

Truces and Negotiations between Bayezid II and Matthias Corvinus in the Context of the Hunyadi-Habsburg Conflict (1482-1484)

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The date and the validity of the first major diplomatic arrangement between Matthias Corvinus and Bayezid II, intimately connected with the problem of the Ottoman conquest of the Moldavian harbors at the end of July 1484¹ has turned into a lasting object of controversy², in particular among Romanian scholars. The treaty was viewed as instrumental in depriving Stephen III of Moldavia from military aid from his Hungarian suzerain and thus sealing the fate of the disputed harbors. Hungarian historians have dealt less with the matter and usually accepted the traditional dating of the arrangement to 1483, a dating that was imposed already in the 1890s³. This scientific interest was triggered namely by Matthias' attitude during and after the sultan's campaign, by his (later) protest(s) addressed to Bayezid who would have violated the arrangement between these monarchs. These matters (in particular the

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¹ The Ottoman conquests of the Moldavian harbors were repeatedly and most often intentionally misdated since 1484. The accurate dates were established on scientific bases only in recent years (see the data and the analysis of Ovidiu Cristea, *Acest domn de la miazănoapte. Ștefan cel Mare în documente ine-dite venețiene*, Bucharest, 2004, p. 110-114; Al. Simon, *Între porturi și cer. Chilia, Cetatea Albă, Istanbul și Veneția în vara anului 1484*, "Acta Musei Napocensis" 39-40 (2002-2003 [2005]), 2, p. 229-271.

² The debate was summed up (in two different manners nonetheless) by Naghi Pienaru, *Confruntare și diplomație la Dunăre. Tratatete de pace otomano-un-gare încheiate de Bayezid II și Matia Corvin*, "Revista Istorică", new series, 14 (2003), 3-4, p. 178-183; Mihai Maxim, *Stephen the Great and the Sublime Porte: New Turkish Documents*, "Transylvanian Review" 14 (2005), 1, p. 17-20.

³ E.g. Vimos Fraknói's monograph (*Mathias Corvinus. König von Ungarn (1458-1490)*, Freiburg in Breisgau, 1891, p. 218-224), or the studies of Ferenc Szakály (*Phases of Turko-Hungarian Warfare before the Battle of Mohács. 1365-1526*, "Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae" 33 (1979), p. 90-91), Gyula Rázsó (*Die Türkenpolitik Matthias Corvinus*, "Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae" 32 (1986), 1-2, p. 45-46) or György Házai (*A Topukapu Szeráj Múzeum levéltárának Magyar vonatkozású török iratai*, "Levéltári Közlemények" 26 (1955), 11, p. 294, note 47 (*Topukapu*); *Eine Urkunde zur Geschichte des ungarisch-türkischen Grenzgebietes*, "Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes" 76 (1986), p. 125-133).

protests) have led some scholars, namely Romanians, to presume deliberate foul play on behalf of King Matthias⁴.

The recently discovered sources as well as the older ones contradict such an assumption⁵. In return, they stress out King Matthias' domestic weakness and his main faults: overstressing his powers and promising support and aid which the king knew he could deliver only with great difficulty (like during Mehmed II's Moldavian campaign of 1476)⁶. Nonetheless, the question of the (written) foundation, on which King Matthias' protests after the fall of the harbors relied, remains open. The issue at hand moves well beyond the limits drawn by the diplomatic proposals, versions and talks of 1483-1484. A different explanation for King Matthias Corvinus' protest(s) of August-September 1484 is therefore also possible. The explanation is motivated by two interconnected aspects.

1. Questions of Diplomatic Documents and Practices

On one hand, the lack of clear major sources regarding the exact content of the drafted Ottoman-Hungarian treaty and stages of negotiations, and the confusions and debates enclosing the existing sources is compelling. For instance, the preserved copy of (a draft of) an Ottoman-Hungarian treaty from Matthias Corvinus' and Bayezid II's reigns (the draft was dated by Gyula Hazai to 1488, whereas Mihai Maxim opted for 1484), indicates the names of Moldavia and Walachia as lands under Buda's protection

⁴ E.g. Eugen Denize, *Stephen the Great and his Reign*, Bucharest, 2004, p. 114-115 (following in the pre-1918 footsteps of Vasile Pârvan and Nicolae Iorga who emphasized king Matthias' 'treasonable behavior' towards the Romanians).

⁵ See our *Chilia și Cetatea Albă în vara anului 1484. Noi documente din arhivele italiene*, "Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie" 26 (2008), p. 177-196; *Hungary's South-Eastern Border Area in the Power Relations between Matthias Corvinus and Bayezid II*, in *A Century in the History of Transylvania: Late Crusades, Humanism, Church Union and Social Mobility at the End of the Middle Ages (1387-1490)* (= *Mélanges d'Histoire Générale*, new series, II, 1) (ed. by Ioan Drăgan, Ioan-Aurel Pop, Tudor Sălăgean, Al Simon), Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 115-144; *The Ottoman-Hungarian Crisis of 1484: Diplomacy and Warfare in Matthias Corvinus' Local and Regional Politics*, in *Matthias and his Legacy. Cultural and Political Encounters between East and West* (ed. by Attila Bányai and Attila Györkös), Debrecen, 2009, p. 401-436. The main documents in this respect come from the Archivio di Stato di Milano, Milan (ASM), Archivio Ducale Sforzesco/Archivio Visconteo Sforzesco (A.D.S.). *Potenze estere*, Napoli, cart. 244, 1482-1484, nn (9th of July 1484); Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Venice (ASVe), Senato Secreti (S.S.), *Deliberazioni*, reg. 32, 1484-1485, c. 92^r (16th of November 1484). They add to the documents in ASVe, *Dispacci Constantinopoli* (S.D.C.), F[ilza].1A, 1484-1567, *Dis-pacci al Senato del Segretario Giovanni Dario. 1484. 31 maggio-28 febbraio mv* [1485], and *Dispacci al Senato di Pietro Bembo Bailo. 1483. 16 gennaio mv-1484. 9 febbraio mv* [1485], ed. by Giuseppe Calo (22 *Dispacci da Constantinopoli al doge Giovanni Mocenigo* (Venice, 1992) and O. Cristea, *Campania din 1484 in lumina unor noi mărturii venețiene* [hereafter, *Campania*], in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt: Atlet al credinței creștine* (ed. by Ștefan Sorin Gorovei, Maria-Magdalena Székely), Putna, 2004, p. 187-274.

⁶ In this respect, we recall, with prudence nonetheless, due to the ideological background of the book, Lajos Elekes', *A középkori magyar állam története megalapításától Mohácsi bukásáig*, Budapest, 1964, p. 258-259.

(too) were (eventually) eliminated⁷. At any rate, regardless of dating, it must be noted that Ottoman reluctance towards such an inclusion of Moldavia and Walachia in a treaty between Istanbul and Buda was and remained great until the *general* [7 year]-*peace* of Buda, in 1503⁸.

The abovementioned (draft of an) Ottoman-Hungarian treaty can be dated (equally successful) to 1484 and 1488, or to 1486. Namely Italian sources confirm that a two year truce was concluded, respectively renewed between Matthias and Bayezid II in each of these years⁹. Apparently, the two year interval became defining for Ottoman-Hungarian diplomatic settlements after the arrangement of February-March 1468¹⁰.

On the other hand, the amount of contradictory sources and interpretations regarding Ottoman-Hungarian arrangements prior to 1481 calls for prudence, as well as for new researches¹¹. Such documentary and scholarly uncertainties and doubts had an impact also on the dating of Moldavian-Ottoman peace attempts prior to 1486 (another controversial aspect), opening up new perspectives. The basis however remains the same¹².

⁷ *Topukapu*, no. 11, p. 295, note 47; M. Maxim, *Stephen the Great*, p. 21-22.

⁸ Magyar Országos Levéltár, Budapest [hereafter, MOL], (Q section) Diplomatikai Levéltár (DL), [no.] 39328 (4th of November 1503; the unedited Latin version of the Ottoman confirmation of the peace); Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Urkundenabteilung, Allgemeine Urkundenreihe, 1503 (20th of August 1503; the Hungarian version of the treaty, often edited, for instance, in Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, II-1, 1451-1550 (ed. by Nicolae Densușianu), Bucharest, 1890, no. 24, p. 23-24 [hereafter, *Hurmuzaki*].

⁹ For an overview: Archivio di Stato di Modena, Modena, Cancelleria Ducale, *Ungheria*, [reg.] II-3, f. 27^r (23rd of September 1488); copy: MOL, Filmtár (F.T.), *Nehring Karl gyűjtése (Nehring)*, rol. 30174 <unnumbered frames>; the copy can also be found in Direcția Județeană a Arhivelor Naționale-Cluj, [hereafter, DJAN-Cluj], *Documente medievale din Regatul Ungariei*, rol. XVI; Iván Nagy, Albert B. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziái emlékek. Mátyás király korából 1458-1490 (= Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, IV, 1-4), II, [1466-1480], Budapest, 1890, no. 90, p. 121-123; no. 232, p. 375-376; no. 238, p. 384; nos. 275-276, p. 435-437 [hereafter, MDE]; *Acta vitam Beatricis reginae Hungariae illustrantia. Aragóniai Beatrix magyar királyné éltetére vonatkozó okiratok (= Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, I, 39), ed. by Albert [von] Berzeviczy, Budapest, 1914, no. 61, p. 99 (in particular).

¹⁰ In this respect, for the 1460s and 1470s, see the sources (again, namely of Italian origin) in Al. Simon, *Between Empires: Matthias Corvinus' Politics in the 1470s, in A Century in the History of East-Central Europe: From the Political Hegemony of the Anjous to the Dynastic Supremacy of the Jagiellonians (Late 1300s-Early 1500s) (= Mélanges d'Histoire Générale*, new series, II, 2, ed. by Iulian Mihai Damian, I.-A. Pop, T. Sălăgean, Al. Simon), Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 149-191; Idem, *Brancho's Son and the Walachians: A Milanese Perspective on the Battle of Baia (I)*, "Historical Yearbook" 6 (2009), p. 87-100; (II) in print.

¹¹ The main sources and interpretations are provided by Tayyib Gökbilgin, *Korvin Mathias (Mátyás)ın Bayezid II.e mektupları ve 1503 (909) osmanlı – macar muahedesinin türkçe metni. La traduction des lettres de Korvin Mathias à Bayezid II et le texte turc du traité Hungaro-Ottoman de 1503 (909)*, "Belleten" 22 (1958), 87, p. 369-390; Mihai Guboglu, *Fâtih'in Ştefan çel Mare üzerine iki Boğdan seferi (1474-1476)*, "Belleten" 47 (1983), 186, p. 138-194; Sándor Papp, *Stephen the Great, Matthias Corvinus and the Ottoman Empire*, in *Between Worlds, I: Stephen the Great, Matthias Corvinus and their Time (= Mélanges d'Histoire Générale*, new series, I, 1, ed. by László Koszta, Ovidiu Mureșan, Al. Simon), Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 107-122.

¹² Aurel Decei, *Tratatul de pace -sulhname- încheiat între sultanul Mehmed al II-lea și Ștefan cel Mare la 1479*, "Revista Istorică Română" 15 (1945), 4, p. 465-494. The document in question,

In any case, one Venetian observation made in reference to the events of 1484-1485 should be recalled here. *One peace leads to the other* [*luna cossa si tira l'altra*]; that is: a peace/a truce between Buda and Istanbul leads to a peace/truce between Suceava and Istanbul and viceversa¹³. This interdependence proved vital on late medieval diplomatic soil.

II. The Two Imperial Fronts of the Crusading Crown of Hungary

Depending namely on the manner in which, based on the data at hand, we date the time when a negotiated and confirmed Ottoman-Hungarian truce became operational (the same problem comes up in relation to the Habsburg-Ottoman truces of the late 1490s¹⁴), in spring or fall 1482, a truce was probably concluded between King Matthias Corvinus and Sultan Bayezid II. Already in February, King Matthias had been accused of hindering anti-Ottoman warfare¹⁵. In spite of his apparent Ottoman arrangement, he was still considered by Pope Sixtus IV the best solution for the crusade, and, prior to December 12¹⁶, he was promised 200.000 ducats if he was to fight the Porte (in comparison, as well as a reference for the age, it should be noted that in November, the same year, the crusade was being preached in Poland, allegedly very

dated between late 1479 and early 1481, was re-edited also in *Documente turcești privind istoria României*, I: 1417-1774 (ed. by Mustafa Ali Mehmet), Bucharest, 1976, no. 3, p. 3-4. For Ottoman-Moldavian relations in the early 1480s: M. A. Mehmet, *Un document turc concernant le kharatch de la Moldavie et de la Valachie aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, "Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes" 5 (1967), 1-2, p. 265-274.

¹³ Giovanni Dario's words from his report were edited in *22 dispacci*, no. 41, p. 28. In this respect, see in particular O. Cristea's comments in *Campania*, p. 214-215; *Matthias Corvin et l'expédition de Baieid II contre la Moldavie (1484)*, "Revue Roumaine d'Histoire" 42 (2003 [2005]), 1-4, p. 81-88.

¹⁴ For instance: Franz Babinger, *Zwei diplomatische Zwischenspiele in Deu-tsch-Osmanischen Staatsverkehr unter Bâyezid II. (1497 und 1504)*, in *Idem, Aufsätze und Abhandlungen zur Geschichte Südosteuropas und der Levante*, I (Munich, 1962), p. 254-269; Johann Gröblacher, *König Maximilians I. erste Gesandtschaft zum Sultan Bâyezid II.*, in *Festschrift für Hermann Wiesflecker* (ed. by Alexander Novotny and Othmar Pickl), Graz, 1973, p. 73-83; Al. Simon, *The Dying Crusade: The Hungarian Royal Elections of 1490 as Moldavian Prequel to the Polish 'Crusade' of 1497*, in *Worlds in Change. Church Union and Crusading in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (= *Transylvanian Review*, XVIII, suppl. 2; *Mélanges d'Histoire Générale*, new series, IV, 1), ed. by Christian Gastgeber, I.-A. Pop, Oliver Jens Schmitt, Al. Simon, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 391-410.

¹⁵ The matter comes up both in southern and in northern sources: MDE, III [1481-1488], Budapest, 1877, nos. 8-10, p. 20-23; *Politische Korrespondenz Breslaus im Zeitalter des Königs Matthias Corvinus* (= *Scriptores Rerum Silesicarum*, XIII-XIV) (ed. by Berthold Kronthal, Heinrich Wendt), II: 1480-1490, Breslau, 1894, no. 370, p. 48; Marino Sanudo II Giovanne, *Le vite dei dogi (1474-1494)* [I-II] (ed. by Angela Caracciolo Aricò), Padua, 1989-2001, p. 234, 422.

¹⁶ Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City [hereafter, ASV], Miscellanea, Armadi/Varia Politica (Misc., Arm.), [reg.] II-56, ff. 207^v-209^v [late 1482; edited in Edgár Artner, *Magyarország mint a Nyugati Keresztény művelődés védőbástyája: a Vatikáni Levéltárnak azon okiratai, melyek őseinknek a Keletről Európát fenyegető ve-szedelmek ellen kifejtett erőfeszítéseire vonatkoznak* (cca. 1214-1606) (ed. by Szovágh Kornél), Budapest, 2004, no. 110, p. 130-131 (*Magyarország*); data gathered in the 1930s and 1940s; Biblioteca Museo Correr, Venice, *Manoscritti*, Mss. 364, f. 9^r-15^r (12th of December 1482).

successful, although Emperor Frederick III of Habsburg had just accused in front of Sixtus IV not only Matthias, but also Casimir IV of having a truce with Bayezid II¹⁷).

It is more likely that the Ottoman-Hungarian truce in question was concluded in late 1482, for in September, Paul (Pál, Pavel) Kinizsi (Chinezul), count of Timiș (Temes) and captain of the Lower Parts of Hungary, was still campaigning against the Ottomans¹⁸. The truce was part of larger Ottoman diplomatic offensive, determined by the successful flight to Rhodes of Djem, Bayezid II's brother and main rival¹⁹. It also stands in direct connection (whether as a consequence or as precondition) with the Ottoman raid on Moldavia which nearly proved fatal for Stephen III of Moldavia in the summer of 1482 (in July most likely)²⁰. At any rate, King Matthias Corvinus apparently did not view the truce concluded with Sultan Bayezid II as a fully satisfactory solution to his Ottoman concerns (which proved to be a mistake in 1484²¹) and focused increasingly on Djem²².

According to the evidence at hand²³, confirmed by recently discovered sources²⁴, no real functional truce was formally 'sealed' until the winter of 1484-1485.

¹⁷ ASV, Misc. Arm., II-56, ff. 70^v-76^v [mid-fall 1482; ed. in *Magyarország*, no. 111, p. 131-132]; Augustin Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia*, II, *Ab Ioanne PP. XXIII usque ad Pium PP.V. 1410-1572*, Rome, 1861, nos. 239-240, p. 219-220.

¹⁸ V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei. Külügyi Osztály*, II: 1480-1490, Budapest, 1895, no. 131, p. 232-233 (Kinizsi's fa-ther-in-law, Balázs Magyar, had led the first attacks); no. 133, p. 234-235 [hereafter, MKL].

¹⁹ For an overview, see the analysis by Nicolas Vatin, *Une tentative manquée d'ouverture diplomatique: la lettre de créance d'un envoyé de Bajazet II auprès de Louis XI (1483)*, in *L'Empire Ottoman, la République de Turquie et la France* (ed. by Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Hatim Batu), Istanbul-Paris, 1986, p. 1-13; and namely his inventory, *Itinéraires d'agents de la Porte en Italie (1483-1495): Réflexions sur l'organisation des missions ottomanes et sur la transcription turque des noms de lieux italiens*, "Turcica. Revue d'études tur-ques: peuples, langues, culture, états" 19 (1987), p. 29-50 (here p. 31-33).

²⁰ Masarykovy Universitni knihovny, Brno, Mk 9, *mikulovsky rukopis*, f. 276^r-277^r (two letters of Matthias Corvinus to Stephen III of Moldavia, the first one dated to the 20th of August 1482, while the other has no date, but belongs to the same time span; copies: MOL, FT, *Nehring*, rols. 30173-30174, nn; DJAN-Cluj, *Documente medievale din Regatul Ungariei*, rols. XV-XVI, nn [the last two and the first two frames on the two rolls, 30173 and 30174, respectively XV and XVI]). On the basis of their undated copies preserved in Budapest, the letters were repeatedly misdated, usually under 1475 (e.g. MKL, I, 1458-1479, Budapest, 1893, nos. 220-221, p. 313-314; for the correctly dated edition of the most relevant passages: Al. Simon, Cristian Luca, *Documentary Perspectives on Matthias Corvinus and Stephen the Great*, "Transylvanian Review" 17 (2008), 3, p. 95-96.

²¹ In this respect, see also Pienaru, *Confruntare și diplomație*, p. 179-180.

²² Dezső Csánki, *Oklevelek a Hunyadiak korából (II)*, Történelmi Tár, Budapest, XV (1902), 2, no. 38, p. 356; [Bernardino Zambotti], *Diario ferrarese dall'anno 1476 fino al 1504* (= *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, new series, XXIV, 7) (ed. by Giuseppe Pardi), Bologna, 1937, p. 137-138; Louis Thuasne, *Djem Sultan, fils de Mohammed II, frère de Bayezid II (1459-1495) d'après les documents originaux en grand partie inédites. Étude sur la question d'Orient à la fin du XV^e siècle*, Paris, 1892, p. 102-103. The course of events had been anticipated by Pierre d'Aubusson, the grand-master of the Knights of St. John, in his letter to emperor Frederick III, written three days after Djem had arrived on Rhodes (HHStA, Reichshofkanzlei, *Fridericiana*, [Karton] 5, 1481-1483, fasc. 5-3, 1482, f. 75^r; 3rd of August 1482).

²³ These contemporary sources, especially of Venetian or Ragusan origin, were quoted or edited in Cristea's *Campania*, or in Simon, *Între porturi și cer*.

Furthermore, even in early 1485 it was doubted that Matthias would respect this truce²⁵. Such southern doubts are highly eloquent.

The Ottoman-Hungarian negotiations of late fall 1483 – late spring 1484²⁶ had been acknowledged by Matthias too, unlike most of his previous discussions with the sultan(s) (such as those of 1482, completely passed under silence in April 1483, when, with good cause²⁷, he accused Venice and Frederick of conspiring with the *Turks* against him, he who would not give up fighting the *Turks*²⁸). These negotiations of 1483-1484 had however led only to the conclusion of a preliminary (most likely) treaty (if not only to the drafting of one) between Matthias and Bayezid II. This form of settlement became was rendered invalid in the second half of 1484, following the events triggered by the sultan's crossing of the Danube (it should be added that in the fall of 1483 a violent clash between Hungarian and Ottoman troops apparently took place²⁹). Otherwise, if the Ottoman-Hungarian treaty had been valid, sultan Bayezid II would hardly have sent to Buda (prior to the end of 1484³⁰) an envoy (or more) with another peace offer (an offer this time accepted by Matthias Corvinus).

III. The Royal Chancery in Matthias Corvinus' Ottoman Politics

Under the circumstances, given Matthias' protest(s) and Bayezid II's answer of (probably) late August-early September 1484³¹, it seems rather likely that the king's claim that the sultan had broken the Ottoman-Hungarian arrangement referred to the arrangement of 1482 and not that of 1484, which in fact/apparently did not legally exist. This possibility however does not settle the matter of what happened

²⁴ In this case, see namely the reports edited in our *Chilia și Cetatea Albă*.

²⁵ Nicolae Iorga, *Studii și documente cu privire la istoria românilor*, XVI, Bucharest, 1909, no. 17, p. 123 (Stephen III had recently re-attacked the Ottoman strongholds).

²⁶ The king's letters are in MKL, II, no. 162, p. 273-275; no. 164, p. 286.

²⁷ For Venice's attempts to secure a truce between Bayezid II and Frederick III: ASVe, S.S., *Deliberazioni*, reg. 31, 1482-1483 [MV 1483-1484], c. 10^v, 45^v (10th of April, 22nd of July 1483). The attempts were hindered by Bayezid's need to first reach an arrangement with Matthias, viewed as the main threat to his Otto-man power, due to also to the fact that Djem had already turned towards Matthias.

²⁸ Matthias' anti-Venetian and anti-Habsburg charges can be found in HHStA, Staatenabteilungen, Ausserdeutsche Staaten, *Hungarica (Ungarische Akten), Allgemeine Akten*, I, [Karton] 1 (I-1), 1, 1423-1525, fasc. 1-1 (A), 1463 Juli-1490 Mai, f. 116^r (26th of April 1483; abstracted by K. Nehring, *Quellen zur ungarischen Aus-senpolitik in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts (I)*, "Levél-tári Közlemények" 47 (1976), no. 166, p. 113; MOL, DL 38886 (11th of April 1483).

²⁹ For the sources, see N. Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XV^e siècle*, V: 1476-1500, Bucharest, 1915, no. 131, p. 133; MKL, II, no. 156, p. 267-270; *Korrespondenz der Stadt Breslau*, II, no. 395, p. 71.

³⁰ The case of the report from Ragusa (31st of December 1484), in ASM, A.D.S., *Potenze Estere, Illiria, Polonia, Russia, Slavonia*, cart. 640, fasc. 4 (the report was edited and analyzed in Simon, *Chilia and Cetatea Albă*, p. 188-189).

³¹ Edited and redited since the 1700s (e.g. [Imre Kelcz], *Epistolae Matthiae Corvini Regis Hungariae ad pontifices, imperatores, reges, principes, aliosque vi-ros illustres*, (Kosice, 1743), pars I, nos. 4-5, p. 3-4), based on undated copies, the only ones known so far (e.g. the edition in *Hurmuzaki*, II-1, nos. 18-19, p. 15-16).

with the Hungarian version of the treaty: was it 'stolen' from the chancery by Vuk (a Serbian member of the royal chancery and a successful Ottoman spy)³² or was the Hungarian chancellor, Peter (Péter) Váradi (Várdai), archbishop of Kalocsa, bribed or negligent³³, omitting a clause which would have protected the 'Moldavian harbors' (when confronted by Bayezid II with the Ottoman version of the arrangement following the king's protests, Matthias could not produce a Hungarian version of the settlement to contradict the provisions of the Ottoman version). Nevertheless, the hypothesis that the fall of the chancellor was largely due also to his opposition to Matthias' domestic policies should thus receive more credit³⁴.

³² For Vuk (based on a source from 1487, edited in *Topukapu*, no. 10, p. 295), see Tahsin Gemil, *Un izvor referitor la moartea lui Dimitrie Jaakšič, solul lui Ma-tia Corvin la Bayezid II*, "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A. D. Xenopol" 22² (1985), p. 597-604. The matter was last discussed by Ivan Biliarsky, *Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes vers la fin du XV^e siècle*, "Turcica. Re-vue d'études turques: peuples, langues, culture, états" 32 (2000), p. 291-305. It is not impossible (quite the contrary) that Vuk and Váradi stood in close connections, at least in administrative terms, given Váradi's southern involvement (see the following note) and his office which placed him in control of the royal chancery.

³³ In this respect, see also Al. Simon, *Ștefan cel Mare și Matia Corvin. O co-existență medievală*, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 531-532. For the very complex figure of the archbishop (who had led Matthias' negotiations with the Ottoman adversaries of Bayezid II and also had instrumented Matthias' plan to assassinate the sultan at the end of 1483; ASV, Misc., Arm., f. II-56, f. 346 (347); 356 (357)-357 (358)); 24th-28th of October 1483; the reports sent from Buda to Sixtus IV by the papal legate, Bartolomeo Maraschi, bishop of Castelli, see also the older works of V. Fraknoi, *Váradi Péter*, in Idem, *Egyháznagyok a magyar középkorból*, Budapest, 1916, p. 106-171; Rabán Gerézdi, *Egy Magyar Humanista: Váradi Péter (I-II)*, "Különlenyomat a Magyar-ságtudomány" 1 (1943), 3, p. 305-328; 4, p. 527-564. The constant efforts made by Sixtus IV' successor, Innocent VIII, to secure the release of the archbishop from his royal captivity, at a time when the new pope had just launched another crusade against the Ottomans following Bayezid II's Moldavian triumph, (e.g. [Odorico Rinaldo], *Annales ecclesiastici ab anno MCXCVIII ubi desinit Cardinalis Baronibus auctore Odorico Raynaldo accedunt*, XIX, Cologne, 1693, 1484, nos. 64-68, p. 345^b-346^a; no. 71, p. 346^b; 1485, nos. 3-5, p. 349^b-350^b) make the matter of the archbishop's involvement even more problematic. On one hand, it would seem doubtful that, had Váradi been the main responsible for Matthias' diplomatic disaster, the pope, anxious to promote (for Italian purposes) anti-Ottoman warfare and to improve the relations between Rome and Buda, would have kept pressuring Matthias to release and restore to office his former chancellor (for Váradi's later career, after Matthias' death, when he largely regained his former powers: *Petri de Warda epistolae cum nonnullis Wladislai II. regis Hungariae litteris Petri causa scriptis* (ed. by Carol Wagner), Bratislava-Kosice, 1776. On the other hand, Váradi had sufficient 'dubious' ties and Matthias enough regional and domestic concerns (which allowed Innocent VIII to increase his pressures).

³⁴ This interpretation was developed by L. Elekes in his *Mátyás Király és kora*, Budapest 1958, p. 177-179, 181-183. The opinion was (prudently nevertheless) shared by the late András Kubinyi (*Matthias Rex*, Budapest, 2008, p. 130-131, 179-180; based on a comparison to the case of John Vitéz, the first Hungarian prelate and politician to be beaten and then deatined by the king), whose ideological and historical background was very different from that of Elekes. It is very possible that Matthias' used the opportunity presented by the sultan's response and made his move against Váradi, apparently one of the leading figures of the Hungarian opposition to Matthias policies (at the same time, it should be stressed out that this opposition, which varied in names and numbers throughout Matthias' reign, had very good Ottoman connections that best came to light during the rebellion of 1467; in this respect, see also our *Brancho's son and the Walachians (I-II)*, with further contemporary references). Váradi was also closely connected to the Újlaki family (who played an

At the same time however, it should be added, that Matthias would not have issued a protest without seeing the document on which the protest was based or, more likely (as he was not in Buda at that time, but on campaign in Austria against Frederick III³⁵), without being assured that he had documentary grounds for his protest. Therefore, in this respect, a few aspects should nevertheless be further stressed out. Matthias could not have relied in his protest on an arrangement which he had previously not officially approved³⁶. In return, in 1482, he had apparently not placed great value (nor cared much, one could add) on his treaty with Bayezid, which however, had not eliminated hostile actions on both sides of the borders, even if their impact was not comparable to that of a full-scale war³⁷.

For instance, if we are to completely trust the Venetian reports from Istanbul, from October 1484 nonetheless³⁸, Matthias' envoys had hurried to Bayezid in order to conclude a treaty, after the sultan had left against Stephen. It is certain however that Matthias did dispatch envoys to Bayezid when the latter neared the Lower Danube line³⁹. Furthermore and at any rate, it is quite beyond any doubt that, between mid 1482 and mid 1484, *the mighty king* Matthias constantly underestimated the *weak sultan* Bayezid.

important part in the 'release' of the archbishop in 1490), whose Ottoman connections were surpassed (eventually) on Hungarian soil only by those of the Szapolyai family (for a retrospective overview of these matters see also our *Valahii și Dieta de la Râkos (1505). Considerații asupra sfârșitului epocii huniade*, "Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis" 43 (2006), p. 99-121). At the time of the Ottoman attack on Moldavia, the Újlakis, who had their power base in Slavonia (i.e. Matthias' southwestern flank), were causing much unrest and threatening the king's power (see here the sources quoted in the following note).

³⁵ In this respect, as well as for Matthias' immense domestic problems (prior and after the conquest of the Moldavian harbors) to secure a rapid and effective military Hungarian intervention against the Ottomans who had entered Moldavia: Esztergomi Székesfőkáptalan Magánlevéltára (Prímási Levéltára), Esztergom, Acta radicalia, 27-2-15 (copy: MOL, Diplomatkai Fényképgyűjtemény (DF), [no.] 236551); MOL, DL 102629 (in *Documenta quibus Hungariae, Valachiae et Moldaviae relationes melius illustrantur* (ed. by Marius Diaconescu, Géza Érszegi), "Mediaevalia Transsilvanica" 2 (1998), no. 6, p. 287-288); Státny Okresný Archív Bardejove, Bardejove (Bártfa), Archiv Mesta Bardejove/Bártfa Város Levéltára, Középkori gyűjtemény, no. 2350 (DF 215104); Státny Oblastný Archív Levoča, Levoča (Lewocza, Leutschau, Lőcse), [Section] L. Rody i panstavá, I. Rody (L-I), Andráši (z Krásnej Hôrky) Archiv/Andrássy család levéltára, [Section]: Mohács előtti oklevelek, [no.] 17-59 (copy: MOL, DF 265307); D. Csánki, *Oklevelek*, no. 48, p. 362.

³⁶ The way in which he conducted his western policy (largely shaped by conflict with his main nemesis that was not the sultan, but the emperor) is eloquent in this case (see namely the synthesis of V. Fraknói, K. Nehring and A. Kubinyi).

³⁷ See our *The Contested Sultan* in reference namely to the events of 1486.

³⁸ *Dispacci*, no. 28a, p. 124 (Hungarian-Venetian relations kept deteriorating).

³⁹ *Campania*, no. 7, p. 233 (Matthias did not wish to leave the Austrian front).