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IN THE SUMMER OF 1466:
THE ATHONITE RISE OF STEPHEN III THE GREAT AND
THE OTTOMAN FALL OF
ATHLETE GEORGE CASTRIOTA SKANDERBEG
(Summary)

Keywords: Mehmed II, Mara Branković, Skanderbeg, Stephen III of Moldavia, Mount Athos, crusading, patronage.

In 1466, within less than three months, Stephen III of Moldavia took under his patronage the Monasteries of Zographu (May 10) and Chilandar (July 27), the monastic symbols of Bulgaria and Serbia on Mount Athos. The Holy Mountain was equally a pillar of anti-Roman resistance, a fortress open to Latin protectorate (*e.g.* that of Alfonso V of Aragon, king of Naples and the ally of John Hunyadi) and an Orthodox space of negotiations between the Catholics and the Muslim Turks (*e.g.* during the talks between Venice and the Porte, mediated by Mara Branković, the daughter of despot George and the widow of Sultan Murad II). In 1466, three years had elapsed since the head of the last Christian king in the Balkans, Stephen Tomasević of Bosnia, had fallen at the feet of Mehmed II (1463), and seven had passed since the same sultan, raised by his step-mother, Mara Branković, had taken Smederevo, the capital of the Despotate of Serbia (1459). In 1466, John Hunyadi's "heir" as the athlete of Christendom, the Albanian Skanderbeg, has about to collapsed in front of Mehmed. Murad II's son seemed on the verge of triumph against the crusader collation formed after the start of the war between the Ottoman Republic and the Republic of Saint Mark in autumn 1463. In fact, after the "crusader miracle" of Belgrade (1456), the power of the Turk had been harmed only twice: by John Hunyadi's, Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, who re-took Jajce, Bosnia's capital, on Christmas day 1463, and by Stephen of Moldavia, who re-won Chilia, at the Danube Mounds, in February 1463.

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In Stephen's history, 1466 takes a secondary position in relation to the "mile-stone/key years" 1473 (the great campaign in Wallachia), 1475 (the battle of Vaslui), 1484 (the fall of Moldavia's harbours) or 1497 (the battle in the Forrest of Cosmin), although attention was drawn to 1466 (the year of the foundation of the Putna Monastery) that naturally connected the conquest of Chilia (1465) "to" the battle of Baia (1467). Either out of excessive interpretative prudence, or because an expansion of the research coordinates weakened desired interpretations, 1466, even when it received the due attention, was often viewed outside of the chronological framework and of the regional political context.