

**BETWEEN CRUSADE AND PEACE WITH THE INFIDEL:
STEPHEN THE GREAT'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SULTAN
IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE OF VASLUI**

Ovidiu CRISTEA*

In memory of Professor Șerban Papacostea

Abstract: The reign of Stephen the Great of Moldavia (1457-1504), namely his relations with foreign powers, remains a topic of interest for the Romanian historiography. In the last years the interest was renewed due new documents from the Italian archive and by new perspectives on old published documents. The paper aims to discuss the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Moldavia in 1475-1476 years of open and violent conflict between the two realms. The traditional view was that once the war started the political ties between the empire and its vassal state were severed. There are, however, two sources which share a different perspective speaking about diplomatic contacts between Stephen the Great and Mehmed II in the aftermath of the battle of Vaslui and in the following year: the Polish chronicle of Jan Dlugosz and a letter written by a Genoese of Pera, Antonio Bonfilio. The analysis of two documents shows that the information provided are reliable and that after the battle of Vaslui (10 January 1475) Stephen's diplomacy pursued in parallel to different and antagonist goals. On one hand he tried to gains military support for the war against the infidel while on the other he aimed to appease the sultan's anger. Only after the treaty with the Kingdom of Hungary, when the requested military support became certain, Stephen the Great ceased abruptly the diplomatic contacts with the Ottomans.

Keywords: Stephen the Great, anti-ottoman war, diplomacy, Jan Dlugosz, Antonio Bonfilio
