

**TRANSYLVANIA
- STRATEGIC TARGET FOR NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE
STRUCTURES DURING THE PERIOD OF NEUTRALITY (1914-1916)**

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Abstract:

The Intelligence and military counterintelligence Section of the Ministry of War and the Department for General State Security (DPSG), Ministry of Interior, in addition to providing counterintelligence support to Romanian army units, in order to counteract the actions of the Central Powers, gathered intelligence during two years of neutrality (1914-1916), employing complex actions of collecting information in Transylvania. With support from Romanian patriots in the territories under domination of Austria-Hungary, networks were created in Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina aimed at gathering information for political and military decision-makers in Bucharest and providing logistical support for the Romanian army's advance in these historical regions.

On 14/27 August 1916, after Romania declares war on Austria-Hungary, formally entering World War I, Romanian troops cross the border of the Austro-Hungarian Empire into the much-contested province of Transylvania. Despite the fact that, during World War I, Romania faced major problems, the sacrifice of Romanian Transylvanian Patriots was not fruitless, as, at the end of 1918, Great Romania was created, for the first time in history (unfortunately for only about two decades).

Keywords: *espionage, Transylvania, World War I, intelligence gathering, the Department for General State Security, Ministry of War, Romanian Army*

Introduction

The breakout of the future world conflict (in the summer of 1914 this future development was not known) generated the first crack between the Central Powers- Romania and Italy declared their neutrality because of

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the special situation of Austro-Hungarian Empire (the dual monarchy not only dominated parts a population composed of people of Romanian and Italian origin but also controlled territories legitimately claimed by the two states). The war brought great changes in the structure of the two political and military alliances. The alliance's members were constantly preoccupied with achieving the balance of power (both from the point of view of the forces involved in the conflict and of occupying areas important for the next operations).

The war also generated an extraordinary mobilization of troops and materiel by participating states. This contributed to a great quantitative and qualitative evolution of weapons, organization and means of war as well as to the carrying out of operations on an unprecedented scale, resulting in great human losses (dead, maimed, wounded) including among the civilian population.

The transformation of the war, which became a long-term conflict, showed that the winner would be the side which is able to overcome losses in life and material yet unknown in modern history. Therefore, each military alliance needed to attract more and more allies, even among those states which were initially regarded with suspicion. Romania became a legitimate target for both political and military blocks (The Entente and the Central Powers), each side attempting to attract the country's leadership to its side.

The Entente was the one which won Romania to its side because it was the only one that officially recognized, through the Political Convention of 4/17 August 1916, the unification of Romania with the territories held by Austria-Hungary, thus achieving the desideratum of national public opinion. This promise would be fulfilled only if victory was achieved. Through the Convention, Romania undertook the obligation to participate directly in the conflict by using military forces.

One has to mention that our country was, at the same time, the victim of "secret diplomacy" carried out by the Great Powers, which refused to grant Romania an equal status, and were forced to do so only by negative developments on the Western Front.

The fact that Imperial Russia adopted a duplicitous attitude regarding our country comes out from the tsarist Minister of Foreign Affairs' archive. The contents of this were published by Soviet communist authorities. A significant exchange of secret letters between Sankt Petersburg and its officials from allied states, including from Bucharest, occurred. The actions of the Tsarist government showed that it aimed (in the first 2 years of war

1914-1916) to slow down negotiations with Romania, hoping to obtain victory. Only when the war became global, and victory was far from sight and only under French pressure, Russia accepted the demands of Bratianu's government.

Once the communists came into power they condemned the "secret diplomacy" adopted by the greatest European powers in the previous century, and published documents from the imperial secret archive. As soon as the Romanian authorities found out about these disclosures, crucial to recent national history, they translated the documents from Russian and made them available to any interested institutions, including the Department for General State Security. A great amount of information regarding the unfolding of the secret diplomatic exchange between spring and summer of 1916, having Romania as the main topic can be found at the National Archive of Romania.

An eloquent example is *Foreign Affairs Minister's secret letter to ministers from Paris, London and Rome. July 31 (13 August) 1916.Nr. 3513* signed by Imperial Russia's Prime-Minister, Boris Vladimirovich Stürmer, which states:

Our Minister in Bucharest has been ordered to sign, together with the representatives of the Allies and with Romanian Government the political convention suggested by Bratianu, as it currently stands.

Please inform the Foreign Affairs Ministry so that it can instruct the representatives from Bucharest accordingly. The Imperial Government is confident that the great sacrifices and concessions it has made for the general success, following the requests of the allies, would be given the proper attention and, if a future interpretation of parts of the Convention would be needed, parts which are not clear enough in the convention, the allied governments would not refuse to endorse Russia's view. It would be desirable that you obtain the confirmation of the government you are commissioned with. (ANIC, SSI, 4/1934, f. 217)

Actually, the obligations assumed by Imperial Russia, the French Republic, the British Empire or the Kingdom of Italy with regard to Romania would be nullified if Petersburg's special interests in South-Eastern Europe demanded. Fortunately, the political-military developments generated by the fall of the tsarist regime radically altered the situation. Yet, until the unification of Romanian territories (1918), the intelligence structures of the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of War had to deal with a difficult and dangerous situation not only for the civilian agents inside Transylvania but also for Transylvanian patriots – establishing a deep and thorough intelligence presence in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Collecting intelligence from Austro-Hungarian Empire - a priority for the national intelligence structures during the period of neutrality

Once the First World War started, the Romanian General Staff took action in order to prepare the Romanian army for participation in the war, if necessary. The large number of forces and materiel employed by participating states, the need to apply the principle of joint leadership regarding national armies and to operate together with allies in military operations required an intense activity from structures tasked with conception, planning and undertaking operations at both the strategic and the tactical level.

The General Staff was the institution tasked with command, conception and control (Giurcă, 2014, pp. 11-34) of the Romanian army. According to the legal framework of the pre-war period, the General Staff (at the strategic level) along with army and division-level staffs had to carry out complex operations adapted to operational requirements throughout the duration of the war. Therefore, the need to know the enemy in each of his aspects increased, generating a significant need for information. In meeting this need, the intelligence structures of all combatants, including Romania's, evolved.

Once the possibility that Romania join the Entente became realistic, the need for a continuous and diversified information flow from across the mountains increased exponentially. The modern war that had engulfed all of Europe made it clear that detailed knowledge of the potential of the Austro-Hungarian enemy was essential in order to create complex offensive plans.

During the two years of neutrality, the Army's intelligence and counter-intelligence structures, as well as the Ministry of Interior's Department for General State Security, part of the Department of Police and General Security (DPGS) undertook, apart from counter-intelligence support for the Romanian army's units (to prevent espionage by the Central Powers), complex operations aimed at intelligence collection in Transylvania.

The aim of these operations was to gather information related to fighting plans, maps, orders of the Austro-Hungarian headquarters, sketches of military construction work, photographs of the emplacement of artillery pieces and of machine-gun nests (a weapon whose operational value had been proven), the fighting capacity of the Austro-Hungarian soldiers, military-industrial objectives in Transylvania, means of transport and communication, main strategic points and people's state of mind (Șinca, 2009, p. 86).

The quality of the intelligence activity that took place in Transylvania, Banat or Bucovina lived up to requests, being also eased by the sympathetic attitude of the Romanians who, while subjects of the dual monarchy, awaited the liberation and the union with the Old Kingdom.

The head of The Special Intelligence Service (1940-1944), Eugen Cristescu commented on the successes achieved during the period of neutrality: "By using offensive intelligence actions, the General Security and the General Staff succeeded in obtaining information about the military situation in Transylvania, taking advantage of the great help provided by Romanians from Transylvania, used as informers and who, after the war, were employed as superior functionaries in the security service of the reunited country (*Din Memoriile lui Eugen Cristescu*, 1968, p. 14-15).

The recruitment of people who could both easily obtain information due to the nature of their work and who could easily travel in the targeted regions without arising suspicion from Austrian and Hungarian authorities (a very important feature in times of war, when free travel is restricted in all combatant states) was sought. Sources were recruited from among intellectuals- doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, professors, engineers, teachers or priests; or from among states employees – foresters, railway workers and traders (Brestoiu & Bobocescu, 1979, p. 105). Also, a great help came from Romanian peasants, who lived near borders and who could offer refuge for agents crossing to the Austro-Hungarian side or to people fleeing from Imperial authorities, as well as from those who knew well the mountain roads used by shepherds.

In a Note from June 8, 1915 written by a Transylvanian agent to his superiors from Bucharest (illegible signature), he reported: "In the matter discussed, namely for guides to lead our troops through mountains on safe paths, aside from me there are also others who can help: Constantin Solomon from Buzău; George Buzea Bordan, Alecse Bucur Comşa and Ioan Noaghi - Romanian refugees with an unknown residence. They can be found if needed. All of them are trustworthy." (ANIC, DPSG, 1914, f. 17)

The collaborators of the Romanian secret structures were trained in intelligence collecting techniques, on the categories of information relevant to the Romanian state and on how to deliver them-some of them had even a camera or other secret technical means. When the mission was highly dangerous, they were supervised by professionals from the Security Service and the army in order to verify their commitment. If collaborators were

arrested, they would manage the situation so as not to compromise the whole network.

Some information of a great military value was transmitted to Bureau III (General Staff's structure commissioned with making war plans) by military unit commanders stationed on the Austro-Hungarian border.

At the same time, the Romanian army engaged in a significant intelligence collection activity regarding the Austro-Hungarian military capabilities also, highly likely, attempting to undertake sabotage (unfortunately, we do not have information on concrete actions) using professional officers.

As evidence of this, we can show a confidential request sent by the General Secretariat of the Ministry of War to the Department of Police and General Security on 17 October, 1914 which requires that

At the proper time it must be transmitted to the Predeal border crossing point that tomorrow, Saturday, 18 October, some officers whose names are written on the back page will leave the country by train to Arad- they must receive permission to pass as they are on a special mission. This commission will have two MD.1893 weapons, four new weapon pipes, 630 g. of gunpowder, two boxes with controls and checkers, plans, tender book and other experience tools and I ask you, Minister, to give orders to Predeal not to obstruct this operation.

Notation:

- 1) Lieutenant colonel Limburg Dimitrie;*
- 2) Caretaker lieutenant colonel Mandrin Petre;*
- 3) Captain Păltineanu Anastase.*

In total, three officers. (ANIC, DPSG, 1910, f. 62-62v)

To keep the message private, the request made to the Predeal border crossing was encrypted, requiring maximum secrecy from Romanian custom officers in order not to arise suspicions.

The greatest part of the secret operations undertaken by the Romanian army inside the dual monarchy was aimed at collecting relevant intelligence for preparing a military offensive. To achieve these goals, the General Staff, using Section III, developed a set of *"Instructions and itineraries for agents sent scouting in Hungary"*. The document, classified as top secret, and written in June, 1914 under the guidance of Colonel Nicolae Petala, head of Bureau's V, Intelligence, part of Section III, was addressed to a number of five intelligence officers who were commissioned to go scouting in Transylvania, the main future battlefield for the Romanian army (ANIC, DPSG, 1910, f. 49-61).

These “*Scouting guidelines*” contained four main operationally valuable points: I) Relating to roads, II) Relating to towns, III) Scouting garrisoned troops and IV) If people meet receive weapons training– organization and the nationality of participants. One of the most important intelligence requirements was to possess information about the exact routes and railroad system from Transylvania. The information had to contain an inventory of roads and their characteristics: whether the roads were paved, if they were passable and also if alongside there were telegraph networks or check points. Moreover, details were required about the condition of bridges: their length and width, composition, the weight they could bear.

The greatest importance in intelligence collection requirements was given to the monitoring of imperial troops in each officer’s area of responsibility :”type, name, and number of troops (Infantry, Cavalry, field or mountain Artillery), technical personnel, army deposits, hospitals et cetera...If they heard about fortifications being built and where?” (ANIC, DPSG, 1910, f. 49-61).

All these officers, together with a large number of collaborators, charged with this “special missions” were to cover the whole area of Transylvania, from Romanian-Hungarian border in Predeal – especially communications in the mountains.

Some important means of information were media, maps and other Transylvanian publications which offered the Romanian General Staff data of great value. Romanian military attaches in capitals of states important for the Romanian national interest were charged with collecting information, having previously received special training for this. In July 1914, documents of the General Staff listed as military attaches: major Soutza Dimitrie (Paris and Brussels), major Trantomir Lucian (Constantinopol), major Prodan Ioan (St. Petersburg), major Ignat Mihail (Rome), major Gherculescu Dumitru(Sofia), major Dumitrescu Toma (Belgrade), major Crăiniceanu Constantin (Athens) and captain Stârcea Traian (Vienna) (Giurcă, 2014, p. 20).

Right after the beginning of the World War, significant work is undertaken to improve foreign intelligence collection and to achieve a unitary framework for intelligence activity for both the General Directorate of State Security of the Ministry of Interior and the representatives of the Romanian Army. An important document written by the army’s leadership and also addressed to the director-general of the Department of Police and General Security, Ion (Iancu) Panaitescu (22 December 1914), with the goal of

implementing it inside the latter institution, shows the modern way that the Romanian army leadership thought, focusing on several tactical and strategic issues crucial to a contemporary conflict.

A secret Appendix called *"A program to guide the way that a permanent agent collects military news"* (ANIC, DPSG, 1910, f. 75) shows that, beside classical military information from the *"Scouting guidelines"*, collecting information meant much more: it was crucial to gather intelligence about the social and political realities and about the state of mind of the population of the adversary country.

This guide reveals an important fact regarding Romanian institutions: they had a good knowledge of the requirements of the new type of modern conflict being waged Europe, as their requests for information were similar to those made of the German and Austro-Hungarian services operating in Romania. Detailed information about the enemy were required: type of units, weapons, modifications in troop deployment, deposits and supply sources, detailed description of fortifications and where they were (ammunition and food reserves, quality of works). Moreover, general information about the budget of the Ministry of War of the targeted country was required, as well as "sensitive" information requiring a complex collection effort:

Information about municipalities. The amount of population by nationality. The amount of houses...Water resources".

Observation-Regarding communication ways: the publication of special maps and statistical dictionaries or any publication which concerns this will be monitored

17) Information about national sentiment.

Important rumors; issues discussed in newspapers; speeches in Parliament; national manifestations.

National patriotism and military spirit. Military instruction in schools, how it's organized and its results. Socialist ideas and their progress in cities or the countryside. Would antimilitarism succeed? How it could be spread?

Newspapers, their spirit: is their personnel national or foreign? – Would money be a good way to create a favorable trend oriented to certain goals? (ANIC, DPSG, 1910, f. 76-77)

A request that intelligence agents monitor counterintelligence services and announce Bucharest about their activity is also important: "The research agent has to discover the foreign secret investigation organization in

the country he works in and to indicate the people engaged in this activity and the means of communication they are using." (ANIC, DPSG, 1910, f. 76-77).

The *"Memoirs of General Maximilian Ronge"*, the head of the Austro-Hungarian High Command intelligence service, offer great information about the support Romanian civilians offered to Romanian intelligence structures during the war. The manuscript, translated in Romanian, in the beginning of the 1920s by Gherghe Baloşin can be found at National Archives of Romania and represents a precious source for studying World War I.

From a professional point of view, general Ronge showed that especially the Romanian State Security Service, but also the Romanian army's specialized structure had had great success: creating significant collecting networks in Transylvania and Bucovina evidenced by the about 100 cases of "betrayal" discovered by the Austro-Hungarian counter-intelligence during the two years of neutrality.

The Imperial officer accused especially Romanian priests and teachers of having an intense secret intelligence collection activity but also of creating a hostile atmosphere against state authorities: Austro-Hungarian soldiers of Romanian descent were advised to escape over the mountains or to surrender when they fought the Russian army (ANIC, MR, MSM, no. 119, f. 181-182).

The reoccupation of Transylvania by the dualistic monarchy at the end of August 1916 threatened Romanian patriots, as the punishment for spying for a foreign country was death, as General Ronge showed: *When war burst out (1914), the counter-intelligence service was extremely busy with discovering and detaining politically suspicious Romanians. After taking back the invaded territory, the traitors who had been in the service of General Security in Bucharest and in the Russian service, as well as those who appealed to people to enlist in the Romanian army had to be identified* (ANIC, MR, MSM, no. 119, f. 287).

National intelligence networks on the territory of the dualistic monarchy

Archival documents point out that the collection of intelligence necessary for decision-making in Bucharest, undertaken inside the dualistic monarchy was done professionally. Both Romanian Army military personnel, as well as civilians sent to undertake special missions and Transylvanian patriots acting for the Romanian national ideal acted together to fulfill well-

defined plans and specific objectives with the support of the State Security and Army officers.

A successful intelligence operation took place right in the imperial capital, Vienna, where military attaché Traian Stârcea established a network which included 50 agents- including diplomats and foreign military attaches. Important collaborators were Italian diplomats, Valerio Benuzzi and Mario Reusi, Chilean embassy secretary, Fernando Aninat or Argentine military attaché Villegas (Spânu, 2012, p. 182). The last two worked for Romanian intelligence services also after our country went to war against Austria-Hungary, sending information through neutral Switzerland.

Extremely valuable information on the Austro-Hungarian military plans against Romania came from Romanians enlisted in the Austro-Hungarian army who decided to cross the mountains and surrender to Romanian authorities. Marshall Alexandru Averescu pointed out that a hussar of Romanian nationality, who defected in the summer of 1916, provided the crucial information that the Central Powers' plan against Romania had taking Oltenia as a main objective. *"I gave credence to this information-said Marshal Averescu in his annotations-as it represented a judicious plan and that's why when great efforts against the Namaiesti group were undertaken, by concentrating 3 ½ of enemy division, I assumed that they wanted to isolate Oltenia by taking Pitești."* (Averescu, p. 365).

By studying archival documents, one can realize that during the period of neutrality (1914-1916), approximately 1000 people (Ștefănescu, 2009, p. 41) – Romanians and other nationalities who lived in Transylvania were agents of the Romanian Army, General Security and Gendarmerie. This is not an exaggerated number if we consider that the best collaborators of Romanian national structures created their own networks. Examples of this kind of residents are David Pop, Spiridon Boita, Aurel Moldovan who created genuine intelligence "services" – each one containing from a few dozen up to 200 trustworthy people (the case of the network led by the lawyer Spiridon Boita and David Pop in Hărman) - that acted in Transylvanian cities and in border-crossing points (Bobocescu, 2000, p. 171).

Documents evidencing this professionally developed espionage network, made up of both civilians and military personnel, can be found at the National Archives of Romania. The lists with Transylvanians who were reliable agents of the State Security are presented in the so-called Special Files of the Department of Police and National Security. The necessity of keeping

their identity secret was vital if we consider that, given that Austria-Hungary was waging a war, the punishment for spying was death.

We can show the people in charge with collecting intelligence in areas of strategic interest for the Romanian army, in 1915.

“The list of reliable people from Transylvania, who collaborate with us.

Petroșeni Region

Sebastian Stanca	parson in Sebeș
Adam Basarab	parson in Romoș
Avram Stanca	parson in Petroșeni

Brașov-Bran Region

Costi Proca	parson in Râjnov
Petru Popovici	owner in Brașov
Spiridon Boita	employee in Brașov

Buzău-Oituz Region

George Negoescu	parson in Întorsura Buzăului
George Hamzea	parson in Brețcu
Ioan Coman	parson in Sita Buzăului

Cluj-Bistrița Region

Nicodim Cristea	doctor of law
George Fodoccean	student.” (ANIC, DPSG, 1914, f. 18)

Apart from this main list, there are plenty that present the names of Transylvanian guides charged with leading Romanian military units across the Carpathians. For each person details as residence, place he/she could be found if mobilization was ordered and recognition password were specified. All the lists and charts presented in Special File (592/1914) entitled–“*Panel of informants and reliable persons from Transylvania, who could be used by Romanian state as guides, if a war with Austria-Hungary would eventually take place*” are only a small piece of the network that Romanian Army and State Security created in Transylvania.

New collaborators and guides were added, so that, in mid-1916, each unit engaged in the Transylvanian offensive could call upon the services of a number of such people. As an example, the head of Infantry Regiment Argeș, colonel M. Urdăreanu, indicated to his subordinates the names and files of the 54 Transylvanians who were about to be used as translators and guides (Brestoiu & Bobocescu, p. 108).

One of the most powerful and active Transylvanian network was the so-called "The club of the hanged" from Braşov, created and handled by lawyer Spiridon Boita. He recruited collaborators in all cities and border points in South-Eastern Transylvania, having a total of 200 reliable persons. (Troncotă, 2008, p. 67)

As the head of the network, his obligations were to establish connections between collaborators, to give them intelligence assignments, to receive and centralize information, to personally examine the most important ones, to compile intelligence reports and to pass them over to Romanian police chief from Predeal and to authorities in Bucharest.

Spiridon Boita undertook some missions in Timişoara, Seghedin and Szolnok, as well as in Bucovina, collecting information regarding the deployment of Austro-Hungarian and German forces. The most difficult mission was to obtain the plan of fortifications built in the Carpathians along the Olt and the Mureş rivers. In order to successfully achieve this operation, Spiridon Boita had to disguise himself "horse seller, factory hand, woodcutter in border forests, trader." (Brestoiu & Bobocescu, p. 108)

The General Security succeeded in building an authentic network in Bucovina with the support of professor Aurel Moldovan, who collected and delivered information about Austro-Hungarian personnel in that region. Another interesting fact is that important information were also sent to Russian command in Galicia. This foreshadowed the Romanian-Russian intelligence collaboration during 1916-1917. In the autumn of 1915, the members were discovered and sent before Austrian military justice, receiving prison sentences of 10 to 15 years. A copy of a report about the placement of the troops of the Central Powers in Bucovina at the beginning of 1915- report which was about to be given to Romanian secret structures- was cited as proof for the prosecution (Bobocescu, 2000, p. 172).

In the end, Aurel Moldovan managed to escape and, as recognition of his merits, he received from Ion (Iancu) Panaitescu, chief of the Department of Police and General Security the permission to reside in Bucharest and to be employed as General State Security agent.

Vasile and Clemansa Chiliman, a married couple, created an intelligence network made up of Romanian peasants, covering the Buzău Mountains and the territories of Vrancea. Its purpose was to deliver military intelligence of tactical importance. A great achievement of this intelligence network was to facilitate the passing of the border to Moldova of 2000

Romanian troops who has escaped imprisonment or managed to hide, after the defeat of 1916 (Chiriac, 2006, p. 45-46).

A Romanian agent with a great intelligence activity and for whose discovery the imperial secret service had to undertake significant efforts was agent "B 9". What is interesting is the fact that this agent wasn't a man but a woman from Banat recruited even since the beginning of the war. "B 9" succeeded in establishing close relationships with German and Austro-Hungarian officers from Timișoara and collected information valuable for Romania and Serbia (she acted as a double agent) regarding the Central Powers' military emplacement in Banat, prospective plans, and espionage actions (Bodunescu & Rusu-Șirianu, 1973, p. 311).

Unfortunately, "B 9" was discovered by the Austro-Hungarian secret service from Bucharest through an information leak. It came out that her real name was Maria Bălan, a beautiful woman. She was arrested and sentenced to death by hanging. However, she managed to break out of prison with the help of Romanian in the Austro-Hungarian military administration before the sentence was executed. After this, she arrived in Bucharest, where her secret activity will be heavily promoted in the post-war period (Bodunescu & Rusu-Șirianu, 1973, p. 312).

Another goal of the secret services was to ease the movement of Transylvanian Romanian secret agents in the border areas with the dual monarchy. A Security Service report from Dorohoi's Police sent to the head of the Ministry of Interior in the autumn of 1915, shows that "Gheorghe Popa and Dimitrie Moldoveanu are hired as secret agents and they travel on border with Austria for the interest of the intelligence service that you know and I ask you to urgently intervene at the Head of the Border Police so that border travel permits are issued for their work in the interest of State Security." (ANIC, DPSG, 1914, f. 32-34)

Ghiță Pop, a Transylvanian patriot, went to the Romanian General Staff in the autumn of 1914 and asked for permission to organize a secret network to collect military information about imperial maneuvers, recruitments and weapons' condition. He was assigned to Colonel Nicoleanu from General Staff's Section I, who instructed him to create a circle of collaborators. His network gave precious information and documents to the Romanian Army. Although he was discovered by Austro-Hungarian counter-intelligence, he succeeded to move to Bucharest. In Transylvania he was sentenced to death in absentia (Bobocescu, 2000, p. 101).

Romanian secret structures appealed even to Romanian men who were married to Hungarian women. These directly participated to the collection of information for the Romanian army and State Security. At the end of the war, Romanians' courageous actions were revealed in the Romanian media: Spiridon Boita reminisced, in an interview for the newspaper "Dimineata" how he decided to work for Romania: "One day some men from the Kingdom came and offered me to work for the Romanian authorities. These men were professor Udrea, who worked at Salonic commercial highschool and General Grozea. I had expected their visit. They also went to others because they had been in charge of this area for a long time. I agreed. I remember that I discussed with my wife all night long. My wife is of Hungarian origin, but her actions make her worthy of a true Romanian woman. Not only that she helped me, but also she suffered along with me the harshness of Hungarian prisons." (Brestoiu și Bobocescu, 1979, pp. 105-106)

Conclusions

In the complex conditions of the war, the political and military decision makers in Romania made great efforts, despite limited resources, to improve and to adapt the activity of both civilian (first and foremost the Ministry of Interior) and military (General Staff and the Ministry of War) intelligence structures to the dynamic of internal and external risks to state security. One of the great challenges of the national intelligence structures during the two years of preparation (1914-1916) was getting to know as much as possible about the socio-political situation in neighboring states – Bulgaria, Russia, but especially, Austria-Hungary.

An important role in this "intelligence game " was played by Romanian patriots in the territories controlled by the dualistic monarchy- in Transylvania, Banat and Bucovina there was created " a network of networks" that had to both collect information and give logistical aid and direct support to the Romanian army in order to cross the border in these historical territories. Unfortunately, the professionalism of the field work could not be exploited at its real value because the offensive in Transylvania was stopped after only two weeks. The end of August 1916 brought the retreat from Transylvania, under the pressure of the military disaster in Dobrogea (the defeat of our troops in Turtucaia).

This Romanian military failure also happened because some information was not taken into consideration. This information was given by the Constanta Security Brigade, led by security commissar, Constantin Duca, who had created an intelligence network in North-Eastern Bulgaria since January 1916. His network delivered information about the plans of German-Bulgarian troops to cross the Danube and to initiate the offensive in Dobrogea if the Romanian army attacked in Transylvania. But these important aspects were not taken into consideration by the General Staff (Pintilie et al., 2000, p. 17).

Intelligence support in Transylvania was at its best: the heads of the Romanian army were informed on the changes that appeared in the dual monarchy's order of battle up until the moment the country went to war, on 14/15 August 1916. But the fact that Romania represented only a tiny wheel in the world war and was never truly supported by its allies (especially Russia), led to the waste of the whole difficult and dangerous intelligence work.

Many Romanian patriots from Transylvania, Banat and Bucovina paid with their own lives their work for the national desideratum, or were permanently traumatized physically and psychologically. But their work was not in vain, as the breakdown of European multinational empires led to the birth of the Europe of nations and to the creation of Great Romania.

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