

ROMANIAN PERCEPTIONS OF TÜRKIYE AND ITS ROLE IN THE BLACK SEA (NOVEMBER 1940-JUNE 1941)

George-Daniel UNGUREANU, PhD

“General Grigore Constandache” Central Archive Depository-Pitești

DOI: 10.55535/RMT.2023.4.28

In November 1940, the direct German-Soviet bilateral contacts revealed some substantial differences of interest, mainly concerning the Black Sea basin and the Balkan Peninsula. The relations between Germany and the USSR would become increasingly cold and difficult, culminating in the launch of Operation Barbarossa, on 22 June 1941. The intensification of the German-Soviet differences was seen as an encouraging development by both Romania and Türkiye, as both Pontic states had been subject to expansionist tendencies of the USSR, manifested in various forms and, in Türkiye’s case, lacking concrete results.

Our article briefly presents Romanian perceptions of Türkiye’s importance and conduct in the region, within the context of a shrinking Romania that had become part of the Berlin-Rome Axis system, while Türkiye was striving to maintain its neutrality, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Among the sources we consulted, a number of documents from Romanian diplomatic and military archives ought to be mentioned.

Keywords: sources of information; assessments; systems of alliances; agreements; balance of power;

INTRODUCTION

November 1940 was a crucial stage in the deteriorating trend of German-Soviet relations, due to the increasingly deep and obvious divergences between the two Great Totalitarian Powers, signatories of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, mainly concerning the area of South-Eastern Europe and the Black Sea basin.

The causes of the German-Soviet rupture lie both in the ambiguous delimitation of spheres of influence in Southeast Europe on 23/24 August 1939 (Constantiniu, 2002, p. 76) and in the political and military developments of the ten months following this arrangement, which led both totalitarian powers to pay increasing attention to the Balkan Peninsula and areas adjacent to it from mid-1940 onwards (Ibid., pp. 113-140).

ROMANIA AND TÜRKIYE UNDER THE IMPACT OF GERMAN-SOVIET COLLABORATION (AUGUST 1939-NOVEMBER 1940)

The military and political developments between August 1939 and June 1940 led to Romania’s complete international isolation, a situation that was taken advantage of by the neighbouring revisionist states, starting with the USSR itself which, after the occupation of Basarabia and other Romanian territories, following the final notes of 26-27 June 1940, continued its hostile conduct through numerous border incidents and by encouraging Bulgarian and Hungarian revisionism against Romania. Under these conditions, the Bucharest government, led by King-Dictator Carol II, desperately sought the protection of Germany and Italy, which was eventually obtained on 30 August 1940, at the price of new territorial concessions, this time in favour of Hungary (about 2/5 of Transylvania) and Bulgaria (Southern Dobrogea/Quadrilater). The collaboration with the Berlin-Rome Axis was to be accentuated and accelerated after the abdication of Charles II and the establishment of Ion Antonescu’s regime (5/6 September 1940), with the entry of German troops into Romania (10 October 1940) and the accession of the Romanian state to the Tripartite Pact (23 November 1940).

The new trend in Soviet foreign policy, inaugurated in August 1939 also affected Türkiye’s relations with the USSR, which cooled considerably due to the Moscow government’s demands regarding the status of the Straits, which it sought to take

control of, by installing military bases in their vicinity (Ekrem, 1993, pp. 98-103). After Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu's long and not very fruitful visit to Moscow (25 September-17 October 1939), Türkiye concluded an alliance pact with Britain and France and significantly reduced its trade with Germany, a trend that was reversed, but at a slower pace, from the summer of 1940 (Özden, 2013, pp. 94-96). Towards the Italo-Greek war, which began on 28 October 1940, the Republic of Türkiye maintained its neutrality, but sometimes hinted that it might intervene to help Greece, its ally in the Balkan Pact, if Bulgaria became involved against it (AMFAR, vol. 61/1940, pp. 408-409; RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, pp. 3-5, 13).

In the autumn of 1940, Great Britain regarded the USSR as a future ally against Germany and showed a growing interest in widening German-Soviet differences in the Balkans and the Black Sea area, including by encouraging aggressive action by the USSR against Romania in the Danube Delta (Constantiniu, 2002, p. 141). As early as July 1940, Adolf Hitler had realised the possibility of British-Soviet collusion in Balkan affairs, which contributed to the decision to attack the USSR (Ibid., pp. 114-115).

After the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact, with Italy and Japan, on 27 September 1940, Hitler raised the question of bringing the Soviet Union into this structure, on condition that Moscow gave up its expansionist ambitions in the Balkans, contenting itself with the Persian Gulf area, Iran and, perhaps, the Indian sub-continent; as regards the Straits, Germany wanted to liberalize traffic through them and a guarantee for the integrity of Türkiye by the the founders of the Tripartite Pact and USSR (Duroselle, 2006, p. 219) In this context, political and diplomatic relations between Romania and Türkiye entered, in September 1940, on a clear downward slope, the essential cause being the fact that the two states belonged from then to different alliance systems. Consequently, on 23 September 1940, the level of mutual diplomatic representation was lowered, by mutual agreement, from that of embassy to that of legation (AMFAR, vol. 61/1940, p. 384; Calafeteanu coord., 2004, p. 329). On 28 September and 13 October 1940, Romania's Foreign Minister, Mihail Sturdza, and even the head of state, General Ion Antonescu, made categorical statements to the effect that the Romanian state had denounced the Balkan Pact concluded on 9 February 1934 (Calafeteanu coord., 2003, p. 330). The entry of German troops into Romania in October 1940 led to the appearance of unfavourable comments in the Turkish press, some of which were repeated on Radio Ankara (AMFAR, vol. 61/1940, pp. 402-406).

On the economic (commercial) level, however, there were quite substantial common interests, Türkiye needing Romanian kerosene and Romania being interested, first of all, in the procurement of raw materials for the textile industry (cotton and wool), but especially in the continuation and safety of traffic across the Straits (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1997, doc. 13, pp. 342-360). In the Council of Ministers meeting of 8 April 1941, General Ion Antonescu made a more general observation, related to the treatment of foreign nationals and the possible repercussions or reprisals in the event of abuses by the Romanian authorities: *"We have Romanians in Türkiye, in Spain, in France. Our fellow citizens are there trading and it would mean that they would be picked up in 24 hours and ruined, they and their families; judge all these things!"* (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1999, doc. 4, pp. 99-11).

According to the information available to the Romanian specialised military structures, in mid-November 1940 Türkiye had about 1,000,000 people under arms, most of them in Thrace (the European part of Türkiye). The maximum number of people able for mobilisation amounted to 1,200,000, while the permanent army forces comprised about 10,000 officers, 20,000 non-commissioned officers and 150,000 troops respectively (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 348/1940, p. 3). The population of Türkiye at the outbreak of the Second World War was 17,369,000 (Kyçyku, 2005, p. 95). The Turkish Army included, in peacetime, 25 infantry divisions (at mobilisation, 40), 4 mixed mountain brigades, 3 cavalry divisions (at mobilisation, 5), 2 fortification divisions and 1 mechanised division, with a total of about 400-500 battle tanks, 480 aircrafts and 16 warships with a total tonnage of 40.000 dwt (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 348/1940, pp. 4-5).

15 DECISIVE DAYS: 12-26 NOVEMBER 1940

In mid-October 1940, Nazi Germany's Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, invited his Soviet counterpart, Vyacheslav M. Molotov, to visit Berlin (Duroselle, 2006, p. 219). The visit took place on 12 and 13 November 1940, when Molotov held talks with both his German counterpart and Adolf Hitler. The discussions highlighted the differences and diverging interests between the two sides. Thus, the hosts sought the USSR's adherence to the Tripartite Pact in counterpart for territorial gains in the India-Iran area, to which they later added the exclusion of the Black Sea states from the Straits navigation (Duroselle, 2006, p. 220). In return, Molotov emphasised Soviet interest in Finland and especially in the Balkan Peninsula and the Black Sea basin, making Bulgaria the epicenter of Soviet claims due to the strategic position

of this small Slavic state as a bridgehead in the Balkan Peninsula and a gateway to the Straits (Constantiniu, 2002, pp. 144-154). The Soviet note sent to Germany on 26 November 1940, in which Moscow reiterated its previous demands concerning Finland, the concessions on the island of Sakhalin and especially in the Balkans and the Black Sea, was to remain unanswered by Germany (Jelavich, 2000, pp. 211-212).

The second half of November 1940 marked a defeat for Soviet diplomacy in the battle for predominant influence in Bulgaria. Thus, on 30 November, the Bulgarian government declined Soviet proposals for a mutual aid pact, communicated on 18 November by Molotov to the Bulgarian minister in Moscow and reiterated on 25 November by the diplomat Arkady Aleksandrovich Sobolëv, who had arrived on a visit to Sofia (Duroselle, 2006, p. 221). The Soviet offer made to Bulgaria on 25 November 1940 included the promise of territorial gains for Türkiye up to the Enos-Midia line. (Ilchev, 2019, p. 557; see also: Miller, 1975, p. 34, Biagini, 2005, p. 125).

On 26 November 1940, the head of the British government, Winston Churchill, told the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, that Britain's aim in South-Eastern Europe was for the Turkish government to declare that any action by Germany through Bulgaria against Greece, or any action by Bulgaria against Greece, would be followed by a declaration of war by Türkiye (Miller, 1975, p. 43). In order to avoid such a situation, the government in Ankara proposed to the government in Sofia the conclusion of a neutrality and non-aggression pact between Türkiye and Bulgaria, but without success (Ibid.).

A military intelligence bulletin for November 1940 reported a state of great unrest in Türkiye, particularly in the second half of the month, as a result of the international situation and the application of exceptional military measures such as the imposition of a curfew in several districts of Thrace and western Anatolia, troop movements to the west, mobilisation of contingents and the introduction of anti-aircraft camouflage (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 345/1940, pp. 579-584).

Romanian military documents from the mid-1940s and 1941 consistently underlined the consistency of the military and financial aid granted by Great Britain to Türkiye (Ibid., file no. 315/1940, passim.). The Turkish-British collaborative relations aroused suspicion and even unease in some Romanian circles. Thus, on 22 November 1940, the Romanian consul in Beirut, Paul Negulescu, quoted a series of allegations from some Turkish circles in the future capital of Lebanon, according to which, in the event of the arrival of German beyond the Danube (from Romania),

the British air force would react with massive attacks directed towards the Ploiești-Câmpina oil area, using Turkish airports and airfields as launching bases (AMFAR, vol. 61/1940, p. 433).

THE WINTER OF 1940-1941 AND BULGARIA'S ACCESSION TO THE AXIS

The violent and anarchic actions undertaken by the Iron Guard arm squads towards the end of November 1940 led to the appearance in the columns of some Turkish newspapers of a series of articles highly critical of the realities and developments in Romania, in particular of the new domestic and foreign policy of the Romanian state. In this respect, the newspapers *Tan* (The News), *Yeni Sabah* (New Morning), *Vatan* (The Homeland) and even the government newspaper *Ulus* (The State) stood out (AMFAR, vol. 61/1940, pp. 448-463; RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 345/1940, pp. 603-606).

At the end of November 1940, the mood in Türkiye was evolving towards a certain calm, according to the information available to the Romanian specialised services, two factors being at the origin of this situation, namely the discussions of the German ambassador von Papen with Şükrü Saraçoğlu and, respectively, the postponement of Bulgaria's accession to the Tripartite Pact (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 345/1940, p. 599). The tendency to calm the general atmosphere in Türkiye was to continue throughout December, in parallel with another tendency, manifested at the level of diplomacy and the press, towards a certain reconciliation with neighbouring Bulgaria (Ibid., pp. 679-684).

A political-diplomatic event which aroused some comment in various circles in the Balkan (and also other) states was the conclusion of a friendship pact between Hungary and Yugoslavia on 12 December 1940. At the government meeting on 13 December 1940, the last meeting he attended as foreign minister, in reply to a question from Ion Antonescu, Mihail Sturdza blamed the previous day's act on influence from Great Britain, the USSR and the USA through Türkiye (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1997, doc. 33, p. 626). The Romanian military attaché in Ankara, famous colonel Traian Teodorescu, observed, in connection with the same event, the tendency of Romania's isolation on a regional level, urging, consequently, to maintain ties with Greece and Türkiye, despite belonging to different alliance systems, since the two mentioned South-Eastern European states were characterized as anti-Slavic (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 345/1940, pp. 655-657). There was also the initiative to set up a Romanian consulate in the Turkish town of Trabzon (old

Trebizond), located on the Anatolian Black Sea coast; following this request, Hüseyin Numan Menemencioglu, the general secretary in the Turkish Foreign Ministry (future, head of Turkish diplomacy), confidentially communicated on 5 January 1941 to the Romanian diplomat, Al. Télémaque that the Ankara government had decided not to approve the establishment of any new consulate in Trabzon, in order not to irritate the USSR, suggesting the establishment of a Romanian consulate in Smyrna/Izmir (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, p. 4).

On 9 January, the Turkish Minister in Bucharest, Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver, was received in audience by the Romanian diplomatic official Gheorghe Davidescu. The Turkish diplomat inquired about the possibility of making the Romanian railway network available to German troops for transport south of the Danube, receiving a negative reply, accompanied by the assessment that such an act would not be directed against Türkiye, “*which is valued by the German factor*”. Suphi Tanrıöver launched into a Russophobic and anti-Soviet tirade, beginning with historical examples, continuing with data on the situation of the Turkish-speaking populations of Central Asia and the Caucasus, and concluding that Türkiye had a vital interest in the defeat of the USSR, which prompted the Ankara government to faithfully fulfill its economic commitments to Germany (Ibid., pp. 8-9).

As far as trade relations were concerned, there were some dysfunctions linked to delays in cotton deliveries from Türkiye and disagreements over the method of payment, to which the Romanian side responded by reducing oil deliveries to Türkiye (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1997, doc. 33, pp. 604-605). At the government meeting of 9 January 1941, the ministers took note of the fact that Turkish wool had arrived in Constanta, while cotton was on its way to the country (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1998, doc. 1, p. 5).

Meanwhile, the *Barbarossa* Plan for attacking the Soviet Union had been perfected in Berlin, with the consequence that German efforts to control south-eastern Europe were stepped up. Thus, on 13 January 1941, the Nazi dictator met King Boris III of Bulgaria at Berghof and asked him to join the Tripartite Pact and become directly involved in the war against Greece; the Bulgarian sovereign, renowned for his ability, objected that Bulgaria was not prepared for such politico-military action, citing the possibility of reprisals from the USSR and Türkiye (de Launay, 1988, pp. 207-208). Four days later, V.M. Molotov expressed his dissatisfaction with the freezing of Soviet-German political contacts after the exchange of notes on 25/26 November 1940 to Ambassador Friedrich-Werner von der Schulenburg, who reiterated Soviet views on Bulgaria and the Straits, considered “*part of the USSR’s*

security zone”, which should have ruled out the idea of another “*foreign military presence there*” (Constantiniu, 2002, p. 165). At the same time, Great Britain urged Türkiye to declare war on Italy (which had attacked Greece), but also on Germany, in case the Reich sent its troops to Bulgaria or Yugoslavia. The government in Ankara rejected these suggestions in the context of visits to Türkiye by Lord Halifax and Sir John Dill, citing its own military shortcomings and the ambiguous attitude of the Soviet Union (Özden, 2013, p. 97). British diplomatic efforts were also supported by the administration in Washington DC. On 21 January, US Colonel Donovan, the US President’s special envoy, held talks with King Boris of Bulgaria, but he did not make any categorical promises (de Launay, 1988, p. 208).

In this context, at the beginning of 1941, the Turkish authorities resorted to massing troops near the Bulgarian border and declaring or maintaining a state of emergency in some districts in the west of the country (Ekrem, 1993, pp. 116-117).

On 15 January 1941, following a meeting with Şükrü Saraçoğlu, the Romanian diplomat E. Krupenski reported that the head of Turkish diplomacy was satisfied with the reassuring explanations offered by the German ambassador, but that Türkiye could not renounce certain military measures. The diplomat E. Krupenski also mentioned that other (unspecified) sources had reportedly told the Greek military attaché that Türkiye would join Britain in the war if German troops entered Bulgaria. At the end of the same telegram, E. Krupenski mentioned the assessment of foreign military circles in Ankara that Türkiye would attack Bulgaria only in the event of substantial British military support, estimated at several hundred tanks and 1,000 fighter planes, with the aim of pre-emptively taking it out of action before German troops crossed the Danube (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 10-11). A few days later, the repeated broadcast by Radio Ankara of a news report on the concentration of German troops in Romania was to provoke considerable dissatisfaction and concern in Türkiye, and this topic was commented upon by the main newspapers (Ibid., p. 17). After another meeting with Şükrü Saraçoğlu on 27 January 1941, the Romanian diplomat E. Krupenski concluded that the Turkish Foreign Minister was considering a Turkish-Bulgarian collaboration to prevent German military penetration of the Balkan Peninsula, which he attributed to the ‘usual optimism’ of the Turk minister; at the same time, the head of Turkish diplomacy seemed convinced that Yugoslavia would defend itself, in the event of a German attack (Ibid., p. 19).

In the first half of February 1941, in the context of the imminent rupture of relations with Great Britain, the government of Ion Antonescu also took the measure of interrupting navigation between Romanian and Turkish ports (Ekrem, 1993,

p. 114). Imports of cotton from Türkiye continued to be difficult, a fact also recorded in the meeting of the Council of Ministers of 6 February 1941 (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1998, doc. 7, pp. 130-169). A week later, after Minister Nicolae Dragomir had presented some data regarding the delivering of wool and cotton quantities ordered from Türkiye, General Ion Antonescu said: *“As far as Türkiye is concerned, the situation is getting more and more complicated, because of the war in the Balkans and the Turkish-British links. So we must expect that this source of raw materials will also cease”* (Ibid., doc. 11, p. 237). In the next government meeting, held the very next day, after expressing his exasperation at the continuing delays in the issue of cotton imports from Türkiye, Ion Antonescu also referred to the problem of the safety of ships, ordering that ships under the Turkish flag in the port of Constanța be detained until the return home of Romanian ships sent to Turkish ports; for such missions, considered risky, it was recommended to send ships of lower quality and value (Ibid, doc. 12, pp. 268; 271-272).

On 15 February, Suphi Tanrıöver was received by Ion Antonescu. During the meeting, the Turkish diplomat insisted on the resumption of Romanian-Turkish navigation links, reiterating a series of firm security guarantees for Romanian ships. In reply, Ion Antonescu justified the Romanian government’s gesture by circulating information on the preparation of British air bases on Turkish territory, rumors denied by Tanrıöver. Turning to general foreign policy issues, Ion Antonescu considered that Türkiye’s entry into the war against Germany, at Britain’s suggestion, would be a *“capital mistake”*, as it would give the Soviet Union the possibility of an attack from the Caucasus into Anatolia. The Turkish diplomat stated that his country would not want to enter the war unless there was an enemy attack, to which the Romanian leader considered that neither Germany nor Italy intended to attack Türkiye (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 31-32). At the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 20 February, Ion Antonescu informed the ministers of the discussion with the Turkish minister in Bucharest. After mentioning the Turkish diplomat’s insistence on the resumption of bilateral trade relations, the head of the Romanian government stated that trade had resumed, but recommended great caution, again citing information on the existence of British air bases in western Türkiye (Eastern Thrace and the Straits area) (*Stenogramele/Transcripts*, 1998, doc. 15, p. 318). The next day, the Head of State wrote a triple resolution on the memorandum received the previous day, concerning the denial by Türkiye of the rumours about some intentions of hostile military actions towards Romania; General Antonescu asked for clarification as to whether or not foreign warships would be authorised

to enter the Black Sea through the Straits, whether there were foreign air bases in Türkiye and, respectively, what the attitude of the Turkish state would be in the event of the entry of German troops into the territories of Bulgaria and Greece (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 39-40).

In the meantime, on 17 February 1941, a Bulgarian-Turkish pact had been concluded, which was perceived in many circles as an act of disengagement of Türkiye from Greece, even in the event of a Bulgarian attack. Moreover, the news of the perfection of this pact was received with disappointment in Anglo-American circles and with great satisfaction in German and Italian circles (Miller, 1975, p. 45).

In a report written on 19 February 1941, Colonel Traian Teodorescu explained Türkiye’s diplomatic step by the general perception of the Ankara government of the war, dominated, on the one hand, by the conviction that Great Britain (also supported by the USA) would finally emerge victorious, and on the other hand by the appreciation that, in the given situation, a determined commitment on the side of Great Britain would have been too risky for Türkiye. Another common belief in Turkish circles was that *“neither the Russians, nor the Germans want each other at the Dardanelles”*. The recent severing of the Romanian-British diplomatic relations had caused concern, as it was perceived as a manifestation of Germany’s tendencies towards increasing direct involvement in the Balkans (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 401/1941, pp. 63-69).

In a military information report dated 21 February 1941, we could find a rather negative assessment of the Turkish army, especially in terms of dress, equipment and sanitary conditions, and the outbreak of an epidemic of typhus. However, the population’s state of mind was considered positive (Ibid. file no. 348/1940, pp. 12-16). According to an informative summary completed on 1 March 1941, Türkiye’s military forces at that time totalled three armies, including 17 corps. The number of infantry divisions was 38, to which were added four in the process of being organised; three cavalry divisions and one motorised division were also in operation. The fighting strength of an army corps included three infantry divisions, a heavy artillery regiment (6 batteries), a cavalry division, an anti-aircraft battery, a signal battalion and a pontoon company. Under arms were about 800,000-1,000,000 troops, with the total mobilisation strength estimated at a maximum of 1,500,000. Another element of vulnerability was the very diverse origin of the weapons and ammunition: French, British, German, etc. (RNMA-CADP, Collection 5417, file no. 918/1940, pp. 1-18).

In bilateral Romanian-Turkish relations, a gesture of goodwill on the part of the Ankara government intervened by granting a favourable opinion on 21 February 1941 for the appointment of the Romanian diplomat Al. Télémaque as Minister Plenipotentiary (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, p. 42). However, three days later, the Romanian diplomat E. Krupenski expressed to Numan Menemencioğlu the Romanian government's protest against the attitude of some Turkish newspapers towards Romania, receiving the usual formal assurances that such deviations would not express the point of view of the Turkish government and people; the Romanian diplomat considered them, however, as a signal of loyalty sent by Türkiye to Great Britain (Ibid., p. 43).

An important diplomatic moment was the visit of the head of British diplomacy, Anthony Eden, to Ankara on 26 February 1941 on his way to Athens. On this occasion, the Turkish government's lack of confidence in the effectiveness of British aid in the event of a direct conflict with Germany became apparent (Ekrem, 1993, p. 118). On the same day, the Turkish minister in Bucharest, Suphi Tanrıöver, had a conversation with Ion Antonescu. At the beginning of the discussion, the Romanian head of state wanted to know the purpose of Eden's visit to Ankara, receiving the answer that the visit was not likely to change the position of Türkiye, which would only enter the war in the event of direct external aggression against it. At Antonescu's urging for Romanian-Turkish collaboration, under German aegis, against "*the danger of Slavic penetration and anarchy*", the Turkish diplomat expressed some fears about Germany's alleged intentions to take control of the Straits, in order to use them as a base of attack towards Suez (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 44-45). On 2 March 1941, after examining several pieces of information and hypotheses, Colonel Traian Teodorescu concluded that the visit had been a success in terms of general British policy, with the amendment that British officials had given up the intention of drawing Türkiye into the war, realizing that the neutrality of this country was the best solution, under those circumstances (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 401/1941, pp. 70-77). The assessment of the Romanian military attaché was to be shaped both by the subsequent evolution of events and by the historiography of the problem (Biagini, 2005, pp. 125-126).

In the Council of Ministers meeting of 27 February 1941, General Ion Antonescu concluded that the Black Sea remained a safe trade route; Romanian interest in Turkish barley and oats, however, proved to be without end, as the export of these items was banned by the Ankara authorities (*Stenogrammele/Transcripts*, 1998, doc. 17, pp. 397-398; Ibid., doc. 22, p. 520).

On 1 March 1941, in Vienna, the ceremony of Bulgaria's formal accession to the Tripartite Pact took place, as the skilful King Boris had obtained Hitler's agreement to maintain Bulgarian neutrality in the event of a German-Soviet conflict (de Launy, 1998, pp. 210-211). Bulgaria's adherence to the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis aroused the dissatisfaction of the USSR, which was transparently expressed (Constantiniu, 2002, pp. 169-170).

MARCH 1941 – A MONTH OF DIPLOMATIC EFFERVESCENCE FOR TÜRKİYE

After Bulgaria's accession to the Axis in March 1941, Türkiye became the object of extensive and insistent British, German and Soviet diplomatic efforts. The British warned in particular of the German danger, but did not mention the Soviet one. For their part, the Germans promised to respect Türkiye's independence and territorial integrity, accompanying these promises with gestures such as withdrawing troops from Bulgaria 60 km from the Turkish border, or revealing Soviet intentions towards Türkiye after the conclusion of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. Finally, the political and diplomatic defeat in Bulgaria and the cooling of relations with Germany convinced the Soviets to reassess their attitude towards Türkiye, so that on 24 March a bilateral declaration of neutrality and non-aggression was signed and published (Ekrem, 1993, p. 119). Hitler had ruled out the possibility of military action against Türkiye for several reasons, including the assessment that Turkish resistance would have been substantial and likely to create considerable difficulties, especially in view of the confrontation with the USSR (Kyçyku, 2005, pp. 68-69).

In a note of the Special Intelligence Service (SIS) of 3 March 1941, after describing the defensive military measures taken in the Bosphorus area, the granting of numerous leaves of absence to soldiers of the troops deployed in Thrace after the conclusion of the Turkish-Bulgarian Pact was mentioned (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, pp. 39-41). Another informative note, dated 12 March 1941, reported the same troops going on the defensive, which was explained by fears of a German attack, to which the troops crowded into the restricted area of European Türkiye were very vulnerable (Ibid., pp. 43-44). An additional factor of vulnerability was, according to information obtained from '*casual sources*', the Turkish army's net inferiority in aviation and motorised troops, including in Thrace (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 348/1940, p. 9). Another '*casual source*' had, two days earlier, passed on information leading to the conclusion that Turkish-British collaboration intentions had proved a failure;

according to this source, British financial aid, though substantial, had proved useless, the Turkish army being neither materially nor morally prepared for war, the only supporters of entering the war being the Jewish Greek and Armenian minorities, disavowed by the vast majority of ethnic Turks (Ibid, p. 25).

On 18 March, Al. Télémaque officially presented his letters of accreditation to President İsmet İnönü, only 78 hours after the arrival of the Romanian diplomat in the Turkish capital, a fact underlined in the opening of the solemn audience. On the issues of pressing political importance, the President of Türkiye expressed his concern about the massing of German troops in Bulgaria, considered to be a preliminary act to the attack on Greece, and questioned the new Romanian Minister about Germany's attitude towards Türkiye; the Romanian diplomat expressed his conviction that the Axis Powers would respect Türkiye's neutrality, as long as Türkiye would keep itself within the limits of neutrality. At the end of the audience, despite certain customs, President İnönü spent a few minutes with each member of the Romanian delegation, emphasizing the feelings of mutual Romanian-Turkish friendship (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 46-49). However, bilateral economic relations continued to be hampered by the delay in the delivery from Türkiye of much-needed cotton to the Romanian textile industry (*Stenogrammele/Transcripts*, 1998, doc. 26, pp. 646-647).

At the same time, Turkish-British discussions were taking place in Cyprus aimed at co-opting Yugoslavia into a regional structure designed to halt German expansion, but the Turkish offer of collaboration conveyed to Belgrade was ignored by Drag Cvetković's government (Ekrem, 1993, p. 118). An informative note of 18 March 1941 reported the strong echo in Turkish public opinion of the speech of the North American President F.D. Roosevelt, interpreted as a real declaration of war addressed to Germany (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 401/1941, p. 100), and other sources reported deliveries of American ammunition to Türkiye via the port of Basra in southern Iraq (Ibid., file no. 345/1940, p. 51).

On 23 March, the Turkish authorities decreed an extension of the curfew in some western districts for another three months (Ibid, file no. 315/1940, p. 52), and the next day the joint Turkish-Soviet declaration of neutrality and non-aggression was issued, with the effect of reducing the military forces previously concentrated by both states in the Caucasus area; according to a report of 10 April 1941, this tendency manifested itself more rapidly on the part of the USSR, a fact blamed on the suspicion of Turkish military commanders (Ibid., file no. 401/1941, p. 223).

Hostilities against Greece continued on a course unfavorable to the Italians. After having advanced about 100 km into Albania at the end of 1940, occupying the towns of Koritsa (Korçë) and Argyrokastron (Gjirokastër) in the so-called Northern Epirus, in March 1941 Greek troops advanced to the vicinity of the port town of Vlorë/Valona (de Launay, 1988, p. 197). Things were not going well for Italian forces in Africa either, as they suffered defeats in Libya in the winter of 1940/1941. To support his allies, Hitler decided to send the *Afrikakorps*, which went on the offensive towards the end of March, but the German-Italian offensive aiming Suez, in the spring of 1941, would be carried out in parallel with a series of serious defeats in Ethiopia (Ibid., pp. 197-199).

TÜRKIYE BETWEEN TWO CONFLICT ZONES (27 MARCH – 1 JUNE 1941)

The Yugoslav crisis triggered after the Belgrade coup of 26/27 March 1941 was considered by I.V. Stalin as an opportunity to draw Hitler's attention to Soviet interests in the Balkans, the Kremlin dictator anticipating a longer Yugoslav resistance to Germany (Constantiniu, 2002, pp. 170-171). What is certain is that after 27 March 1941 Soviet-Yugoslav diplomatic contacts took place both in Moscow and Belgrade, culminating in the signing of a bilateral pact at dawn on 6 April 1941 (de Launay, 1988, p. 12). A memo from the Romanian Secret Intelligence Service of 2 April 1941, based on information gathered from circles close to the Turkish Legation in Bucharest, recorded the satisfaction in some Turkish circles with the events in Yugoslavia, which had occurred shortly after the joint Soviet-Turkish declaration; according to the document in question, Türkiye had prepared for war against Germany, and landings of military specialists and even British troops on Turkish territory were mentioned (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, p. 63). Coincidentally or not, but in flagrant contradiction to the news circulated in the first half of the month, an intelligence note of 27 March 1941 mentioned the continued presence in Thrace and the Straits area of a large number of large units of the Turkish army, while in the Caucasian border area the general situation had been calm since December 1940 (Ibid., p. 54). On 14 April 1941, after the outbreak of the German-Italian attack on Yugoslavia, when hostilities were coming to an end, the Reich Minister in Bucharest, Manfred von Killinger, recommended to General Ion Antonescu that Romania should keep a calm attitude, facing possible provocations from the USSR, and then mentioned Berlin's irritation at Soviet diplomatic manoeuvres in Türkiye and Yugoslavia (Constantiniu, 2002, p. 198).

The Romanian Minister in Ankara, Al. Télémaque, had a meeting with Numan Menemencioglu. On this occasion, the Turkish official considered that Bulgaria would adopt, in the Yugoslav crisis, the attitude dictated by Germany, and to the Romanian diplomat's question on Türkiye's attitude in the event of Bulgaria's participation in a German-coordinated attack against Yugoslavia, he had not expressed a very clear answer, which was interpreted by the interlocutor as a clue that Türkiye would keep its neutrality. When Al. Télémaque brought up the Soviet factor, Numan Menemencioglu stressed the independence of Turkish foreign policy, and then, with a more relaxed attitude, noted the distancing between the USSR and Germany (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 51-52).

An event that further complicated, temporarily but considerably, Türkiye's position in the region was the anti-British uprising in Iraq (formally, an independent state since 1931), which broke out on 1 April 1941 in a coup d'état and which would be suppressed during the next month by British-Arab forces, without Germany being able to intervene, as it was busy preparing for the anti-Soviet war (Rondot, 2003, pp. 45-46).

The onset of the German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece (6 April 1941) led to several popular demonstrations in Türkiye against the Axis Powers and in sympathy with the two Balkan states under attack, according to an informative note from 'one of our residents in Istanbul'; according to the same source, the anglophile Turkish circles considered that the right time to enter in the war had just arrived, but they were categorically opposed by the General Military Staff, led by Fevzi Çakmak (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, pp. 68-69), the only Marshal of Türkiye.

According to a telegram of 11 April, at the latest meeting of the Turkish government, Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu had asked for the general mobilization of the Turkish army, but, following the reluctance expressed by the military commanders, a compromise solution had been adopted, consisting of the mobilisation of two more contingents, in addition to the 10 already called up (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, p. 57). Bulgarian troops did not take direct part in the military operations against neighbouring Yugoslavia, but were given the mission of protecting the border from Türkiye (Calafeteanu C., 2011, p. 110).

On 15 April, the Romanian minister in Türkiye submitted a report to General Ion Antonescu (who was also acting head of Romanian diplomacy at the time), on the partial evacuation of the population from Istanbul to the interior of Anatolia. According to the Romanian diplomat, the evacuation operations were compulsory

and very well organized, including in terms of presenting and explaining the reasons to those concerned; the number of those already evacuated was estimated at 100,000 people, the operation having only just begun (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, pp. 71-73).

The Axis Powers' campaign in the Balkans ended after 23 days (in Yugoslavia after 12 days), with the full occupation of Yugoslavia and mainland Greece. The Germans captured huge numbers of Yugoslav and Greek prisoners, as well as vehicles, guns and cannons; the numerical and, above all, technical superiority of the invaders proved itself, temporarily, more important than the courage and heroism of the defenders (de Launay, 1988, p. 218). It is worth noting that, in the case of occupied Greece, Germany retained control over the strip on the land border with Türkiye, as well as Thessaloniki, the interior of Aegean Macedonia, the city of Piraeus, and later three islands in the Eastern Aegean and finally most of the island of Crete (occupied in the last decade of May), while Bulgaria occupied Western Thrace, lost in 1919, but did not annex it (Glenny, 2020, p. 504).

The rapid victory of the German troops in the Balkans was followed by the USSR's consistent series of concessions to the Reich: Recognition of German claims in the area of the common frontier in Poland, official recognition of the anti-British government formed in Iraq, the expulsion of the ambassadors of Yugoslavia, Greece, Belgium and Norway from the USSR, the appointment of a Soviet ambassador to the Vichy collaborationist French government, and the continuation of "economic collaboration", with the anticipation of supplies of raw materials to Germany (Duroselle, 2006, p. 223). The German military successes in the Balkans in April 1941, combined with other elements (events in Iraq, older pro-German tendencies in Iran, French Syria's placing under the authority of the Vichy government, etc.) led to increased German pressure on Türkiye.

According to a Romanian military information bulletin on Türkiye, from the beginning of May 1941, under the shock of the Balkan campaign, the Turkish authorities had decided to declare Ankara an open city in the event of direct conflict with Germany. Turkish fears of a possible Soviet attack were, however, on the wane, the transparent cooling of German-Soviet relations being the reason for this trend, and the likelihood of a German attack on the USSR was also considered. Consequently, Türkiye's main military preparations at that time were aimed at preventing a possible German attack (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 401/1941, pp. 256-262). Another document of the same nature, but covering almost the whole of May, focused on the idea that the main concern of Turkish decision-makers

was to avoid direct involvement in the war and to keep it as far away from their own borders as possible; among the Great Powers, the best relations were maintained with Great Britain, without, however, raising the question of leaving neutrality, while with regard to the USSR, a long-term caution was expressed (Ibid., pp. 401-412).

An informative note at the end of April 1941 mentions the continuation of fortification work in the Bosphorus Strait area and the alleged intention to move motorised troops from Ankara to the town of Diyarbakir, in south-eastern Anatolia near the border with Iraq (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, pp. 76-79).

Another military development which caused concern in Turkish circles was the occupation by German forces of Greek Aegean islands in the vicinity of the Dardanelles Strait (Lemnos, Lesbos, etc.) in early May 1941. According to a report of 3 May 1941, taking control of these islands gave Germany an enormous strategic advantage in the Straits, which it could block at will; the German advance towards the islands in the southern Aegean Sea heightened Turkish fears of a possible Reich attack on Syria and Cyprus (Ibid., file no. 401/1941, pp. 307-309). An informative summary prepared a few days later reported, also in connection with military developments in the Aegean Sea, movements of Turkish military units, the number of which was not specified, from Thrace to the areas of Brusa, Edrenit and Izmir, located very close to the islands recently occupied by the Germans (Ibid., file no. 348/1940, p. 29).

On 7 May, Colonel Traian Teodorescu sent a report from Ankara on the impact of events in Iraq on Türkiye. According to the Romanian military attaché, the anti-British uprising under the leadership of Ali Rashid al Gaylani had caused great concern in Türkiye, with rumours circulating that Germany (or even the USSR) might ask for military transit rights in aid of the new power in Iraq. Other concerns, also in relation to Iraq, were the possibility for pan-Arabic trend to proliferate, or, on another level, the likelihood of Türkiye's supply of British munitions *via* Basra being cut off. Under these circumstances, the government in Ankara was very concerned about developments in Iraq and was quick to offer its good offices for the earliest possible resolution of the British-Iraqi conflict (Ibid, In another report, sent only two days later, the same Romanian officer remarked on the polite and elegant way in which the Turkish authorities understood to relate to Germany in the context of the events in Iraq, quoting the following phrase attributed to Turkish diplomats: *"just as our government could not allow our British friends and allies to transport troops through Türkiye, so our government will not be able to allow this to our German friends"*. According to Colonel Teodorescu, the improvement in the general tone

towards Germany was a trend that could also be observed in the Turkish press, but this would have caused dissatisfaction among some of the younger military personnel (Ibid., pp. 340-341).

At the same time, the question of cotton imports from Türkiye continued to preoccupy the Romanian government, as the transcripts of its meetings of 8 and 9 May 1941 show. Under-Secretary of State Toma Petre Ghițulescu described the cotton import situation as *"very serious"*, with annual requirements of almost 35,000 tones, 95% of which came from imports, and indicated that the purchase of 5,000 tones had been completed. The next day's meeting again mentioned the problem of importing cotton from Türkiye, a country which had also supplied cotton to Italy (Ibid, doc. 14, p. 363).

The Battle of Crete, fought between 20 May and 1 June 1941, ended in a costly victory for the German troops, the losses suffered causing Hitler to lose confidence in the paratroopers' weapon and to abandon his intention of launching an airborne operation against the island of Cyprus, then British territory (de Launay, 1988, pp. 219-220).

In this context, on 27 May 1941, after a few weeks of the Turkish Minister in Romania being in Ankara, a new conversation took place between Ion Antonescu and Suphi Tanrıöver. At the opening of the meeting, the Turkish diplomat sent greetings from the President of the Republic of Türkiye, İ. İnönü, and the Prime Minister Refik Saydam, then congratulated the Romanian Head of State for having accurately forecast, three months earlier, the rapid advance of the German armies in the Balkans and the Aegean Sea, but finally tried to obtain some information and assessments on a possible German attack against the USSR. To this question, Ion Antonescu did not formulate a clear answer, emphasising the benevolent attitude adopted by the Soviets in recent weeks in their relations with Germany, and shifting the emphasis to the common interest of Romania and Türkiye in working together, under German aegis, against Greater Bulgaria, described as an *"extension of Slav expansionism in the Balkans"*. Without giving a categorical answer to Antonescu's suggestion, Suphi Tanrıöver agreed with his interlocutor on Bulgaria, mentioning the increasingly difficult situation of the ethnic Turks in Southern Dobrogea (Quadrilater) after the territory's reintegration into the Bulgarian state. Towards the end of the discussion, although he had previously been skeptical about the likelihood of a German-Soviet war, I. Antonescu tried to sound out Türkiye's willingness to participate in an anti-Soviet military coalition under German aegis, receiving the reply that only the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister could answer such a question (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 69-70).

JUNE 1941: THE IMMINENCE AND OUTBREAK OF THE GERMAN-SOVIET WAR

At the end of a report dated 1 June 1941, Colonel Traian Teodorescu quotes the new wording by which the Ankara government justifies its policy of remaining neutral: *“England’s interest is to keep the Turkish army intact, because it will need this army in order to bring order to the Balkans at the end of the war, which the British will win in the West”* (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 401/1941, p. 425). At the same time, against the background of increasingly intense rumours of an imminent German attack against USSR, a kind of optimistic scenario began to circulate in Turkish circles, which was to be found, at least in the first months after 22 June 1941, also in some Romanian circles: Germany would defeat the Soviet Union, and Great Britain and USA would subsequently defeat Germany (Özden, 2013, p. 99).

In an information summary dated 18 June 1941, it was recorded that the general mood in Türkiye was tending to relax after certain fears were expressed about some information about the concentration of German air-navy borne troops in Romanian Dobrogea (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 315/1940, pp. 86-89). Military developments in Türkiye’s southern neighbourhood, in particular the liquidation of the anti-British rebellion in Iraq and the beginning of the offensive by British troops to take control of French Syria, had probably contributed to this positive development (Ibid., file no. 401/1941, pp. 464-465), but above all, the conclusion, also on 18 June 1941, of the treaty of friendship and non-aggression between Germany and Türkiye.

The text of this treaty did not contradict, at least in a blatant and direct way, the commitments previously made by Türkiye to Great Britain (Biagini, 2005, p. 127). Moreover, prior to this political-diplomatic act, Ankara’s decision-makers had been consulting assiduously with the British (Ekrem, 1993, p. 121). The idea of the compatibility of the newly concluded treaty with Türkiye’s previous commitments to other states was stressed by Suphi Tanrıöver during his conversation with Alexandru Cretzianu on 20 June 1941. In this regard, the Turkish diplomat stated that the Treaty of 19 October 1939 between Great Britain, France and Türkiye would have had no other purpose than to deter a possible maritime aggression by Italy, reiterating Türkiye’s determination to defend its independence and territory against any aggression. The Romanian diplomatic official confined himself to expressing his satisfaction at the agreement reached between *“Germany allied with Romania and friendly Türkiye”* (AMFAR, vol. 62/1940, pp. 71-72).

According to an informative summary of 25 June 1941, the negotiations for the conclusion of the German-Turkish pact had lasted six weeks, mainly cause of the objections from London; The Turkish population had, however, welcomed the news of the conclusion of a treaty with Germany, a situation which the author of the summary attributes to the awareness of the broad circles of the Turkish public opinion that, regardless of how hostilities might develop, the probability of really advantageous territorial gains, in the Caucasus or in the Mosul area, was still very small (RNMA-CADP, Collection XIV, file no. 401/1941, pp. 465-466). A very important consequence of the German-Turkish agreement, which also explains to a large extent the satisfaction caused by it in many Romanian circles, was the elimination of the possibility for Great Britain to use Turkish territory as a base for launching military actions, primarily air-raids, on South-Eastern Europe, against Germany and its allies, including Romania (Ibid., p. 467).

At dawn on 22 June 1941, the anti-Soviet war had begun, prompting a further Cretzianu-Tanrıöver meeting next day. On this occasion, the Turkish minister in Bucharest handed over the declaration of neutrality of his country and thanked the Romanian leadership for the *“sincere feelings of friendship it had shown towards Türkiye”* (Ibid., pp. 73-74). In the new context, the territory of Türkiye served as a corridor for the evacuation of Romanian diplomats from the USSR and also of Soviet diplomats from Romania (Ibid., pp. 79-81, 84-85 et seq.) In the informative summary of 25 June 1941, several *“private declarations of sympathy towards Germany and Romania”* were reported, in connection with the outbreak of the anti-Soviet war, but the Turkish authorities kept their caution (Ibid., p. 468).

CONCLUSIONS

The month of November 1940, crucial for the irreversible deterioration of German-Soviet relations, found relations between Romania and Türkiye on a clear downward slope, due to the different positioning of the two South-Eastern European states, formerly allies, in relation to the Great Powers, first of all towards Germany and Great Britain, which were enemies. However, some elements of convergence persisted between Bucharest and Ankara, such as the common fear of Soviet expansionism and the interest in continuing economic relations and trade. Although in Romanian circles, fears of a potential Turkish participation in hostile military actions initiated by Britain were expressed with some recurrence (until the conclusion of the German-Turkish Friendship and Neutrality Pact on 18 June 1941), the diplomats, the military experts and, ultimately, the Romanian

decision-makers correctly identified Türkiye's foreign policy guidelines (primarily staying out of the conflict) and the motivations for this conduct (confidence in Britain's final victory, unfavourable then conjuncture, the Soviet factor, etc.). The conclusion of the German-Turkish pact of 18 June 1941 was greeted with a very predictable satisfaction in Bucharest, but Türkiye could not be drawn into the anti-Soviet war, despite German pressure and some efforts by Romanian diplomats and Russophobic Turkish circles.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Arhivele Ministerului Afacerilor Externe al României/Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania (AMFAR), Collection 71/Türkiye (1920-1944), vol. 61/1940, vol. 62/1941.
2. Arhivele Militare Naționale Române/Romanian National Military Archives – Depozitul central de arhivă "General Grigore Constandache" Pitești/Central Archive Depository/RNMA-CADP, Collection 5417 (*Marele Stat Major-Secția 2 Informații/General Staff – 2nd Intelligence Section*) and Collection XIV (*Studii și căutări referitoare la Armata Română.../Studies and Researches on the Romanian Armed Forces...*).
3. Biagini, A. (2005). *Istoria Turciei contemporane*, translated by Ioana Mândrescu. Cluj Napoca: Editura Accent.
4. Calafeteanu, C. (2011). *România și micile puteri vecine (1940-1944)*. București: Editura Enciclopedică.
5. Calafeteanu, I., coord. (2003). *Istoria politicii externe românești în date*. București: Editura Enciclopedică.
6. Constantiniu, F. (2002). *1941, Hitler, Stalin și România. România și geneza operațiunii Barbarossa*. București: Editura Univers Enciclopedic.
7. Duroselle, J-B, (2006). *Istoria relațiilor internaționale (1919-1947)*, vol. I, translated by Anca Airinei. București: Editura Științelor Sociale și Politice.
8. Ekrem, M.A. (1993). *Relațiile româno-turce între cele două războaie mondiale (1918-1944)*. București: Editura Științifică.
9. Glenny, M. (2020). *Balkanii (1804-2012). Naționalism, Marile Puteri și război*, traducere de Livia Szász. București: Editura Trei.
10. Ilčev, I. (2019). *Rozata na Balkanite. Kratka bălgarska istoriya za lyubopitni chitateli. Balgariya prez XX vek*, Sofia: Colibri Publishing House.
11. Jelavich, B. (2000). *Istoria Balcanilor. Secolul XX*, translated by Mihai-Eugen Avădanei Iași: Editura Institutul European.
12. Kyçyku, K. (2005). *Atatürkismul în Turcia Mileniului Trei*, prefaced by Acad. Răzvan Theodorescu. București: Editura Adam.
13. de Launay, J. (1988). *Mari decizii ale celui de-Al Doilea Război Mondial*, vol. I (1939-1942), translated by Mihnea and Dan Ghibernea, introductory study by Fl. Constantiniu. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.
14. Miller, L.M. (1975). *Bulgaria during the Second World War*. Stanford California: Stanford University Press.
15. Özden, H. (2013). *The Diplomatic Maneuvers of Turkey in World War II*, in *Karadeniz Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Sayı 37, pp. 91-110.
16. Rondot, Ph. (2003). *Istoria Irakului*, translated by Gheorghe Țițeica, prefaced by Petre Otu. București: Editura Corint.
17. *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului de Miniștri. Guvernarea Ion Antonescu, vol. I (septembrie-decembrie 1940)*, documents collection by Marcel Dumitru Ciucă, Aurelian Teodorescu, Bogdan Florin Popovici. București, Arhivele Naționale ale României, 1997.
18. *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului de Miniștri. Guvernarea Ion Antonescu, vol. II (ianuarie-martie 1941)*, documents collection by Marcel Dumitru Ciucă, Aurelian Teodorescu, Bogdan Florin Popovici. București: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 1998.
19. *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului de Miniștri. Guvernarea Ion Antonescu, vol. III (aprilie-iunie 1941)*, documents collection by Marcel Dumitru Ciucă, Aurelian Teodorescu, Bogdan Florin Popovici. București: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 1999.