

trophic defeat suffered there by the Hungarians took place without Ferdinand's having the slightest idea that Louis was contemplating fighting a decisive engagement.

Thus, Ferdinand's sincere intention to assist Hungary was thwarted by a breakdown in communications between the archduke and King Louis. Faced with religious problems at the German diet, the threat of peasant uprisings in his own lands, and his brother's requests for troops, Ferdinand dealt with what he thought were more urgent matters before turning to the Hungarian problem. His decision to postpone consideration of measures to counter the Turkish invasion was an unfortunate one, but, given the prevailing situation, it appeared to be a logical choice to make. The paucity of details and lack of urgency in Louis' infrequent communications to Ferdinand while he was in Speyer led both the archduke and the estates to believe that there was still plenty of time to send adequate aid to the Hungarian king. Judging from the information which Ferdinand had received from Hungary after the beginning of June, one must say that the Hungarian army gave the appearance of being able to fight at least a delaying action against the Moslems until adequate help came from the west. Ferdinand had received no indication from the Hungarian monarch that he was planning to engage in open battle with the Turks before the arrival of troops from abroad. Whether or not the help promised by Austria and by the Holy Roman Empire could have altered the course of the Battle of Mohács remains open to question. However, by neither revealing his intentions to Ferdinand nor overriding the impetuosity of some of his nobles, Louis consigned his nation to certain defeat.

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### COMMENTS

Dr. Fichtner's excellent outline of the factors responsible for Ferdinand's absence from the Battle of Mohács is self-explanatory. A few unknown details supplied by the author are particularly worthy of our attention. Foremost are those concerned with the breakdown of communications between Louis and Ferdinand that occurred before the celebrated battle. As the literature reveals, the immediacy or seriousness

of the Turkish threat was not fully comprehended by the Hungarian monarch. However, it may well be asked whether Louis' moderate confidence was not based on assurances from John Zápolya and his supporters of assistance against Suleiman? For, indeed, the magnates opposed to the expansion of Habsburg influence apparently thought in terms of a total Hungarian military or diplomatic effort to contain or, at least, reach a meaningful accommodation with the Porte. This assumption is partly confirmed by the uncharacteristic moderation of Louis' dispatches to Ferdinand and the long-term requests for aid submitted to the *Reichstag* by the Hungarian emissaries present at Speyer. Because of Ferdinand's constant concern over an Ottoman offensive against Hungary, it would be impossible to account for his other military actions listed by Dr. Fichtner in terms other than a conviction that Hungary was relatively safe from a major Turkish attack in 1526. The suddenness, speed, and magnitude of the Turkish military action came as a shock to Ferdinand and presumably also Louis. However, the Hungarians, as Chancellor Bródarics suggested, could have averted a head-on encounter. Louis' decision to follow his "more intemperate nobles" is not surprising *per se*, considering the monarch's well-known stupidity. The fact that advice contrary to Bródarics' could have been given and followed is, however, far more significant as it probably reflects the breakdown of the "grand coalition" against the Turk.

These arguments in no ways alter Dr. Fichtner's fundamental contentions or conclusions. They are merely intended to encourage further investigation of the entire range of Hungarian-German and Hungarian-Turkish relations with a view to providing a fuller explanation of many obscure aspects of Hungarian history in the period under discussion.

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