67; F. Szakály, *Phases of Turco-Hungarian Warfare before the Battle of Mohács. 1365-1526*, in "Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae," XXXIII, 1979, 1, pp. 93-94; see also Zs. Teke, *Rapporti diplomatici tra Mattia Corvino e gli stati italiani*, in vol. *Italia e Ungheria all'epoca dell'umanesimo corviniano*, ed. by Sante Graciotti, Cesare Vasoli, Firenze, 1994, pp. 21-24.

everything (except namely for the foundation of the university of Bratislava) that could have gone wrong for him had gone wrong. The next years brought not too many improvements.³⁸

3. 'The Lords of Transylvania' and the Question of Anti-Ottoman Warfare in the East

After 1467, the Transylvanian congregations reconvened only in 1493, after Matthias' death and the fall of voivode Stephen Báthory, the fear of the Szeklers, appointed by the king in 1479. He had decided that the offices of voivode of Transylvania, count of the Szeklers, and from 1479, of royal court judge were to have one holder. This lasted until 1526. By uniting the main dignities, along the eastern limits of Hungary and by connecting them to a major office in the 'central' administration, he wanted to expand royal power over the province. He did not convene the congregations in order to avoid any type of political communication and solidarity that did not pass through him. In return, he multiplied the privileges granted, in part, to each ethnic group and local political structure. The Wallachians (who received the most group privileges in their history) and the Saxons (who were eventually granted their own *university* in 1486) benefited the most from this change in royal policy.³⁹

³⁸ See also *Urkundliche Nachträge zur Österreichisch-Deutschen Geschichte im Zeitalter Kaiser Friedrich III.*, ed. by Adolf Bachmann, Wien, 1892, no. 439, p. 452; *Korrespondenz Breslaus*, ed. by B. Kronthal, H. Wendt, vol. I, no. 91, p. 66; Peter Eschenloer, *Historia Wratislaviensis et que post mortem Regis Ladislai sub electo Georgio de Podiebrat Bohemorum Rege illi acciderant prospera et adversa*, ed. by Hermann Markgraf, Breslau, 1872, pp. 135-136; Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. IV, New York, 1934, p. 473; Michal Lacko, *Newly Discovered Sources Regarding the First University of Bratislava Academia Istropolitana*, in "Slovak Studies," XIX, 1979, pp. 208-210. It would be worth investigating if there were any ties between Matthias and the Podolian nobility because of Stephen's complaints about the *Odrowaz reguli* in his letter to Casimir; see P.P. Panaitescu, *Contribuții la istoria lui Ștefan cel Mare*, p. 68, on the fact that in the 1440's-1450's Di(e)dri(c)h Buczacki had been more than a Moldavian alternative to Hunyadi and due to the king's supporters in the Lower Country, while right in front of it, he had his own area of insecurity.

³⁹ Károly Szabó, *Báthori István erdélyi vajda és székely ispán bukása 1493-ban*, in "Századok," XXIII, 1889, 9, pp. 701-709; I.-A. Pop, *Privilegii obținute de români în epoca lui Matia Corvinul*, in "Revista istorică," n.s., II, 1991, 11-12, pp. 667-677; I. Drăgan, *Aspecte ale relațiilor dintre români și puterea centrală în timpul domniei lui Matia Corvinul (1458-1490)*, ibidem, III, 1992, 9-10, pp. 905-916; Al. Simon, *Acceptance and Rejection in Medieval Transylvania. Romanians and Hungarians before 1600*, in "Transylvanian Review / Revue de Transylvanie," XIV, 2005, 1, pp. 62-64; K.G. Gündisch, *Participarea sașilor*, pp. 28-30; Idem, *Das Patriziat*, pp. 334-339.

Unlike the Saxons, whose taxes had been doubled and then tripled after 1467, the main royal Wallachian profit was, as in the case of the Szeklers, on a military level. The main Wallachian centers of power in the Hungarian realm were either at the borders of Transylvania (Hațeg, Făgăraș) or in its vicinity (the Mountainous Banate, Maramureș or Zarand), but outside the administrative limits of the voivodate. It was easier to attempt to control the voivodate by their military presence than to enforce their re-acknowledgement as a political nation, due to the Transylvanian problems caused by the *Hungarian-Wallachian* party in 1437-1438, the questionable conduct of the Wallachians during the civil war of 1456/1457-1458 (their conduct was an even greater problem in 1490), the hostility of the traditional elite towards this rising party or the fact that he did not even convene the traditional Transylvanian congregations. His aim was a system of loyal nations connected only through him.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, the politics of the most Hungarian *Valachorum regulus* led to an increase of the hostility of the traditional political forces towards these Wallachians. In return, Matthias Corvinus assured the preservation of their power after the downfall of his family. In 1505, in their fight with the 'nationalist' *Scythian* party of the Szapolyai family for control of the royal Hungarian crown, Vienna and Krakow fought over the favor of the Wallachians in the realm. By that time, Matthias' desired legacy had largely become history. It looked wasted and wounded, like the king after Baia, as his contemporaries who saw him, in Hungary or Bohemia, noticed. Due to Baia, he had won, but not in the manner he wanted, the necessary, yet questionable, certainty he needed in order to leave for Bohemia. In a way, like Sigismund of Luxemburg had put it, after he arrived in Constantinople, following his disaster at Nicopolis, God saw fit that Matthias should come to Bohemia over a different route.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Radu Popa, *Țara Maramureșului în veacul al XIV-lea*, București, 1970¹, pp. 232-234; Gh.I. Brătianu, *Les assemblées d'État et les Roumains de Transylvanie (I)*, in "Revue des études roumaines," XIII-XIV, 1974, pp. 39-40; I. Drăgan, *Nobilimea românească din Transilvania. 1440-1514*, București, 2000, pp. 95-98, 233-234, 393-396. Such facts contradict both Romanian and Hungarian traditional nationalist perspectives: I. Lupaș, *Réalités historiques dans le Voïvodat de Transylvanie du XII^e au XVI^e siècle*, Bucarest, 1938, pp. 79-82; László Makkai, *La naissance de la société d'Ordres (1172-1526)*, in vol. *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, ed. by Béla Köpeczi, Budapest, 1990, pp. 189-195.

⁴¹ For an overview: ASM, ADS, Potenze estere, Illiria, Polonia, Russia, Slavonia, cart. 640, fasc. 3, nn, fasc. 4, nn, 4 March, 27 May 1498; *Acta Alexandri Regis Poloniae, magni ducis Lithuaniae, etc. (1501-1506)*, ed. by Fryderyk Papée, Cracoviae, 1927, no. 304, pp. 514-515; A. Kubinyi, *Az 1505-ös rákosi országgyűlés és a szittya ideologia*, in "Századok," CXL, 2006, 2, pp. 361-374; Al. Simon, *Valahii și Dieta de la Rákos (1505). Considerații asupra sfârșitului epocii huniade*, in "Apulum," XLIII, 2006, pp. 99-121. For Matthias' aspect and wounds in 1468: P. Eschenloer, *Historia Wratislavenensis*, pp. 305-306; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, p. 18. For Sigismund's statement of November 1396, see John W. Barker,

On anti-Ottoman Transylvanian soil, Matthias failed. Transylvania was turning into an Ottoman diplomatic channel, not into a major anti-Ottoman structure. The events of 1467 backfired on him and on Stephen. In 1476 and especially in 1484, when the Ottomans attacked Moldavia, virtually no support came from the province to Stephen's aid. The king had to bring troops from Hungary proper and even from Croatia. In 1484, this led to a catastrophe. Neither the efforts of Stephen to present himself and the Saxons, in his correspondence with Braşov, as loyal subjects of the crown (1475-1476), nor the renegotiations of the Moldavian-Hungarian treaty of 1475 (the last arrangement prior to 1484, that was even viewed as a *foedus*) or the Ottoman raids in the Szekler lands allowed by Stephen (1479) could alter this state of facts. The Transylvanian situation turned to his favor only after his Ottoman peace of 1486 and namely after he became one of Hungary's major barons in the 1490's.⁴²

Manuel II Paleologus (1391–1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship, New Brunswick, NJ, 1969, *Appendix*, pp. 482-485.

⁴² See also I. Bogdan, *Documentele lui Ştefan cel Mare*, vol. II, nos. 146-147, pp. 335-337; no. 150, p. 339; no. 154; p. 349; no. 157, p. 355; *Acta et epistolae*, ed. by Endre Veress, vol. I, nos. 32-34, pp. 34-37; A. de Bonfinis, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades*, vol. IV, pp. 124, 129; Ignác Ácsády, *Régi magyar birtokviszonyok 1494-1598* (offprint "Értekezések a Történeti Tudományok Köréből," XVI, 3), Budapest, 1894, pp. 24-25, 32, 38; Al. Simon, *Chilia și Cetatea Albă în vara anului 1484. Noi documente din arhivele italiene*, in SMIM, XXVI, 2008, pp. 177-196 (in particular pp. 191-194); Idem, *Anti-Ottoman Warfare and Crusader Propaganda in 1474: New Evidences from the Archives of Milan*, in RRH, XLVI, 2007, 1-4, pp. 25-39 (here pp. 36-38); Idem, *The Costs and Benefits of Anti-Ottoman Warfare: The Case of Moldavia (1475-1477)*, ibidem, XLVII, 2008, 1-4.