

The Eastern Policy of the House of Habsburg (1400s-1500s): Walachia and Moldavia between the Later Crusades and the Ottoman Empire

General Summary. "The Oriental policy of the Habsburgs" is a common formula, especially since the *Thirteen Year War Long War* (1593-1606), seldom used however in respect to the years prior to 1526-1529 (the fall of medieval Hungary and the first Ottoman siege of Vienna). By their status of heads of the "free Christian world" (Frederick III was crowned emperor just a year before the fall of Byzantium) and (co-) king of Hungary (a title which the kings in office too had to accept), the Habsburgs had begun their eastern involvement much earlier. In spite of the impressive documentary funds, little attention has been paid to this subject (approximately 1150 unedited sources pertaining only to the relations between Walachia, Moldavia and the Habsburgs have been identified in European archives, a figure comparable to that of all known sources for the policies of the Walachias in that same period). The project's aim is to study and to edit, in partnership with international partner, this increasing documentary mass, which significantly alters the perspectives of East-Central European and Romanian studies. Previously the subject has received limited attention in Austrian and German studies. Hungarian and Polish researches dealt with it within the limits in which the 'Habsburg data' was able to strengthen or to partially infirm old coordinates. On the Romanian level, although since the 1930, attention had been drawn towards the subject and its importance, prior even to the reign of Peter Rare or, in particular, prior to the years of Michael the Brave, the subject – as a whole – was largely neglected. The eastern role of the Habsburgs prior to 1526 was recently reassessed, as a number of the constants in Vienna's Ottoman and Romanian policies began to emerge, in relation to the better studied 1800s and even 1900s. Hence, researches within the project – though focused on the 15th and 16th centuries, might go as far as the general Western peace of 1648 that triggered a major change in the general policy of the Habsburgs and implicitly also in their Oriental policy.

Extended Summary. "The Oriental policy of the Habsburgs" is a common formula, especially since the *Thirteen Year War* (Jan Paul Niederkorn's synthesis of 1993 is relevant in this respect), seldom used however in respect to the years prior to 1526-1529, prior to the fall of medieval Hungary and the first Ottoman siege of Vienna (a partial nonetheless, because the book focuses on the relation between Matthias Corvinus and Frederick III, is Karl Nehring's thesis of 1975). By their status of heads of the "free Christian world" (Frederick III was crowned emperor just a year before the fall of Byzantium) and (co-) king of Hungary (a title which the kings in office too had to accept), the Habsburgs had begun their eastern involvement much earlier. In spite of the impressive documentary funds, little attention has been paid to the subject (approximately 1150 unedited sources pertaining only to the relations between Walachia, Moldavia and the Habsburgs have been identified since 2003 by Ioan-Aurel Pop and Alexandru Simon in the archives of Bratislava, Budapest, Milan, Rome, Venice and Vienna; a figure comparable to that of all known sources for the policies of the Walachias during that same period). This increasing documentary mass significantly alters the perspectives of East-Central European and Romanian studies (we draw the attention to the recent responses of Hermann Wiesflecker, Manfred Holleger, László Veszprémy and Ierban Papacostea, especially over the last three years). Previously the subject has received limited attention in Austrian and German studies (Franz Babinger's notes, Johann Groblächer's, Gustave Alef's or Hermann Wiesflecker's studies focused their attention on the Habsburg-Muscovite and Habsburg-Ottoman relations). Hungarian and Polish researches dealt with the subject within the limits in which the 'Habsburg data' was able to strengthen or to partially infirm old coordinates (one must therefore single out the older studies, collected and translated in the 1990s, by András Kubinyi and Krzysztof Baczkowski, to which we can add the recent works of Jan Smolucha, Natalia Nowalkowska, Géza Páffy or Pál Fodor, Gábor Agoston and Géza Dávid, the latter three in particular from an Ottoman perspective). On the Romanian level, although since the 1930 (we recall, in chronological order, the notes and studies of Ilie Minea, then Teodora Simionescu and Costin Fenean, in the 1970s-early 1980s, and of Ileana Cazan, in the 1990s), attention had been drawn towards the subject's importance, prior even to the reign of Peter Rare or, in particular, prior to the years of Michael the Brave, the subject was largely neglected (it should be noted that even the main studies on the relations of the latter two with Vienna are at least seventy years old and belong to Ion Sârbu, Ioan Ursu and Alexandru Ciordanescu; to which we should add some of Matei Cazacu's and Teodora Andreescu's notes). The eastern role of the Habsburgs prior to 1526 was recently reassessed (the publication, since 1989, of the documents on Maximilian I in the prestigious *Re-gesta Imperii* series, as well as Johannes Helmrath's and Norman Housley's studies on the relations between the German *Reichstag* and the crusade, played a major part in this process). A number of the constants in Vienna's Ottoman and Romanian policies began to emerge (in these matters, we turned to the documents and studies published by Florina Ciure, Ovidiu Cristea, Iulian-Mihai Damian, Cristian Luca or Adrian Magina), in relation to the better studied 1800s and even 1900s (in this respect, in reference namely to Vienna's relations to the Saxon community of Transylvania and Vienna's oriental Church policies, we mention the works of Ioan Cârja, Loránd Mádly and Attila Varga). Therefore researches within the project stretch only until 1606 and the peace of Zsivatorok (by which the Ottoman sultan acknowledged the Habsburg emperor, for the first time, as his imperial equal), but they could well go until the general Western peace of 1648 that triggered a major change in the general policy of the Habsburgs and implicitly also in their Oriental policy (both as limitation and as prospect, for future studies, we mention that each major archival unite of Vienna relevant for this topic consists of 550 folios, in average, a year, after the year 1648, and that most of these documents appear to be still unedited or – at times – even unknown in Austrian scientific circles too).