

MERCENARIES AND CRUSADERS



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Mercenaries and Crusaders

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FOREWORD

This volume is the proceedings of an international conference „Mercenaries and Crusaders (1202–1480)” held between 22-24 June 2022 at the University of Debrecen (<https://mercenariesandcrusaders.com/>). It was organised and the proceedings have been edited under the auspices of the HUN-REN (Hungarian Research Network) – University of Debrecen Research Group “Military History of Medieval Hungary and Central Europe”. The conference was funded by National Research, Development and Innovation Fund. The volume is also sponsored by the „Hungary in Medieval Europe” project under the framework of the University of Debrecen’s Thematic Excellence Program as well as the “Sources of Medieval Hungarian Military Organization in Europe, 1301–1437” research program of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund.

The original idea of a conference like that was brought forward years ago by Ölbei Tamás (Université de Lorraine, Nancy-Metz – University of Debrecen) and João Nisa (Universidade de Coimbra), for which I myself and the editorial board are grateful. It is due to their efforts that the conference was to be organised in a collaboration with the Histoire et Cultures de l’Antiquité et du Moyen Âge (Université de Lorraine, Nancy-Metz) and the Centro de História da Sociedade e da Cultura (Universidade de Coimbra). I need to thank here for the members of the Organizing and Scientific Committee, Professor José Pedro Paiva (Coimbra) and Professor Guy Vottéro (Nancy), Professor Miguel Gomes Martins (Universidade Nova de Lisboa), Professor Francisco García Fitz (Universidad de Extremadura), Professor João Gouveia Monteiro (Coimbra). We are also grateful for the key-note speakers, Professor Valérie Toureille (CY Cergy Paris Université), Professor Sylvain Gouguenheim (Ecole normale supérieure de Lyon) and Professor Saul Gomes (Coimbra). Professor Toureille and Michael Depreter (Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford), László Veszprémy (Péter Pázmány Catholic University), Ágnes Maléth, Zsolt Hunyadi and István Petrovics (University of Szeged) as well as João Nisa (Universidade de Coimbra), László Pósán, Attila Györkös, Ádám Novák and Orsolya Tóth (University of Debrecen) also acted as reviewers. Due to help of João Nisa in the first place the conference was also supported by the Asociación Ibérica de Historia Militar, Cáceres, the Instituto de Estudos Medievais, the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and the Universidade de Extremadura as well as the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, República Portuguesa. Some scholars also gave papers in a partnership with the University of Public Service, Faculty of Military Sciences and Officer Training.

In June 2022, 52 researchers presented papers in 16 sessions. We were pleased to welcome distinguished scholars from the Polish Academy of Sciences (Kraków), Webster University Vienna, the University of Bucharest, the Europa-Universität Flensburg, Uzhhorod National University, Institute of History, Belgrade, Novosibirsk State University, the Centre for Transylvanian

Studies, Romanian Academy (Cluj), Odessa Mechnikov National University, University of Novi Sad, University of Crete (Rethymnon-Heraklyon), Cyprus Research Centre (Nicosia), Nicolaus Copernicus University (Toruń), the University of Białystok, the Jesuit University Ignatianum (Kraków), Móra Ferenc Museum (Szeged), Universitat de València, the universities of Pécs and Szeged as well as Eötvös Loránd University Budapest. Special panels were organised by the scholars of Stanford University and Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario) the Universidade de Coimbra and the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. Speakers from Canada, Greece, Albania, Ukraine, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Belarus also presented papers.

The conference explored the subject of crusaders and mercenaries from a broad perspective. It covered the armies of the Hundred Years' War, the Catalan companies, the condottieri in Florence and Genoa, mercenaries in the Balkans, the Levant, the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom, as well as the Turcopoliers of the knightly orders. The Northern Crusades, the Baltic Crusades, the Iberian Reconquista, the crusades against the heretics in Bosnia and Hussites were examined. The role of the ideological and religious background, the Holy See, the papal legates, recruitment, tactics, strategy, supply, logistics, equipment, booty, were also investigated.

The organisers placed an emphasis on mentoring. PhD students also had an opportunity to present themselves in front of prestigious representatives of medieval studies.

I would especially like to thank Sándor Ónadi, Melinda Jakab and Ádám Novák for their enormous work and all their never-ceasing efforts in the editorial process. I also do thank Zoltán Véber for his IT services all through the organization and the hosting of the website. I am also pleased to have – as usual – Balázs Bacsa “at hand” in the English language proofs.

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HUNGARIANS AND THE CRUSADE FROM THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE TO THE REGENSBURG REICHSTAG

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Ottoman Empire had a significant impact on the European public opinion, prompting the two prominent leaders of the Christian world, Pope Nicholas V and Emperor Frederick III, to collaboratively orchestrate a crusade with the aim of recapturing the city. The news reached Rome in July 1453, prompting an immediate response from the Pope. His primary objective was to establish peace in Italy, and he promptly dispatched legates to Venice, King Alfonso V of Naples, as well as the opposing parties of Milan and Florence.¹ On September 10th, he appointed six cardinals to lead a committee tasked with addressing the Turkish threat.² On September 30th, he promulgated the crusading bull titled “Etsi ecclesia Christi,” in which the Pope implored all Christian rulers to defend Christianity.³ In addition to these actions, the Pope also dispatched legates to European courts to encourage monarchs to participate in the crusade.

Simultaneously, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III embarked on active organizational endeavours. He established communication with the Pontiff and convened an imperial assembly, extending invitations not only to the German princely states but also to other sovereigns of the Christian realm. The purpose was to collaboratively formulate the intricate specifics of the envisaged crusade.⁴ The prospect of broadening the geographical scope of the crusade beyond the confines of Europe appeared auspicious: emissaries from the Karamanid principality materialised in October 1453 at the respective courts of Emperor

* The author is a member of the HUN–REN – University of Debrecen “The Military History of Medieval Hungary and Central Europe” Research Group. This project has received funding from the HUN-REN Hungarian Research Network. It was also funded by the University of Debrecen Thematic Excellence Program, Project no. TKP2021-NKTA-34, provided by the Ministry of Culture and Innovation of Hungary under the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund. It was also supported by the ÚNKP-23-4-I New National Excellence Program of the Ministry for Culture and Innovation From the source of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund.

¹ Setton, Kenneth, *The Papacy and the Levant (1205–1571)*. Vol. II. The Fifteenth Century. Philadelphia, 1978. 140.; The Pope’s initiative proved successful, and subsequently, the conflict referred to as the “Wars in Lombardy” was concluded by the Treaty of Lodi on April 9, 1454. Ibid.

² Nowak, Jessika, *Ein Kardinal im Zeitalter der Renaissance*. Tübingen, 2011. 128.

³ The text of the bull can be found in: *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III*. Vol. V./1.: 1453–1454. Eds. Weigel, Helmut – Grüneisen, Henny, Göttingen, 1969. 59. [hereinafter DRTA]; and in English translation: *The Crusade of 1456. Texts and Documentation in Translation*. Ed. Mixson, James D., Toronto–Buffalo–London, 2022. 39.

⁴ The text of the invitation can be found in: DRTA 96.

Frederick III in Vienna and King Ladislaus Posthumous in Prague. These envoys conveyed intelligence concerning an impending Turkish incursion targeting Hungary,⁵ concurrently proffering their willingness to cooperate with the Christian coalition. In conjunction with this, a meticulously devised military strategy was proffered.⁶

The previously unprecedented collaboration, which commenced with great promise, ultimately failed to materialise. During the Reichstag convened in Regensburg in April 1454, Emperor Frederick III was conspicuously absent, and only a few nations were represented. Consequently, an agreement on the specifics of the crusade could not be reached, resulting in its postponement to an autumn Reichstag.⁷ Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the Bishop of Siena, who served as the secretary and diplomat of Emperor Frederick III, attributed significant responsibility for this state of affairs to the Hungarians. His assertion was based on the claim that the Emperor's absence from the assembly was due to threats from Hungarian captain-general, John Hunyadi.⁸ Despite the invitation, the Hungarians refrained from sending envoys to Regensburg, in spite of being in the utmost peril in the impending situation.⁹ In my study, I endeavour to address the question of why, despite initially indicating their intention to participate, the Hungarians ultimately abstained from engaging in the organization of the crusade that was launched with an exceptional display of cooperation. By focusing on this particular turning point, I seek to provide a more thus holistic understanding of the complex dynamics surrounding the crusading effort at the time.

The 1453 crusade has been the subject of extensive research, involving renowned historians such as Ludwig Pastor,¹⁰ Kenneth Setton,¹¹ and Norman Housley.¹² These scholars have meticulously analysed the events surrounding the organization of the crusade, with a particular focus on the activities of the papacy and the empire. However, their works have only tangentially addressed Hungary's role. In a separate study, János M. Bak dedicated attention to Hungary's involvement in the 15th-century crusades, yet he did not extensively cover the events between 1453 and 1454.¹³

⁵ *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini* (Fontes Rerum Austriacarum II/ LXVIII). Ed. Wolkan, Rudolf, Vienna, 1918. 348, 361. [hereinafter *Der Briefwechsel*]

⁶ The military plan can be found in: DRTA 45.

⁷ Setton, *The Papacy*, 1978. 151–152.

⁸ *Der Briefwechsel*, 1918. 459.

⁹ *Der Briefwechsel*, 1918. 495.

¹⁰ Pastor, Ludwig, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*. Vols I–V. Transl. Antrobus, Frederick Ignatius, London, 1891–1900.

¹¹ Setton, *The Papacy*, 1978.

¹² Housley, Norman, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580. From Lyons to Alcazar*, Oxford, 1992.; Housley, Norman, *Religious Warfare in Europe, 1400–1536*. Oxford, 2002.; Housley, Norman, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat, 1453–1505*. Oxford, 2013.

¹³ Bak, János, “Hungary and Crusading in the Fifteenth Century”, In: Housley, Norman (ed.), *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact*. Basingstoke,

The focal point of my research focuses on the source collection titled *Deutsche Reichstagsakten* (1453–1454), which encompasses nearly the entire spectrum of German-related materials concerning the fall of Constantinople and the crusade occurring between this event and the Regensburg Imperial Diet.¹⁴ Within this collection, besides German sources, a comprehensive array of papal and Hungarian sources can be found, which hold significant importance from the perspective of my research. Among the German sources, there are the correspondences led by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini.¹⁵ He served as the secretary and diplomat to Emperor Frederick III, leveraging his distinguished position and Hungarian affiliations to provide abundant information on the subject. Furthermore, of notable significance is the correspondence of John Vitéz of Zredna, who acted as the chancellor of Ladislaus V and spearheaded diplomatic exchanges on behalf of the Hungarian ruler.¹⁶ His correspondence offers supplementary insights for my study. To ensure the comprehensiveness of my research, both published and unpublished¹⁷ Hungarian sources will be integrated, aiming to construct the most comprehensive depiction of the events. In the context of John Hunyadi's Italian diplomatic connections, I will also consider the Venetian and Milanese sources published within the study titled *Relazioni di Giovanni di Hunedoara con l'Italia negli anni 1452–1453* by Francisc Pall, which provides Venetian and Milanese sources within the framework of Hunyadi's Italian interactions.¹⁸

As a result of the 1396 Battle of Nicopolis defeat, it became evident to the rulers of the Kingdom of Hungary that there was insufficient capacity within the realm to undertake a *passagium generale* against the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, efforts were redirected towards the bolstering of border defences and the engagement in defensive *passagium particular*.¹⁹ Hungary assumed the role of the “bulwark and shield of Christianity” within the phraseology of Hungarian monarchs during this juncture, a designation that would persist throughout subsequent centuries.²⁰ The strategic shift was instigated by the actions of John Hunyadi, who once again adopted an aggressive stance against

2004. 116–127.

¹⁴ DRTA

¹⁵ *Der Briefwechsel*, 1918.

¹⁶ *Johannes de Zredna Vitéz. Opera quae supersunt*. Ed. Boronkai, Iván, Budapest, 1980. [hereinafter *Johannes de Zredna Vitéz*]

¹⁷ Hungarian National Archives, Budapest. Pre-Mohács Collection. Medieval Charters (DL) and Collection of Photocopies (DF) (<https://archive.hungaricana.hu/en/charters/>) [hereinafter DL or DF].

¹⁸ Pall, Francisc, “Relazioni di Giovanni di Hunedoara con l'Italia negli anni 1452–1453. II. Documenti”, = *Revue des études Sud-Est européennes* 13, 1975, 559–594.

¹⁹ Bárány, Attila, “Magyarország és a kései keresztes hadjáratok”, In. Laszlovszky, József (ed.), *Magyarország és a keresztes háborúk. Lovagrendek és emlékeik*. Budapest, 2006. 148.

²⁰ Bak, Hungary and Crusading, 2004. 118.

the Ottomans.²¹ His victories in the early 1440s rekindled hope within European public sentiment that the expulsion of the Turks from the Balkans was a plausible endeavour.

During the reign of King Vladislaus, Hunyadi led two campaigns against the Ottomans, followed by an additional one during his tenure as governor. Although he recognised the disparity between the opposing factions after the defeat at the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1448, which necessitated a transition to a defensive strategy, his rhetoric and diplomacy remained focused on the formation of an anti-Turkish alliance. Hence, it is perplexing that the Hungarians abstained from participating in the Regensburg Imperial Diet convened in 1453 to deliberate on the proposed crusade, especially considering the context of their prior campaigns where the establishment of a broad international coalition appeared viable.

In Hunyadi's previous campaigns, aside from support from the Holy See, only 1–2 countries provided tangible assistance. However, in the present context, one of the principal organisers was Emperor Frederick III, with whom the Hungarians had engaged in warfare during their earlier campaigns, leading to the necessity of leaving troops within the nation due to the emperor's involvement. Moreover, it would have been in the Hungarians' vital interest to partake in the crusade of 1453, particularly as reports surfaced indicating that the Ottoman objective in 1454 was the assault on Belgrade.²²

Our investigation should commence with the immediate precursor to the Crusade, the siege of Constantinople. Hungary's general-captain, Hunyadi, was apprised of the city's siege while he was stationed in the southern region of Transylvania, presumably awaiting news.²³ However, he was unable to dispatch armed assistance to the city; nevertheless, according to Greek sources, he attempted through diplomatic means to impede the city's fall. Concurrently, his presence in Transylvania might have contributed to the spreading rumour in the Turkish camp that the Hungarians were advancing towards Constantinople with a substantial cavalry and infantry force to liberate the city.²⁴ The diplomatic initiative did not prove successful, marking the downfall of the last significant impediment between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary.

²¹ For the most recent summary of John Hunyadi's campaigns, consult: Pálosfalvi, Tamás, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*. Leiden, 2018. 99–187.

²² *A zichi és vásonkeői gróf Zichy-család idősb ágának okmánytára. Codex diplomaticus domus senioris comitum Zichy de Zich et Vasonkeo*. Vols I–XII. Eds. Nagy, Imre – Nagy, Iván – Véghely, Dezső – Kammerer, Ernő – Lukcsics, Pál, Pest–Budapest, 1872–1931. XII. 237–239. [hereinafter Zichy].

²³ 4 May: Lipova, DL 14 683; 17–20 May: Timișoara DL 85 897, 31 646; 27 May: Caransebeș, *Krassó vármegye története. III. Oklevéltár*. Ed. Pesthy, Frigyes, Budapest, 1882. 395.; 31 May – 1 Jun: Hațeg, Mihályi, János, *Máramarosi diplomák a XIV. és XV. századból*. Máramaros-Sziget, 1900. 365–367.; 4 Jun: Hunedoara, DL 240 063.

²⁴ Kapitánffy, István, *Hungarobyzantína. Bizánc és a görögség középkori magyarországi forrásokban*. Budapest, 2003. 99–119.; Spremić, Momčilo, *Despot Djuradj Brankovic i Njegovo Doba*. Beograd, 1994. 402.

The Sultan, having conquered the Byzantine capital, decided to restore the territorial heritage of the Byzantine Emperors. He issued ultimatums to all the countries that had previously been part of this Empire. Among others, he sent envoys to Moldavia, Kaffa and Chios, and in these messages he also mentioned that he would arrive in Rome in less than two years.²⁵ The Sultan also made demands on the Serbian despot Đurađ Branković, despite the fact that he had provided auxiliary troops for the siege of Constantinople.²⁶ A letter from a Trau (Trogir) humanist, Johannes Sobote (Ivan Sobota), dated 24 July 1453, tells us that Mehmed II demanded from the despot two towns in the north of Serbia, on the Hungarian border, Golubac and Smederevo, from where he could easily launch an attack against the Hungarians.²⁷ These open threats provoked a forced reaction from the Hungarians. Subsequently, the most important task became to prepare for the imminent Turkish attack.

In 1452, the Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, approached John Hunyadi and Ulrich of Cilli with an offer for a military alliance against Venice.²⁸ The purpose of the negotiations was for the Hungarians to join the Lombard War on the side of Milan and Florence, opening a new front in Friuli. According to the agreement, the Hungarians were supposed to lead at least 12,000 cavalymen into Italy in exchange for appropriate payment. After winning the war with Hungarian assistance, Sforza would turn against the Ottomans.²⁹ After more than a year of negotiations, the Florentine-Milanese envoy departed from Milan on June 27 to finalise the contract.³⁰ At that time, they were still unaware of the fall of Constantinople. By the time the envoys reached Vienna, they found themselves in changed circumstances, and thus, due to the Turkish threat, Hunyadi and his associates withdrew from finalizing the contract.

Prior to the proclamation of the crusader bull, the Hungarian king convened an assembly on August 31, 1453, in Pressburg (Pozsony, Bratislava) where one

²⁵ Pilat, Liviu – Ovidiu, Cristea, *The Ottoman Threat and Crusading on the eastern of Christendom during the 15th Century*. Leiden–Boston, 2017. 123.

²⁶ The Sultan requested assistance troops from the Serbian despot for the campaign against the Karamanids. The 1500 Serbian cavalry were ultimately deployed against Constantinople. Once they realised that they were not being deployed against Karaman, they wanted to return home, but they were threatened with death if they did so.; Spremić, Despot Djuradj, 1994. 402–403.; Mihailović, Konstantin, *The Memoirs of a Janissary*. Transl. Stoltz, Benjamin, Ann Arbor, MI, 1975. 46.

²⁷ “quod gravius longe, imperator Teucorum a Georgio despote petit, ut duo oppida sibi tradat: Golumbac et Smedrovo, oppida munitissima, ex quibus facillimus aditus in Panoniam est Georgius despotus vehementer trepidat.” – Rački, Franjo, “Prilozi za sbirku srbskih i bosanskih listina”, In. *Rad Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti*. Vol. I. Zagreb, 1867, 151–152.

²⁸ Pall, Francisc, “Relazioni di Giovanni di Hunedoara con l’Italia negli anni 1452–1453. I. Documenti inediti preceduti da una studio”, = *Revue des études Sud-Est européennes* 13, 1975, 453–478. 454.

²⁹ Pall, Relazioni, 1975. I. 460.

³⁰ Pall, Relazioni, 1975. I. 468.

of the main objectives was to discuss defence against the Turks.³¹ Unfortunately, there are no surviving sources detailing the results of this assembly, leading us to infer that significant decisions on the matter were likely not reached. One possible explanation for this could be the absence of John Hunyadi, the central figure in the fight against the Turks, who was not present at the gathering. The general-captain only set out from Transylvania to Hungary on September 24, where he concluded a *bonam et optimam* peace with Vladislav II, the Voivode of Wallachia.³² The conflict between them had arisen the previous year due to disputes over the possession of the Transylvanian fortresses of Fogaras (Făgăraş) and Omlás (Amlaş, both Romania) which were part of Vladislaus' Hungarian fiefs but were sought after by Hunyadi.³³ While the dispute between the voivode and Hunyadi would resurface in the following years, the loss of Constantinople temporarily reconciled the two parties.

In October, Hunyadi joined the king, who arrived in Prague with a large entourage, where he was crowned on October 28.³⁴ It was at this time that the Karamanid envoy Ladislaus Posthumous arrived at the court of Prague,³⁵ who reported on the future Turkish invasion³⁶ and came up with a realistic war plan. According to the plan, both the Karamans and the Christians would launch simultaneous attacks against the Ottomans, necessitating a division of their forces. The Christian forces would be composed of three armies: 15–20 thousand Hungarians stationed along the Danube; Skanderbeg with 30 thousand Albanian and Italian soldiers advancing slowly towards Greece; and a fleet of 40–50 galleys patrolling between Thessalonica and Constantinople. The Karamans believed that such a large Christian force could easily defeat the remaining Ottoman army in Europe, offering various potential methods for victory.³⁷ From the Hungarian side, the plan seemed realistic, as an army specified

³¹ Mályusz, Elemér, “A magyar rendi állam Hunyadi korában. I.”, = *Századok* 91, 1957, 47–123. 96. Footnote 220.; Information about the objectives of the assembly can be obtained from a letter by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini: “rex Hungarie in Posonio conventum regni habet; tria ibi tractantur: de modo expellendi latrones, qui regnum infestant, de pace cum cesare firmanda ac de modis inveniendis, per quos Turchorum furor ne ulterius serpat comprimi possit.” – Der Briefwechsel, 1918. 241.

³² *Documenta Romaniae Historica. D. Relații între Țările Române*. Vol. I. (1222–1456). Eds. Pascu, Ștefan – Cihodaru, Constantin – Gündisch, Konrad G. – Mioc, Damaschin – Pervain, Viorica, Bucharest, 1977. 436.

³³ Lukács, Antal, “John Hunyadi and the Duchy of Făgăraş”, In. Dumitran, Ana – Mádly, Loránd – Simon, Alexandru (eds.), *Extincta est lucerna orbis. John Hunyadi and his Time*. Cluj-Napoca, 2009. 211–216.

³⁴ Held, Jospeh, *Hunyadi: Legend and Reality*. New York, 1985. 148.; Elekes, Lajos, *Hunyadi*. Budapest, 1952. 412.

³⁵ Der Briefwechsel, 1918. 348.

³⁶ “(...) orator quidam Caramanni, qui se dicit Turchorum inimicum, quamvis sit ipse Turchus, hortatusque est magnopere cesarem, ut exercitum contra Turchum prepararet, quem venturum prope diem in Hungariam asserit.” – Der Briefwechsel, 1918. 361.

³⁷ DRTA 44–46.

in the plan could be fielded by the Kingdom of Hungary along with its vassals. However, the establishment of the other two armies encountered obstacles. The addition of Italian forces was necessary to supplement the Albanian contingent, and the formation of the galleys could only be provided by the Italian states. The Wars in Lombardy, mentioned earlier, affected almost all the Italian states, including the Kingdom of Naples and Venice, from which the greatest numbers of galleys and soldiers could be expected. No sources have survived regarding the Hungarian reaction to the plan, but indirect information offers some insights. On November 14, 1453, Hunyadi requested permission from the Venetian Senate to travel to Venice and other parts of Italy with a retinue of 300 men.³⁸ While the exact purpose of Hunyadi's visit is not mentioned in the source, later information reveals that it was aimed at fostering peace and reconciliation in Italy with his numerous entourage. The Venetians accepted Hunyadi's request, although the specifics of their response are not documented.³⁹

A few days after the arrival of the Hungarian envoy in Venice, the Venetian Senate made a decision that diverged completely from Hunyadi's plan. In contrast to Hunyadi's peace intentions, they sought to involve the Hungarian captain general in the Wars in Lombardy, as previously attempted by the Milanese-Florentine alliance.⁴⁰ To achieve their goal, they dispatched envoys to Hungary. We will return to the results of this embassy in due course.

After the coronation of King Ladislaus V, John Hunyadi spent an additional two months in Prague and only returned to Hungary towards the end of the year. Although he was no longer the governor, he continued to wield significant power as the chief captain of the country and the manager of royal revenues.⁴¹ Consequently, with the likely consent of the king, in January 1454, to avert the anticipated Turkish attack, he called for a diet where the total mobilization of the country's armed forces was decreed. This plan has been a very heavy burden for the country, and therefore the text of the law itself promises that no such unusual measures will ever be taken in the future, only because of the certainty of a Turkish attack.⁴²

³⁸ "Quod illustri domino Johanni de Hunyad, supremo capitaneo regie Maiestatis in regno Hungarie, qui sicut nobis expeni 281 fecit, personaliter venire disposuit Venetias et ad alie partes Italie, fiat salvusconductus in plena, valida et honorabili forma pro eo cum personis III c., tam equestribus quam pedestribus et omnibus rebus et bonis suis, sicut a nostro dominio requisivit." – Pall, *Relazioni*, 1975. II. 588.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ "(...) et apertissime videatur, quod solum et unicum remedium sit habere aliquem notabilem et dignum favorem ultramontanorum sintque temptanda omnia et specialiter sperare possit de favore illustris domini Jani, gubernatoris regni Hungarie." – Pall, *Relazioni*, 1975. II. 589.

⁴¹ Elekes, Hunyadi, 1952. 422.

⁴² Mályusz, *A magyar rendi állam*, 1957. 97.; *Online Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae. The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*. Ed. Bak, János, Budapest. 2019. [hereinafter *Online Decreta Regni*]

Concurrently with the parliament, the Venetian envoy arrived to engage Hunyadi, seeking to involve the Hungarians in the Wars in Lombardy. The content of the message is discerned from the envoy's instructions: he was to convey to Hunyadi that Venice also held great interest in the Ottoman issue and was prepared to offer assistance against them, contingent upon the resolution of the war.⁴³ Given their awareness that the Hungarians still held a truce with the Turks, they requested their military aid against the Milanese-Florentine alliance.⁴⁴ According to the plan, Hunyadi was initially expected to provide 5,000 to 6,000 cavalry to Italy, with the possibility of this number rising to 10,000 in a subsequent phase, for which substantial payment was pledged.⁴⁵ It is evident that the Venetians did not consider the peace advocated by Hunyadi and the Pope; instead, they aimed to secure Hungarian military support, much like Francesco Sforza had sought against the Venetians earlier. Conceiving the Italian peace as impractical, Hunyadi did not opt for the realization of Karaman's military plan at the Hungarian assembly. Instead, the intention was to raise a sizable army for the country's defence. Ultimately, Hunyadi declined the Venetian offer, citing the impending Turkish threat. Instead, he reiterated his offer to personally travel to Italy with 300 cavalry to mediate peace, now openly expressing this stance, in contrast to the previous source.⁴⁶ The Venetian Senate, however, diplomatically rejected Hunyadi's proposal, citing the Pope's involvement as the mediator and the presence of Venetian envoys in Rome for those negotiations.⁴⁷

At the same time as the Hungarian Diet, the papal legate Johannes de Castiglione arrived in Prague to discuss the crusade with the Hungarian king.⁴⁸ The cardinals and the Pope deemed the assistance of the Hungarians

⁴³ "(...) la conservation del qual felicia et prosperità contra gli perfidi Turchi in vero non manco desideremo che la propria salute e bene del stato nostro. La perfidia et rabia deli qual Turchi ad voler esser fugada et extincta, certa cosa è principalmente a questo esser de bixogno gli favori et forse si de quelle parte come etiam gli nostri, in la qual materia sempre se troveremo per honor de dio et ben de la xristiana religion optimamente disposti. E' vero che al presente nui havemo considerato i termeni e condition dele cose nostre de Lombardia per la guerra che nui havemo, la qual ne è pur molto grave." – Pall, *Relazioni*, 1975. II. 591.

⁴⁴ "Havemo etiamdio considerato che quello reame e parte de lì sono in triegue et sufferentie cum Turchi. Per le qual caxon et azoché piú expedita et liberamente quando fosse el tempo possiamo attender cum ogni nostro poter contra i perfidi Turchi, havessamo gratissimo et in singularissima complacencia che ala excellentia del pref ato signor Janus piacesse personalmente conferirsse agli favori nostri, cum quel più numero de zente piacesse ad la excellentia sua." – *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ "Et dicemo che dapoiché la illustre signoria sua personalmente cum le forze zentedarme soe, per le cose de li occorrente, non vede poter descender a queste parte, ma, cum la persona e cum III c. cavali solamente é contenta venire et interponerse dela pace etc." – Pall, *Relazioni*, 1975. II. 593–594.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Nowak, *Ein Kardinal*, 2011. 142.

particularly significant. This is attested by the memorandum prepared by the cardinals, which formed the basis for the Crusader bull. The text stated that if the papacy only concerned itself with its own safety and did not provide aid to the enemies of the Turks, then apart from the Hungarians, no one else would remain to whom the Turks' opponents could later turn. However, the Hungarians lacked sufficient strength against the Turks, so if they did not receive assistance from the Pope, they would become their adversaries.⁴⁹ Perhaps precisely for this reason, the same memorandum also highlights that the utmost attention should be directed towards the envoys in Hungary.⁵⁰

The legate conveyed the Pope's decision to finance the campaign by opening "both treasuries",⁵¹ granting spiritual indulgences and promising material support in the form of monetary aid. He made significant preparations for organizing the crusade against the Turks and sought the participation of the Hungarians.⁵² The king gave his consent to the crusade, but the final decision required the approval of the Hungarian estates. For this purpose, a meeting was convened in February 1454, which ultimately took place in March in Buda.⁵³ The legate himself was present at this assembly.

The sources do not provide information about the course of the assembly; however, based on the royal propositions and subsequent developments following the deliberations, we can somewhat reconstruct it. What decision was reached regarding the original purpose of the assembly, the Crusade? From the royal propositions, we know that the present estates were to determine how the Hungarians should participate in the Crusade⁵⁴ and with what forces, as well as to select the envoy who would inform the Pope of the decisions made during the deliberations.⁵⁵ Negotiations concerning the Crusade did not yield results in the end. According to the legate, the Hungarians are very zealous about the Turkish issue, but they still have an 11-month truce

⁴⁹ "Nulli populi propinqui hosti remanent, quorum opera et ope uti possumus, nisi forte deus Ungaros interea conservabit, quorum tantillae potentia difficillimum et impossibile esset exprimere inimicum, qui etiam inimici nostri, ut credendum est, habituri sunt, si se ita solos ab omnibus nostris destitutos viderent." – DRTA 66.

⁵⁰ "Quamquam vero in deliberatione publicanda sint nominandi reges ordine suo, ad quos mittetur: Romanorum, Francie, Hispanie, Anglie, tamen oportebit esse accuratiorem legationem ad regem Hungarie missam (...)" – DRTA 67.

⁵¹ "et quod effuso largissime utroque thesauro sibi credito," – Johannes de Zredna Vitéz, 1980. 190.

⁵² DRTA 77–80.

⁵³ Johannes de Zredna Vitéz, 1980. 190.; Mályusz, *A magyar rendi állam*, 1957. 97–98.

⁵⁴ "(...) ut domini nunc presentes de omni intencione eorum ac modo et ordine quibus contra Turcos secundum requisicionem domini pape procedere volunt et possint, dominum Regem ex nunc clare abhinc informent." – Birk, Ernest, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Königin Elisabeth von Ungern und ihres Sohnes König Ladislaus. 1440–1457*. (Quellen und Forschungen zur Vaterländischen Geschichte, Literatur und Kunst). Wien, 1849. 246.

⁵⁵ "(...) ut pro parte Regni Hungariae statim eligantur et nominentur Nuncij qui pro re premissa profecturi sunt (...)" – Ibid.

with them, which is why they are not taking any measures.⁵⁶ The reference to the truce is particularly interesting because neither the King in Prague nor Hunyadi in the previous January diet mentioned the truce, and they were already preparing for the assured Turkish attack.⁵⁷ On February 14, Piccolomini still thought that the Hungarians would send envoys to the Regensburg assembly. Furthermore, even before the start of the March assembly, in a letter dated March 1, Hunyadi writes about raising an army against the Ottomans.⁵⁸ Why could Hunyadi's and the Hungarian estates' standpoint change so quickly? As we know, on March 16, Johannes de Castiglione, the papal legate, first reports of the truce and the passivity of the Hungarians. Thus, it is my assumption that sometime in the first week of March, the Hungarians received information that altered their standpoint. This is reinforced by the fact that during the March assembly, they eventually resorted to imposing taxes, which equated to abandoning the large army scheme that was under preparation January on.⁵⁹ Where could this information have come from? While we cannot provide a definite answer to this question, we can propose a hypothesis based on indirect information that can be incorporated into the subsequent course of events.

A letter dated May 31, 1454, from Đurađ Branković, the Serbian despot, has survived, providing insights into his earlier diplomatic efforts. According to this letter, the despot had previously sent envoys to Hunyadi and other barons in Buda. The envoy met with Hunyadi, who entrusted the envoy with negotiating a ceasefire.⁶⁰ The joint mention of the barons, and Hunyadi in the letter could suggest that Branković dispatched his familiaris to one of the diets, of which there were two held in Buda at the time. The possibility of his attendance at an assembly is supported by the fact that Branković was a Hungarian vassal with significant fiefs in the country, implying that he might have received invitations to attend such assemblies. It's important to note that the despot had considerable influence in the Ottoman court, serving as a communication conduit between the Ottomans and Christians. This role ex-

⁵⁶ "ait Hungaros ad rem Turchorum fervidos esse, quamvis habent inducias cum his ad menses undecim." – Der Briefwechsel, 1918. 457.; This was reported to Piccolomini by the papal nuncio who was present at the negotiations.

⁵⁷ "(...) quomodo perfidissimus imperator Turcorum potentissima paganorum coadunatione solito multiplicata in finale exterminium firma intentione machinatur hoc regnum nostrum Hungarie subintrare" – Online Decreta Regni, 2019. 621.

⁵⁸ Hunyadi, in the name of the King, exempted the town of Pressburg from participating in the campaign against the Turks.; Mályusz, *A magyar rendi állam*, 1957. 118–119.; DF 242 465.

⁵⁹ Mályusz, *A magyar rendi állam*, 1957. 118–119.

⁶⁰ "(...) miseramus Budam ad eandem et alios barones egregium Ludovicum familiarem nostrum specialem, eoque tunc intimaverat nobis magnificus Johannes de Hunyad comes perpetuus Bistriciensis, filius noster, ut laboraremus, qualiter possemus inducere imperatorem Turcarum ad componendas Trewgas pacis cum serenissimo domino Ladislao rege etc. et prefatis dominis baronibus." – Zichy XII. 237–239.

tended beyond the Hungarians, as he facilitated negotiations between various Western Balkan states and the Sultan.⁶¹ Based on the information previously mentioned, the January diet can be excluded. Since news about the existing truce and the Hungarian reluctance to engage in war as a consequence, on March 16, or, it is more likely that in the early days of March Hunyadi received information from Branković's envoy that prompted the Hungarians to abandon the ambitious plan proposed in January and citing the ongoing truce, they declined to participate in the crusade. This information might have pertained to the Sultan's openness to extending the truce established in 1451, which was set to expire in autumn 1454. By adhering to the existing truce, it seems the Sultan would not initiate any military actions in the year 1454. The hypothesis is supported by Hunyadi's message to the Emperor in April that there would be peace in 1454, and that the Sultan was not planning an attack.⁶² This is also confirmed by a letter of 15 May from Oswald Wenzel, mayor of Hermannstadt (Sibiu, Romania) to the city of Vienna, informing the city that Turkish merchants were visiting the fairs in Wallachia in large numbers, from which he concludes that the Ottomans would not attack that year.⁶³

The aim of the Ottoman Sultan with may have been, in my opinion, to conceal his upcoming campaign against Serbia in the summer of 1454. Thus, he disinformed the Serbian despot with the purpose of preventing both him and the Hungarians from preparing for the Turkish attack.

It seems that the information had the desired effect. Trusting in the extension of the ceasefire and the ongoing 11-month truce, the Hungarians declined participation in the organization of the crusade. They may have feared that their involvement in planning the crusade could be interpreted by the Sultan as a breach of the ceasefire, potentially jeopardizing the extension of the treaty. Additionally, due to the negative experiences from previous crusades, they might not have had full confidence in its success. Consequently, the Hungarians did not participate in the Regensburg Reichstag. Hunyadi considered the Turkish issue closed and, leaving the assembly, he moved with his army to the western part of the country to address the depredations of Nabuchodo-

⁶¹ Spremić, Despot Djuradj, 1994. 366, 372–373.

⁶² "Quies hoc anno erit, exinde totis sese conatibus in Christianos agitabunt." – DRTA 132.

⁶³ "(...) auch hab ich vernomen von aienem mein ausspeher dem wolczeglauben ist, der erst vor vier tagen von den lannden übergepirg herkömen ist von der spehung, wy dy tuerken, gleich oder nahent in als grosser menig, als dy Walachen selbst daselbs in den steten der jarmeerkt vnd anderswo vmbvaren kaufmanschaft treiben, darumb, wy wol wir glauben vnd auch hoffen, daz dy türken den frid, der da zwischen in vnd dem wirdigen kunig reich ze Vngernn vnd lannden, dy zu dem künig reich gehören (...)" – *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*. Eds. Zimmermann, Franz – Werner, Carl – Müller, Georg – Gündisch, Gustav. Vols. I–VII. Hermannstadt–Bucharest, 1892–1991. no. 2785. [hereinafter *Urkundenbuch*]

nozor Ankenreuter (Nankenreiter), the mercenary leader of the Cilli family in the western regions of Hungary.⁶⁴

Ultimately, the Hungarian trust in the armistice and its extension proved unfounded. The Sultan, as put by Hunyadi, “breaking the armistice and peace,” laid siege to the Serbian capital, Smederevo, during the summer.⁶⁵ Subsequently, the Hungarian stance underwent a complete transformation. Realizing the deteriorating situation, they fully engaged in organizing the crusade, dispatching envoys to European royal courts, and Hungarian representatives appeared at the Reichstag in Frankfurt and Wiener Neustadt.⁶⁶

Although the Sultan besieged the Serbian capital, he ultimately failed to capture it. Following this, Hunyadi penetrated into Serbia and defeated a significant number of Turkish forces left as rear-guard at Kruševac. Subsequently, he ventured deep into Ottoman territory, plundering and burning the settlements that lay in his path.⁶⁷

Thus, the true reason behind Hungary’s initial lack of participation in organizing the crusade until the attack on Serbia can be attributed to several factors. After 1448, Hunyadi came to realise that the Kingdom of Hungary alone, or with limited foreign assistance, could not defeat the Ottoman Empire. He was sceptical of the feasibility of a complete European alliance, which later proved to be accurate. Therefore, upon receiving information that the Ottomans would not attack in 1454 and given the opportunity to negotiate a new ceasefire, Hunyadi did not risk jeopardizing the potential for a new armistice by openly committing to the crusade.

The news brought by the Serbian despot was most likely part of Ottoman disinformation tactics. These tactics aimed to prevent the unity of Christian countries by generating conflicts or proposing favourable peace offers. Using such tactics, the Ottomans managed to thwart the Christian coalition in events like the 1444 conflict.⁶⁸ Another telling example is their successful prevention of Bosnia’s assistance to Hunyadi’s campaign through the generation of internal conflicts in 1448.⁶⁹ Their role in the war between Raguza and the Duke of St. Sava between 1451 and 1454 serves as yet another example of their strategy in action.⁷⁰ In light of these findings, it can be argued that Hun-

⁶⁴ Nógrády, Árpád, “Csepreg ostroma és Sárvár bevétele 1454-ben”, = *Vasi Szemle* 6, 2010, 685–97.

⁶⁵ DF 258 541. 85.

⁶⁶ Albert Vetési served as an envoy on behalf of the Hungarian king and Hunyadi, traveling to Venice, Rome, and later to the Holy Roman Empire: Fraknoi, Vilmos, *Mátyás király magyar diplomatái*. Budapest, 1898. 36–37.; Hungarian envoys at the Reichstag in Frankfurt and Wiener Neustadt: Setton, *The Papacy*, 1978. 158.

⁶⁷ Spremić, Despot Djurdj, 1994. 419–422.

⁶⁸ Engel, Pál, “János Hunyadi and the Peace ‘of Szeged’”, = *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 47, 1994, 241–57.

⁶⁹ Filipović, Emir O., *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo (1386–1463)*. Sarajevo, 2019. 354–356.

⁷⁰ Cirković, Sima, *Herceg Stefan Vukčić Kosaca i njegovo doba*. Beograd 1964.

gary's initial absence from crusade organization can be attributed to Ottoman misinformation. The Ottomans effectively exploited the uncertainty and hesitation among Christian countries to create divisions and prevent their united response to the threat.

In conclusion, it is worthwhile to thoroughly examine whether the ceasefire of 1451 that Hunyadi referred to was indeed still in effect, or if the Hungarian authorities utilised it as a pretext for their abstention from participating in the crusade. The ceasefire, established on November 24, 1451, for a duration of three years, was brokered between the new Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II and the Hungarian governor John Hunyadi.⁷¹ The pivotal question arises: after King Ladislaus V regained his freedom from Emperor Frederick III at the end of 1452 and Hunyadi resigned from his governorship in January 1453, did the ceasefire continue to be binding? Sima Ćirković's 1971 study postulates that the ceasefire ceased with the King's ascension to the throne and, subsequently, the Hungarians employed it later on merely to substantiate their passivity during the Siege of Constantinople and the period of the crusade.⁷² Ćirković's argument finds support in the resolutions of the early 1454 assembly, and he interprets Hunyadi's wartime decisions in January as integral to the crusade. This analysis is drawn from the realm of public wartime policy and leads to the conclusion that the leaders of Hungary perceived the ceasefire as no longer in effect. While this study does not claim to deliver a definitive answer to the question, it endeavours to re-evaluate Ćirković's hypothesis by incorporating new sources.

Given that the ceasefire was specifically negotiated between Governor John Hunyadi and Sultan Mehmed II, it is plausible to infer that due to the changing leadership, the Hungarian side deemed it necessary to send an envoy to establish whether the new Sultan upheld the pre-existing peace. This decision to dispatch an envoy was not influenced by King Ladislaus V's communication to the Pope on January 16, 1453, affirming the continued ceasefire with the Ottomans.⁷³ On March 6, news reached Ragusa of a Hungarian envoy heading to the Ottoman court, with a request for inclusion or confirmation of the existing or newly established ceasefire. This letter suggests that the Hungarian envoys were sent to Constantinople to either validate the prior peace or negotiate a new one on behalf of the King.

⁷¹ *Acte și fragmente privitoare la istoria românilor*. Vol. III. Ed. Iorga, Nicolae, Bucharest, 1897. 23–27.

⁷² Ćirković, Sima, "Despot Đurađ Branković i ugarsko-turski pregovori 1454. godine", In. *Glas. SANU* 280/15. 1971. 103–112.

⁷³ "[.] potissime tractatus quidam treugarum in nostra absentia cum Teucrorum imperatore habiti, recto nobis impedimento obsistunt, quominus huic nostro desiderio celeriter satisfieri valeat (...)". In the letter, the Hungarian king, referring to the ongoing truce, his recent assumption of the throne, and the disordered state of his realms, declines the Pope's request for assistance to Constantinople.; Johannes de Zredna Vitéz, 1980. 176.

The Hungarian envoy arrived in Constantinople during the Siege of Constantinople. Byzantine historians offer differing interpretations of the negotiations, yet they generally concur that the discussions centred around the ongoing ceasefire. According to Doukas, the Hungarian envoy arrived bearing a message from Hunyadi, which can be summarised as follows:

“I have surrendered the rule to my lord. Henceforth, I am no longer responsible for keeping my promises. Take back the documents which you gave me and return those which I gave you, and do as you like with the king of Hungary”⁷⁴

During the siege, Sphrantzes, who was present in the city, is unaware whether the envoys arrived from the king or from Hunyadi:

“The Hungarians, however, did dispatch an embassy with the following message to the sultan: “Assuming that you had a peace treaty with the City, we also concluded the treaty with you. Otherwise, we will annul our treaty.” The embassy arrived almost a week before the Turks launched their final assault. If they took the City, they planned to give them the following response: “The City is ours now; depart and be our friends or enemies, according to your wishes.” This is exactly what happened, and the Hungarians received the above answer. If, on the other hand, the City had held out, the Turks would have lifted the siege and responded as follows: “Because of our affection for you and because of the terms of our treaty, we have lifted the siege.” The sultan would then have arranged a treaty with us, we heard, because he said repeatedly: “If I prove unable to conquer the City, I will conclude a peace treaty immediately and observe its terms faithfully until the day I die.”⁷⁵

As we can read above, according to Doukas, the truce ended at the initiative of Hunyadi; however, he does not inform us whether any envoy arrived on behalf of the king to negotiate the truce. Sphrantzes only informs us about the negotiations, but he does not mention the final outcome and only suggests that the sultan left the question open.

After this point, for almost a year, our sources are silent about the truce until the report of the Papal legate at the Hungarian Diet. However, after March 1454, we have several sources that prove the existence of the truce: In April, Hunyadi writes to the emperor that there will be peace this year;⁷⁶ In May, Oswald Wenzel writes hoping that the Turks will maintain peace;⁷⁷ in early August, King Ladislaus V writes to Serbian Despot George Brank-

⁷⁴ Doukas, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks: An Annotated Translation of “Historia Turco-Byzantina” 1341–1462*. Transl. Magoulias, Harry J., Detroit, 1975. 216–217.

⁷⁵ *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire: A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes, 1401–1477*. Transl. Philippides, Marios, Amherst, MA, 1980. 73.

⁷⁶ DRTA 132.

⁷⁷ Urkundenbuch, no. 2785.

ović about the violated truce.⁷⁸ On November 11, in his letter to Emperor Frederick III, Hunyadi interprets the Turkish attack on Serbia as a breach of the truce.⁷⁹ Then, at the 1455 Reichstag in Wiener Neustadt, the Hungarian envoy explains the earlier passivity with the existence of the armistice.⁸⁰ Based on these sources, we can assume that the truce did not cease. But then why do the sources remain silent about it for almost a year, and why did they assume the Turkish attack until March 1454? In my opinion, we can outline two possible explanations:

First, the Hungarian envoys received a positive response from the sultan about maintaining the truce. However, upon receiving news of the fall of Constantinople, learning about ultimatums sent to Moldavia and Serbia, and hearing reports from the Karamanid envoy about Turkish attacks, the Hungarians started preparing for a Turkish assault. The breach of the truce was not unprecedented: in 1444, Hunyadi and the Hungarian king broke the peace with the Turks, so their fear was not unfounded.⁸¹ Then, when Branković brought favourable news in March 1454 that the sultan would uphold the truce and not attack, they completely halted preparations aimed at repelling an attack.

The other possible explanation is that the sultan did not respond to the Hungarian envoy's request, leaving the Hungarians uncertain. As a result, the Hungarians expected an attack, which lasted until March 1454.

Summary

According to the hypothesis posited in this paper, the Hungarians ceased their military preparations due to Ottoman disinformation. Consequently, they did not provide a positive response to the papal legate and abstained from participating in the Regensburg imperial assembly. Additionally, for the same reason, they revoked the mobilization order of January 1454. The Ottomans only partially achieved their objectives in this regard. The Hungarian abstention significantly obstructed the formation of the Crusade, although their attack on Serbia in 1454 did not attain its goals due to Hunyadi's swift response.

To substantiate my hypothesis, an examination of Hungarian diplomatic actions, particularly those of John Hunyadi, subsequent to the fall of Constantinople, was conducted, which effectively illustrated the impact of Ottoman disinformation. Finally, I re-evaluated Čirković's assertion that the

⁷⁸ Johannes de Zredna Vitéz, 1980. 196.

⁷⁹ "(...) dominus et imperator Turcorum violata fide sua paganissima ruptaque truga et pace (...)": DF 258 541. 85.

⁸⁰ "nostris gentibus (...) antea, propter indutias quas cum Turcis habebamus, non licuisset pugnare, nunc autem, quando eas ultimus nuper clausit dies, libenter auxilium et operam nostram pollicemur, (...)" – *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*. Vol. IV. (1453–1476). Ed. Iorga, Nicolae, Bucharest, 1915. 109.

⁸¹ Engel, János Hunyadi, 1994. 241–57.

truce established by Hunyadi and Sultan Mehmed II in 1451 ceased with the ascension of King Ladislaus V. Based on my assumption, the truce continued to persist and was not merely invoked by the Hungarians later to rationalise their passivity.