

THE INFLUENCE OF THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES OF THE RED ARMY ON THE TERRITORY OF UKRAINE UPON ROMANIAN SERVICEMEN DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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Abstract. *The article analyses some aspects of the activity of the ideological structures of the Red Army. Based mainly on archive documents, the study reviews the ways to achieve one of the main goals of the Red Army's ideological structures – working with the enemy's servicemen, in order to stimulate their desertion. Specialists of the political departments of the Soviet army took into account the enemy's lack of confidence in the potential consequences of the fall into his captivity. This state of mind was sustained and promoted by the German High Command (i.e. Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, OKW). Transmission of information that the Soviet captivity was the only way to stay alive and return home after the war called for the use of a set of measures with informational and psychological impact. These measures aimed at demoralizing the enemy's personnel, decreasing the level of combat, and generally giving up the fight.*

The historiography of the problem available today is mainly marked by preconceived ideas. The attitude of the Romanian servicemen, their level of combativeness or the willingness to lay down arms can be analysed only on the basis of their testimonies. Access to archival funds containing such information has been restricted for a long time and researchers have been forced to resort to studies of Soviet historians. Their works, however, were highly politicized and aimed at justifying and glorifying of the communist ideology. The present study uses historical sources from the Ukrainian archives which became accessible only after obtaining of the independence of Ukraine.

Keywords: *information, psychological influence, Romanian soldiers, ideological structures, Red Army, disintegration*

Rezumat. *Influența structurilor ideologice ale Armatei Roșii pe teritoriul Ucrainei asupra militarilor români, în timpul celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial. Articolul analizează anumite aspecte ale activității structurilor ideologice ale Armatei Roșii. Pe baza documentelor de arhivă, studiul trece în revistă modalitățile de realizarea unuia dintre principalele obiective ale structurilor ideologice ale Armatei Roșii – activitatea cu militarii inamicului, în vederea încurajării dezertării lor. Specialiștii*

departamentelor politice ale armatei sovietice luau în calcul lipsa de încredere a inamicului față de potențialele consecințe ale nimeririi în captivitatea sa. Această stare de spirit a fost susținută și promovată de Înaltul Comandament (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, OKW) german. Transmiterea informațiilor potrivit cărora prizonieratul sovietic era singura modalitate de a rămâne în viață și de întoarcere acasă după război reclama utilizarea unui anume set de măsuri, cu impact informațional și psihologic. Aceste măsuri urmăreau demoralizarea personalului inamicului, scăderea nivelului de combativitate și renunțarea la luptă în general.

Istoriografia problemei disponibilă astăzi este marcată în mare măsură de idei preconcepute. Atitudinea militarilor români, nivelul lor de combativitate sau dorința de a depune armele pot fi analizate doar în baza mărturiilor acestora. Accesul la fondurile arhivistice care cuprindeau asemenea informații a fost îngrădit o lungă perioadă de timp iar cercetătorii era constrânși să apeleze la studiile istoricilor sovietici. Lucrările acestora erau însă puternic politizate și aveau drept scop justificarea și glorificarea ideologiei comuniste. În prezentul studiu sunt valorificate surse istorice din arhivele ucrainene ce au devenit accesibile abia după dobândirea independenței Ucrainei.

Résumé : L'influence des structures idéologiques de l'Armée Rouge sur le territoire de l'Ukraine sur les militaires roumains, pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale. L'article ci-joint analyse certains aspects des activités des structures idéologiques de l'Armée Rouge. A la base des documents des archives, l'étude passe en revue les modalités de réalisation d'un des principaux objectifs des structures idéologiques de l'Armée Rouge – l'activité avec les militaires de l'ennemi, en vue d'encourager leur désertion. Les spécialistes des départements politiques de l'armée soviétique prirent en calcul le manque de confiance de l'ennemi envers les conséquences potentielles de la prise en captivité. Le Haut Commandement allemand (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, OKW) soutint et promut cet état d'esprit. La transmission des informations conformément auxquels la prison soviétique était l'unique modalité de rester vif et de revenir chez soi après la guerre réclama l'utilisation d'un certain set de mesures, avec impacte informationnel et psychologique. Ces mesures suivaient la démoralisation du personnel ennemi, la baisse du niveau de combativité et le renoncement à la lutte, en général.

L'historiographie du problème disponible aujourd'hui est marquée, en général, par des idées préconçues. On peut analyser l'attitude des militaires roumains, leur niveau de combativité ou le désir de déposer les armes seulement à la base de leurs témoignages. On bloqua longtemps l'accès aux fonds des archives qui comprenaient des informations semblables, pendant qu'on contraint les chercheurs à faire appel aux études des historiens soviétiques. Mais leurs travaux étaient puissamment politisés, ayant comme but de justifier et de glorifier l'idéologie communiste. On valorisa, l'étude ci-jointe, des sources historiques des archives ukrainiennes qui devinrent accessibles à peine après que l'Ukraine obtint son indépendance.

INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this topic from a historical point of view is due to the possibility of studying documents which had been hidden for a long time. There were reports of the heads of ideological departments of the Red Army, which contain information on interrogations of Romanian prisoners of war. The surrender of Romanian soldiers to the Red Army, testify for the effective influence of Soviet ideology. However, with careful examination of the testimonies under interrogation of captured Romanian soldiers, it is possible to understand their moods/states of mind and experiences. Analysing those interrogations of Romanian soldiers captured and wishing to return home, who had hopes of gaining land and were exhausted by the war, we understand that their answers are clearly structured. Employees of the ideological structures of the Red Army conducted during the interrogation a kind of sociological survey with a standard set of questions. They led these activities in order to find out the effectiveness of their propaganda methods. For the ideologists of the Red Army, it was important to know what method of informational and psychological influence on Romanian prisoners is more effective. We talk about the impact on people's psychology through the use of an appropriate information product. A large number of Allied forces fought on the side of Hitler's Germany. Representatives of each nationality reacted differently to Soviet propaganda and agitation. This article examines the impact of methods of influence on the motivation of Romanian servicemen to cease participation in the war on the side of Hitler's Germany.

ARGUMENTATION

The experience of the Second World War was an example of the use of powerful ideological mechanisms both by Germany and by the USSR. The use of non-military methods to neutralize the enemy was as important as the armed struggle. The foreign policy of Romania in World War II defined the goals for the return of territories, which the country had lost as a result of the Molotov - Ribbentrop Pact, signed by Germany and the Soviet Union in August 1939.

In 1940 Romania became the victim of massive and concerted diplomatic and military aggressions. By means of force treatment, important parts of the national territory were uprooted (about 100,000 km² and almost 7,000,000

inhabitants, namely 33% of the surface and population). Bessarabia (44,500 km² with 3,200,00 inhabitants) and the Northern part of Bucovina (6,000 km² with 500,000 inhabitants) were occupied by the Soviet Union following the ultimatum notes of 26 and 28 June 1940, the Northern part of Transylvania (43,492 km² with 2,667,000 inhabitants) by Hungary through the Dictate of Vienna of 30 August 1940, while the Southern Dobruja (Rom. Dobrogea, actually the counties Durostor and Caliacra, with 6,921 km² and 410,000 inhabitants), by Bulgaria through the Treaty of 7 September 1940.¹

In these tragic conditions, Romania was forced to go to a rapprochement with Germany. Germany guaranteed the integrity of the preserved part of the Romanian state. That is why Romania joined the war on the side of the Third Reich against the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. The purpose of the new government in the country (King Mihai I and General Ion Antonescu), democratic parties and the army was the restoration of the territorial integrity of the country. The 3th and 4th Romanian armies, together with the 11th German army, under the leadership of General Antonescu, released Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina by July 26, 1941. By difficult military and political conditions, when the Soviet Union was not defeated, and Hungary threatened to seize the southern part of Transylvania, Antonescu decided to continue the struggle on the side of Germany. The Romanian troops carried out a large-scale military operation near Odessa, in the middle of the Azov Sea, in the Crimea, south of Kharkov, in the Caucasus.²

The interest of the German military command was in the supply of oil, food, and the use of a significant number of personnel of the Romanian armed forces. Hitler's assault on the Soviet Union meant that oil supplies would be cut off from there. And, in this case, Germany was dependent on Romanian oil for 90%.³ The lands between the Dniester and Bug were named Transnistria. Ukrainian territory was divided into 13 counties, 64 districts, which included 15 cities, 18 suburban and 1363 rural communes with 2568 villages and 72 farms. The Transnistrian capital proclaimed Odessa, incorporating it into the newly established Romanian province on October 17, 1941. The Romanian administration (August 1941 - March 1944) established the so-called "Transnistrian Governance", headed by

¹ ****Armata Română în cel de-al doilea război mondial* [Romanian Army in World War II], București, Editura Meridiane, 1995, p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 202.

³ С. Демьянов, *Румыния во Второй мировой войне* [Romania in World War II], in http://www.world-history.ru/countries_about/2354.html/ (Accessed on 20.10.2017)

Governor G. Alexianu.⁴

A powerful incentive for the participation of the armed forces of Romania in the war on the side of Germany was the promise of Mihail and Ion Antonescu, appointed vice-premier of the government on the first day of the war.

So, the famous Circular No. 1500/A was wide-spread in the army, and stated that "... military units must compile registered lists of distinguished officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers deserving to be endowed with land on the territories which previously were Romanian. Lists must be compiled by military units every 15 days".⁵ In this case, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the document speaks of the potential distribution of land plots in the "liberated territories", that is, in Bessarabia and northern Bucovina.

The powerful informational and psychological influence of the ideological structures of the Red Army began to be realized since the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Treaty in 1939. This type of activity was characterized by the complexity, planning, and clear specialization in the areas. The most characteristic ways of carrying out information-psychological influence on the enemy were: the production and distribution of leaflets in the language of enemy troops (German, Romanian and Hungarian), so-called "oral propaganda", that is, the systematic disclosure of texts with appropriate content and appeals through sound reinforcement systems. A separate line of activity was the training and sending of specially trained prisoners of war back to their units to persuade other "Hitlerian" soldiers to end the armed struggle and surrender⁶. The reception points of prisoners of war and frontier transit camps were deployed by the Red Army on the fronts in July 1941.

⁴ В. Волошин. *Маршал Іон Антонеску як виразник «тотального націоналізму». Маловідомі факти антиукраїнської діяльності румунського диктатора* [Marshal Ion Antonescu as the spokesman for "total nationalism". Little-known facts of the anti-Ukrainian activities of the Romanian dictator] in https://dt.ua/SOCIETY/marshal_ion_antonesku_yak_viraznik_totalnogo_natsionalizmu_malovidomi_fakti_antiukrayin (Accessed on 20.10.2017).

⁵ *Внешняя политика Советского Союза в период Отечественной войны* [The foreign policy of the Soviet Union during the Patriotic War], Т. 1. Москва, 1946, с. 214.

⁶ *Политическая работа среди войск и населения противника в годы Великой Отечественной войны (1941-1945)* [Political work among the troops and the population of the enemy during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945)], Москва, Военное Издательство Министерства Обороны СССР, 1971, с. 196.

Specialists of 7 departments of the political departments of the armies, together with intelligence were engaged in the selection of prisoners of war for training with the aim of being sent beyond the front line. The Main Directorate of Political Propaganda of the Red Army instructed the structures of the propaganda of the fronts and armies to deploy political work among prisoners of war at transit points. For this purpose, distinguished political workers which knew German, Romanian and Finnish, which spoke conversationally, stood out. For the military prisoners it was necessary to find Soviet literature in foreign languages. It was necessary to report regularly about the results and all problematic issues to the Main Directorate of Political Propaganda.⁷

Despite this, there were actions taken by the army's ideological structures to study the possibilities of information-psychological influence upon the captured Romanian military personnel. In a letter from D. Manuilsky, the Political Leader of the Main Political Directorate, to Lev Mehlis, the head of the Main Political Administration of the Army, about the state of the psyche of prisoners of war located in the camp on August 15, 1941 pointed to such facts:

"German prisoners of war - especially fascists - are insolent. If Romanian prisoners of war, who come from the social point of view mainly from the poor peasantry, are susceptible to political processing, German prisoners of war in their relations with the Romanians are related to the «higher race». The German prisoners continue to spread rumours that «the German army is at the gates of Leningrad» that «Moscow is surrounded» and that Hitler will soon free up the prisoners of war... there is no differentiated approach to prisoners of war in the camp, their social status is not clear, their documents are not always studied and confirmed and that could highlight the political benefits of a prisoner of war. Hungarians and Romanians who instinctively hate the German fascists or against German soldiers deceived by the fascists are unacceptable to the fascist bandits who continue to behave in the camp as if they were at home."⁸

Given the authority of ideologically well-trained German prisoners of war, the author of the report speaks of the need for a differential approach to organization of content in the prisoner of war camp. In his opinion, any attempt at hostile agitation regarding the USSR should be stopped by a very tough military situation in accordance with Soviet legislation. In this case, we are talking about

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 190.

⁸ ****Prizonieri de război români în Uniunea Sovietică. Documente 1941-1956* [Romanian Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union. Documents 1941-1956], București, 2013, p. 34.

imperfect ideological work with Romanian prisoners of war, which, in the opinion of the Soviet leadership, are more ready to move to the sides of the Red Army.⁹

Later, in March 1943, the Military Command of the Red Army held a special meeting on political work with the prisoners. Questions were discussed about the achievements and shortcomings of this work. The Regulations on political work among prisoners of war in the USSR were adopted. The main task was to educate the bulk of prisoners of war in an antifascist spirit. It was necessary to turn them into friends of the USSR. It was necessary to use proven forms and methods of work to do this. At the same time, it was necessary to take into account the political level and national characteristics of the prisoners. The document recommended the following basic forms and methods: individual and group interviews; lectures and conferences to discuss topical political issues; publication and distribution of printed publications in the languages of prisoners; use of broadcasting with group hearing; prisoners of war at conferences and meetings were to receive appeals to their compatriots; had to send letters to their homeland and the army; organization of question and answer evenings; issue of wall newspapers; demonstration of motion pictures; organization of labour competition.¹⁰

And by 1944 the algorithm of work with Romanian prisoners of war had changed. When the Soviet Union organized military formations among prisoners of war, the Soviet authorities displayed a certain interest in the circumstances when the servicemen of the enemy army were imprisoned. In this sense, prisoners of war were asked whether they had been registered in the army under a mobilization order or at the request of registering as volunteers. They also had to declare their responsibility, whether they voluntarily surrendered to Soviet troops or were taken prisoner. Employees of the camps participating in the questionnaire had to complete the physical description of the interlocutor.

Questions of a personal nature about the relatives, about the cultural and religious views of the prisoner were included in the sociological questionnaire. All these data were extremely valuable source of information and could be used for various purposes, including attracting new supporters and supporters or neutralizing opponents of pro-Soviet political forces, blackmailing people for obtaining classified information, promoting foreign interests in various political, economic, cultural, religious and other areas.¹¹

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Политическая работа среди войск и населения противника...*, с. 190-191.

¹¹ *Prizonieri de război români în Uniunea Sovietică*, p. XVIII.

However, confidence in the invincibility of Hitler's Germany was shaken after the failure of the German offensive against Moscow in September 1941- April 1942. It was finally undermined after the defeat of the Allied forces in the Battle of Stalingrad in July 1942 - February 1943. By 1944 the Red Army fully owned a strategic initiative. Groups of German troops were significantly weakened by this time. However, the German High Command (OKW) did not consider this situation hopeless.

Antonescu's regime did not have the support of the entire Romanian society and a lot of Antonescu opponents were among the servicemen. It was not unusual for the Romanian soldiers to surrender voluntarily. Especially a lot of such cases were at Stalingrad, where the Romanian and Italian formations suffered a crushing defeat together with the army of von Paulus.

On February 2, 1943, a group of captured Romanian soldiers appealed to the Soviet government to give them the opportunity to fight volunteers along with the Red Army. In August 1943, the conference of Romanian prisoners of war authorized several of them to turn to Stalin for permission to form a volunteer legion. This initiative was supported by the Romanian communists who were in exile in the USSR. On October 4, 1943, the State Defence Committee adopted a resolution on the formation of the 1st Romanian Volunteer Infantry Division¹². The new compound was given the name of Tudor Vladimirescu, the national hero of Romania, who battled against Turkish rule in alliance with the Russians in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

By analogy with other foreign units that were being formed in the USSR during the war years, the form of the new compound was sewn on the models adopted in the Romanian army, with the only difference as the emblem "TV" (Tudor Vladimirescu). The officers of the division wore Red Army tunics and riding breeches, but with Romanian epaulettes. Colonel Nicolae Cambrea was the commander of the Romanian Volunteer Division. Before falling into Soviet captivity in 1942, Cambrea commanded the 5th Romanian Infantry Division.¹³

There was no shortage of volunteers-the number of Romanian prisoners of war who wanted to turn their weapons against Hitler and Antonescu was measured in thousands. To strengthen the ideological component of the division,

¹² *Дивизия народного героя. Как Румыния переходила на сторону СССР* [Division of the national Hero. How Romania moved to the side of the USSR], in http://www.aif.ru/society/history/diviziya_narodnogo_geroya_kak_rumyniya_perehodila_na_storonu_sssr (Accessed on 20.10.2017).

¹³ *Ibid.*

a commissioner was appointed to become a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Romania Anna Pauker.

The formation, armament and training of the division, which numbered about 9600 people, were completed by March 1944. On March 31, 1944, the 1st Romanian Volunteer Infantry Division named after Tudor Vladimirescu was sent by rail to the commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front.¹⁴

But, despite the facts, in 1944, mobilization was carried out into German troops; a military-industrial complex was operating. During interrogation on June 17, 1945, General-Field Marshal W. Keitel said that Germany's resources at that time were quite powerful: the production of weapons remained at the same level. This made it possible to maintain the army in a normal state. In consequence of air bombardment, individual enterprises were damaged. However, their production activities were quickly restored. We can say that Germany's military-economic situation became catastrophic only in late January 1945¹⁵. The ideological structures of the Red Army clearly understood the need for agitation and propaganda activities aimed at enemy troops.

The most accessible to the German allies was information posted in leaflets and transmitted through sound reinforcement installations. It should be noted that information about the military achievements of the Red Army raised doubts in the Nazi troops. Information about the actions on the territory of the Allies was actively discussed.

Unfortunately, leaflets and propaganda texts aimed at Romanian servicemen almost were not preserved in Ukrainian archives. We can learn this information from the partially preserved daily detailed reports of the political departments of the armies to the higher leadership. It should be noted that political interrogations of prisoners of war were the first form of ideological and political influence on them. The following tasks were defined in the instructions for the interview of prisoners of war: receiving information about the enemy, in the course of the conversation, awaken the class consciousness from the captive, a prudent understanding of his interests in this war. Thus, the propaganda of prisoners of war occurred. Individual questions of prisoners of war were supplemented by another effective form of work. There were group conversations

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Центральный архив Федеральной службы безопасности России [Central Archive of the Federal Security Service of Russia], Д. ПФ-10054. В 3-х тт. Т. 1. Л. 219-231, in <http://istmat.info/node/53807>

and meetings with the newly-captured servicemen.

In April 1942, an anti-fascist school for 100 people was established by the Bureau of military-political propaganda. It had two sectors – German and Romanian. The school's mission was to prepare anti-fascist personnel from the prisoners of war to work in the camps and at the front with the aim of disposing the enemy soldiers.¹⁶

From the first days of the war, the personnel of political departments of the Southern Front began to conduct such work with Romanian prisoners of war. They told Romanian captive officers and soldiers about the liberation mission of the Soviet people in this war. They disclosed the “real goals” of Hitler. They explained how the Hitler destroys Romania and enslaves other nations with his hands.¹⁷ We get information about it from the saved archives material of the interrogations of Romanian warriors.

Corporal Gölneu from company 3 of the 694th Infantry Regiment of 72 infantry divisions, captured in May 1944, trusted rather not Russian propaganda, but interpretations of events on the territory of Romania by Nazi propaganda. He said this during the interrogation: “Regarding the fact that the Red Army is already fighting on the territory of Romania, the soldiers are explained that the Russians have set themselves the goal of withdrawing Romania from the war. But this attempt fails, because: «The Romanians support Antonescu and bravely fight against the Russians». This is the real asset of the Romanians to the war. This is beneficial to the German army”.¹⁸ Attention is drawn to the fact of the consumer attitude towards the allies. Their actions must be subordinated to the benefits of the Germans. It is worth noting that, first of all, the degree of information-psychological impact was influenced by the actual situation of armed struggle. That is why one and the same information was perceived by the German servicemen in a different way in a few months.

Adolf Schaffhouser, the German soldier of the 13th company of the 669th regiment of the 371th division, who voluntarily went over to the side of the Red Army in August 1944, during the interview, testified: “About the events in Romania, the soldiers of our company learn about the events by the Russian sound broadcasts which were conducted on the night of 26 to 27 August. Audibility was

¹⁶ *Политическая работа среди войск и населения противника...*, с. 192.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Центральный государственный архив общественных объединений Украины [Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine. Hereinafter: ЦДАГО України], Фонд 1, Опись 23, Дело 972, л. 1.

good, as the installation stood in front of our positions. The announcer was a German, told that Romania had stopped military operations and Antonescu was arrested. Comrades told me about the fact that the installation informed, in addition, about the liberation of Paris. Hitler continues the war, because he has few dead soldiers. He wants to kill thousands more people”¹⁹.

Despite the fact that the Goebbels’ propaganda events were quite active, the actual military situation did not correspond to the propagated by a propaganda cliché. Information that the *Conducător* of Romania, Ion Antonescu, had been arrested, and military operations had ceased on the territory of the Allied Romania, contributed to the formation of decadent sentiments among the “Hitlerians” and the desire to preserve their lives, stopping the armed struggle. In these terms there was only one way out - surrender in the hope of returning alive to their homeland. The officers reasoned more pragmatically, given the views of the national socialist ideology regarding the prevailing position of Germany and the servicing role of all territories. Thus, in his testimony, Dr. Erich Haade in May 1944 says: “We, the officers, understand that Germany is compelled to capture Ukraine - otherwise Germany will not have anything to eat, that Germany is compelled to capture Romania, otherwise Germany will not have petrol ... Recent events have shown that with military offensives to Ukraine we will not succeed. Ukraine is lost, Romania is hanging by a thread. The loss of bread and gasoline means a final defeat for Germany”. According to archives data it was the opinion of imprisoned German officers.²⁰

A real assessment of the current situation leads to disappointing conclusions about the impossibility of continuing the war without provisions and fuel. During the period of the Second World War the Nazis were forced to form their military units from nationalist-minded representatives of the occupied territories. They fought together with the personnel of the armed forces of the allied states of Germany. In addition, both prisoners and former deserters were mobilized for service. Evidence of this is found in the testimony of Petru Golduș soldier of the 1st company of the 1012 worker’s battalion of the Romanian Infantry Division, who was captured in March 1944. He said: “The division has 8 workers’ battalions. The composition of the battalions is of delinquents and prisoners. The sentiments of soldiers, especially Hungarians and Ukrainians from Northern Bukovina, are

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, Дело 978, л. 54.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, Дело 972, л. 2.

suppressed. No one wants to fight in the ranks of the Germans. Taking advantage of the retreat, the soldiers scatter, some of them desert, and some leave with the Russians".²¹ It is clear that the motivation for this contingent to fight for Germany was extremely low. Any opportunity to stay alive and have the hope of returning home was used. Is it possible to condemn these servicemen for their actions? From the point of view of military discipline, they committed a crime and they deserve punishment. But it is worth taking into account the factors that influenced their participation in the war on the side of Germany.

The nationalist-minded citizens of the occupied territories had their own political goals related to the support of Nazi Germany. The implementation of plans for revamping annexed territories was possible only under the auspices of Germany.

The weakening of the positions of Hitler's Germany in the war led to the fact that the nationalist-minded representatives of the occupied territories firstly had doubts about the power and invincibility of the German armed forces. Later, there was a desire for self-preservation and unwillingness to fight for the already ephemeral victory of the Germans in the war. In this case, it is a question of prudence on both sides. And it would be foolish of Germany to surrender its positions to hope for the fidelity of the collaborators and their willingness to fight to the end. Militant moods were supported in many ways by the myth of the invincibility of the Wehrmacht, boastful promises of a quick victory.

D. Manuilsky, the Political Leader of the Main Political Directorate, in his reports on working with prisoners, mentioned that he Romanians instinctively hate German fascists or just German soldiers. The nature of fascism is understood only by the language of force.²² This fact is evidenced by the testimony of Corporal 1 battalion of the 4th Battalion of the 2nd Romanian Artillery Regiment Martin Stefan, taken prisoner on March 19, 1944 in the area of Gnivani Vinnytsia region. "The government of Antonescu promised every soldier, participant of the Dniester defence 20 hectares of land, provided the Romanians keep this territory. I and three other Romanian soldiers of our unit, stragglers regiment, who had already crossed the Dniester, were disarmed by the Germans and disguised as Italian uniforms. After that, they were sent to repair the dirt road Schastlivets -Vinnitsa."²³

²¹ *Ibidem*, Дело 973, л. 74.

²² *Prizonieri de război români în Uniunea Sovietică. Documente 1941-1956*, p. 34.

²³ ЦДАГО України, Фонд 1, Опись 23, Дело 974, л. 100.

The use of Allied military personnel not for their intended purpose, with demeaning functions for them, also influenced the formation of anti-war sentiments. In the spring of 1944, the German command began to show loyalty to the former deserters from the Allied military personnel who served their sentences in places of deprivation of liberty. Soldiers of 1015 workers of the Romanian battalion Constantine Stan and Adrian Dumitrescu, captured in March 1944 said that they had been sent to the front from prison, where the first served a sentence of 20 years, and the second 10 years for desertion. The most common disease in the working battalion is jaundice due to a lack of nutrition supplied by the Germans.²⁴ As can be seen from the report, the attitude of the German command to the Romanian military personnel was disparaging. Romanian soldiers in a short phrase outlined the tragic horror of the situation of servicemen of the ally country, with whom the German command treated inappropriately.

The tragedy of people who did not want to fight for Germany, forced into punishment to serve a long term of imprisonment and subsequent coercion to violent activity at the front, grew into the tragedy of a whole nation. And this was expressed not only in the situation that developed at the front. Romanian soldiers were forced to tolerate Germans on the territory of the kingdom. So, the soldier Myron Lank, taken prisoner in March 1944, said during the interrogation that he did not believe the German command. "They as allies must behave on the territory of Romania. And in fact they behave like invaders and robbers. From letters from home I know that the Germans take away cattle, property and in general, treat the Romanians as invaders. My family suffers from hunger and cold²⁵."

Captured in March 1944, the soldier Petre Mocanu testifies that he does not trust the German command. His wife wrote in a letter that the Nazis who had come to their city began to commit outrage and were raped, despite the fact that she had given birth a few months ago. How can, in his opinion, believe those who behave like an occupier²⁶.

The information about the difficult situation in the families of Romanian soldiers greatly affected their morale and readiness to carry out the assigned tasks. Despite the fact that all measures were taken by the censorship to prevent such news from reaching the front, Romanian soldiers received this news. It increased the anti-war sentiment. The German command, in no way putting the

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ ЦДАГО України, Фонд 1, Опись 23, Дело 975, л. 24.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, Дело 973, л. 92.

life of Romanian soldiers, often threw them at the most dangerous sites and forced them to make a breakthrough. The more the unwillingness to fight on the Soviet-German front of the Romanian soldiers revealed, the more openly the Nazis expressed their disdain for the Romanians. The number of skirmishes between Romanian and German soldiers has continuously increased.²⁷

In this regard, back in November 1941, there was an order No. 28010, signed by the commander of the 3rd Romanian Army, General Dumitrescu, in which it was stated that “in order to avoid misunderstandings and sad incidents in the future, which took place between Romanian and German soldiers”, Romanian units “in the case of complaints on disputes with the Germans should be absolutely courteous for”, as further noted in the order, these conflicts “can have serious consequences for the implementation of our wishes in the future ...”²⁸. Thus, it can be concluded that, worried about this state of affairs, Romanian officers intimidated the soldiers with fables about the “Russian captivity”, tried to convince them that they would be shot. As prisoners of war were told, the soldiers were still under the influence of this propaganda and were afraid to go over to the side of the Soviet troops.

Regarding this, the political agencies of the Red Army issued a number of leaflets, addressed the Romanian soldiers, saying that “the Soviet command provides all those who will go over to the side of the Red Army, life, good treatment and return to their homeland after the war”²⁹. A Romanian serviceman, Florian Poienaru, taken prisoner in the spring of 1944, says that the Romanian commanders are not respected by the Romanians, although they are afraid. They are not in a hurry to surrender, as rumour has it that the war was lost by the Germans and it is necessary to flee to Romania³⁰.

The issue of the Romanian military prisoners is being studied by Romanian researchers together with their foreign colleagues. Despite of the possibility of studying open archival materials, many questions remain unanswered. In general, the number of Romanian prisoners in the Soviet Union after the Second World

²⁷ Н. Э. Левит, *Вступление Румынии в войну против Советского Союза*, in М. Чернов, *Крестовый поход на Россию. Сборник статей* [The Crusade against Russia], Москва, Яуза, 2005, с. 221, in http://militera.lib.ru/h/sb_crusade_in_rossia/03.html (Accessed on 20.09.2017).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 221-222.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³⁰ ЦДАГО України, Фонд 1, Опись 23, Дело 974, л. 102.

War is not known with precision. Until August 23, 1944, when Romania joined the anti-Hitler coalition, about 165,000 Romanian soldiers were missing; most of them were captured in Soviet captivity. After August 23, Soviet troops disarmed and captured about 100,000 Romanian military. According to official Soviet sources, which should be treated with great care, in 1946 there were 50 thousand Romanian prisoners in Soviet camps.³¹

It is difficult for specialists to determine how many Romanian soldiers surrendered voluntarily and how many of them surrendered under the influence of information-psychological influence from the army ideological structures.

Vitalie Văratîc, the author of the study *Romanian prisoners of war in the Soviet Union / Documents of 1941-1956* launched an idea: "Today we do not even know the exact number of Romanian prisoners of war. The language of the documents of that time used the term <<missing>>. If these people, when crossing some obstacle, for example rivers, fell into the water, no one else knew what happened to them. One of my colleagues, whom we worked with on the research, tried to recreate the list of those killed in the battle of the Gypsy, and he told me that even to this day it is impossible to determine the number of dead, captured and missing accurately. These people are included in the category of missing persons, despite the fact that no one knows what happened to them. And this is only in the battle on the river Prut. And what happened on the Don, or during the crossing of the Dnieper, or near Stalingrad?³²"

According to military historians, the total number of victims from the Romanian army was 794,562 troops, of which 92,620 people were killed, 333,966 injured and 367,976 missing persons.³³ In this way, we can talk about motivation for the cessation of hostilities within the German armed forces, backed up by the possibility of desertion and return home in the years 1944-1945. In Romania, there have been fundamental changes in the reorientation of an ally. King Mihai I arrested Antonescu, and Romania joined the anti-Hitler coalition. Its participation in the war on the German side ended. At the same time, a number of convinced Romanian fascists voluntarily joined the SS forces.³⁴ It should be noted that after some hesitation, the Soviet command decided to use Romanian formations at the

³¹ Румынские пленные в СССР после Второй Мировой Войны [Romanian prisoners in the USSR after World War II] // http://www.rri.ro/ru_ru-13287 (Accessed on 20.12.2017)

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Prizonieri de război români în Uniunea Sovietică Documente 1941-1956*, p. XI.

³⁴ С. Демьянов. *op. cit.*

front. The 1st Army (created on the basis of divisions and training units withdrawn from Crimea) and the new 4th Army (almost entirely composed of training units) began fighting in Transylvania again. Another type of propaganda influence is connected with this territory at different stages of the war. This is poster propaganda. Unfortunately, there is very little evidence of it in the Ukrainian archives.

A feature of the zone of Romanian occupation in Ukrainian territories is the small amount of visual ideological propaganda products of Romanian origin. The authorship of most posters and caricatures belongs to German artists. The decision to replicate one of the most massive posters on the territory of the Transnistrian governorate was adopted after the tenth issue of the "Odesa Gazeta" on November 23, 1941, on the first page of which the article "Transnistria will be Romanian forever" was published. This article was reprinted from Transnistria (Bucharest). As an illustration, the article depicts the image of two servicemen, depicting Transnistria territory in a dynamic, offensive movement from the Dniester to the Bug with clear cartographic outline. Under the onslaught of servicemen over the Bug area, the Bolshevik fled from the background of a sickle and a hammer burning in the fire. The soldiers depicted in the foreground with a rifle in their hands are easily attributed to the Romanian soldier, thanks to the clearly depicted Dutch helmet of the M34 model, which, after the occupation of the Netherlands, Germany handed over to the Romanian allies (picture 1. See Annexes).³⁵

Unique in his artistic and symbolic decision is the work of Sylvestrovich (picture 2), published on the title page of the Odessa newspaper from January 1, 1943. Under the New Year's congratulations, a Romanian rider was depicted with a banner in his hand and the date "1943". The horse became dowry before a Bolshevik soldier who asks for mercy, lying on the tune of 1942, lifting up his left arm, and holding his busby in his right hand. In the upper left part of the image behind the horse's head, the author depicted the steel crown of Romania from which, like from the sun, the rays. The subject of promotional visual products was the only one for the German and Romanian occupation zones, since artistic performance had its own specific features inherent in the region. One of the most

³⁵ Олександр Маєвський, *Карикатура та політичний плакат у періодичних виданнях півдня України (1941-1944 рр.)* [Caricature and political booklets in periodical of the south of Ukraine (1941-1944 years)], in "Black Sea Scientific Journal of Academic Research Multidisciplinary Journal", Vol. 25, 2015, No. 7, p. 53-54.

massive coloured posters in the territory of the Romanian occupation zone was the poster "Transnistria" (picture 3), which was published by the department of propaganda of the administration of the governorship. Chromolithographic picture came out of typography of Odessa municipality.³⁶

The lower part of the poster attracts attention in intense colours, a smiling figure of a woman with a sheaf in her hand and a sunshine against the background of a church bath with a cross and a column of an ionic order and a dwelling house that should not have been symbolized by the reflection of free labour and freedom of conscience in the Romanian occupation zone. The image and manner of performance gives grounds for the conclusion that the author himself was a representative of the Romanian or Ukrainian ethnos.³⁷

These samples of poster art served as propaganda on the territory created by the German command of Transnistria. The themes on the posters change rapidly after Romania's accession to the USSR in the fight against German fascism. We have the same dynamics, almost the same ways of stylistic image. But now the Romanian soldier, along with the Red Army, is destroying the "Hitlerian" soldier³⁸ (picture 4). Researchers today are trying to answer the question of why so few samples of the visual program on the topic of Romania's participation in the Second World War in the Ukrainian archives were preserved. The effectiveness of such propaganda was recognized by the special organs of the Red Army. For the found at an Red Army soldiers' an enemy leaflet, a newspaper or another kind of agitation-propaganda production he was executed.³⁹ If we take into account the fact that this territory subsequently moved back to the USSR, the storage of such samples was dangerous for citizens. Compared with the number of German and Soviet models of poster propaganda, the number of surviving Romanian samples is small. So, this could offer one of the directions of historical research.

Continuing to consider the theme of the allied actions of Romania and the USSR, it should be noted that in the military operations against the German-Hungarian troops the Romanian air force actively manifested itself. In total, according to experts' calculations, Romania lost 350 thousand people in battles

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ А. Гогун, *Черный пиар Адольфа Гитлера. СССР в зеркале нацистской пропаганды* [*Black PR Adolf Hitler. USSR in the mirror of the Nazi propaganda*], Изд. 2-е, испр. и доп., Киев, «К. І. С.», 2016, с. 15.

with Soviet troops and in the end of the war another 170 thousand in battles with German and Hungarian troops. The irrevocable loss of Romania for 1941-1944 on the Soviet-German front of the Second World War amounted to 475,070 military personnel⁴⁰.

Modern researchers believe that according to the strategic, political and material benefits of the number of participating troops, Romania ranks fourth among the participants in the defeat of fascism in the final stage of the war. Participating on the side of the United Nations, Romania for 6 months brought the end of the war closer. But at the peace conference in 1946 in the Paris Romania was included in the composition of the conquered countries. She was denied the status of partner.⁴¹

RESULTS

Given all of the above, there are grounds for the following approval:

1. The Romanian nation became simultaneously a participant and a victim of the events of the Second World War. A change of the territories as a result of the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the establishment of a military dictatorship and a battle on the side of Hitler's Germany in the hope of regaining the lost lands, determined the vector of the foreign policy of the country.

2. When the strategic initiative moved to the side of the Red Army, Romanian soldiers began to increasingly feel the disdain of the Germans. This circumstance became one of the causes of distrust in relation to the German allies. This, in turn, led to the formation of sentiments regarding the cessation of participation in hostilities.

3. Informational and psychological influence was exercised on the Romanian military personnel, as well as on the entire personnel of the German armed forces. Information and psychological influence both from Hitler's propaganda and from Soviet propaganda were made. Under the dual ideological influence, in 1944, the Romanian military trusted information, received from leaflets and sound informational messages of Soviet propagandists. This information was confirmed by the real situation in the war, when the successful

⁴⁰ Г. Ф. Кривошеев (ред.), *Россия и СССР в войнах 20-го века. Потери вооруженных сил. Статистическое исследование* (Russia and the USSR in the wars of the 20th century. Losses of the armed forces. Statistical study), Москва, «Олма-Пресс», 2001.

⁴¹ ****Armata Română în cel de-al doilea război mondial*, p. 202.

actions of the Red Army instilled uncertainty in the victory among the personnel of the enemy troops.

4. The main methods used by the ideological organs of the Red Army were a specially created information product: leaflets, sound transmissions. Interrogations played a special role. Specially trained specialists during the interrogations received information and tried to re-propagate the prisoners. By using the use of communication, the prisoners formed a class consciousness. In addition, single interrogations and collective ones were used. Several prisoners, who had undergone a certain propaganda treatment, influenced their comrade. Soviet military ideologists thus formed the necessary point of view.

5. A special role was played by information on the Soviet captivity from the words of prisoners who were specially processed in the Red Army and returned to their units. Working with prisoners of war as agitators for Soviet captivity brought its results and gained effectiveness considering the fact that the degree of confidence in the prisoners - anti-fascists on the part of the Nazis and their allies was previously quite high.

6. From the side of the ideological organs of the Red Army, powerful psychological pressure was exercised. The purpose of informational-psychological influence was to force Romanian soldiers to stop the armed struggle and surrender. In all propaganda materials one semantic block sounded: "If you want to stay alive and return home, you need to surrender to captivity".

7. The propaganda work on the part of both the Red Army and Germany strengthened. Offers to surrender and to enter into the Soviet captivity sounded very insistent. They were backed up by the real situation at the front and the successful actions of the Red Army. However, it is worth noting the fact that Romanian soldiers were often guided by another opinion. Some archival documents testify to the following fact: Romanian soldiers understood that they were fighting near the territory of their country. The option to surrender and then go home changed the option to stop the armed struggle in alliance with Germany and immediately go to defend their national and personal values. It is worth noting that, according to the generally accepted assessment of modern researchers, Romania occupies the fourth place among the participants in the defeat of Nazi Germany in terms of strategic, political and material participation, according to the number of participating troops.

CONCLUSIONS

On the whole, it can be said that the experience of organizing ideological work during the Second World War is relevant today for the Armed Forces of any country in confrontation with the enemy. Demoralization and reduction of the readiness of fight at the enemy personnel was and it is an important element for reducing the use of own military forces and minimizing losses. Modern technologies associated with the use of the Internet and mobile devices become ineffective in the absence of electricity or network. Even in the presence of electricity and the Internet, enemy means of electronic warfare play an important role in stopping the flow of information. Therefore, the experience of neutralizing the enemy in a non-military way, tested in the Second World War, will always be relevant, given the constant possibility of using direct communication with war prisoners.

ANNEXES



Picture 1, "Transnistria will be Romanian forever"



Picture 2, "Happy New Year!"



Picture 3, "Transnistria"



Picture 4, "The Romanian Army alongside the glorious Red Army"