

**The 1442 Ottoman Expeditions to Transylvania and Wallachia:
A Source-Critical Inquiry
(Abstract)**

Emanuel Constantin ANTOCHE*

Keywords: Jean Hunyadi, Valachie, Mezid bey, Chehâbeddîn pacha, beylerbey de Roumélie, Iron Gate of Transylvania, Sibiu, Ialomița, Chalcocondyle, Thuróczi, Bonfini, Waleran de Wavrin, Ilie Minea, Nicolae Iorga, Tamás Pálosfalvi, John Jefferson.

The narrative sources recounting the itinerary of the Ottoman expedition to Transylvania in March 1442 – particularly the chronicles of Chalcocondyles, Thuróczi, and Bonfini, as well as the account of Waleran de Wavrin – fail to provide sufficiently precise information to determine the exact location where Mezid Bey's troops were annihilated by John Hunyadi's army during the battle of 22 March 1442. Documentary sources, especially donation charters, are equally unhelpful in this regard. Some historians have situated the battle near Sibiu (Szeben, Hermannstadt), while others suggest it took place at "Waskapu", which appears to correspond to the Poarta de Fier a Transilvaniei (Iron Gate of Transylvania) mountain pass. More recent Hungarian, Romanian, and American scholarship attributes this specific identification to Ottokár Székely, who strongly advocated for the latter location in 1921. However, this view did not take into account the earlier contributions of Nicolae Iorga, especially his *Studii și documente cu privire la Istoria Românilor*, vol. III, *Fragmente de cronici și știri despre cronicari* (Bucharest, 1901), and *Geschichte des rumänischen Volkes im Rahmen seiner Staatsbildungen*, vol. I (Gotha, 1905). The second part of this study concerns the location of the Battle of Ialomița, fought on 2 September 1442. Once again, the works referenced by Nicolae Iorga and Ilie Minea – particularly *Vlad Dracul și vremea sa*, published in "Cercetări istorice", vol. 6, no. 1 (1928) – prove to be essential. These sources have been overlooked by some Romanian authors, as well as by internationally recognized historians such as Colin Imber, Tamás Pálosfalvi, and John Jefferson. This research concludes with a critical analysis of the aforementioned historians' interpretations concerning the Ottoman expeditions of 1442, highlighting the importance of revisiting overlooked primary sources and earlier historiography.

* Membre du GRHis (Groupe de Recherche d'Histoire – EA 3831 de l'Université de Rouen-Normandie) ; Membre associé du CETOBaC (Centre d'études turques, balkaniques et centrasiatiques du EHESS – CNRS) ; e-mail : constantin.antoche@univ-rouen.fr.