

Although censorship of the press had concealed the disaster as it evolved, apprehension had grown as Bucharest was inundated with wounded, all from Turtucaia.⁸⁵ On the evening of 6 September at the Jockey Club, a member of Aslan's staff acknowledged the surrender of the city and the loss of 30,000 men. A "wave of consternation" swept over this gathering place for Romania's elite. Longtime advocates of intervention wept like children. Opponents of the war said "I told you so" and began to think of a separate peace.⁸⁶ For Brătianu, who had engineered Romania's belligerency, it was a dark hour of the soul. Deeply depressed, he wept with his head in his hands at a cabinet meeting. His only catharsis was to heap reproach on Romania's allies, especially French General Maurice Sarrail, for failing to aid Romania by aggressively attacking Bulgaria from Salonika.⁸⁷ The general population learned of the surrender of Turtucaia late on 7 September. Panic swept over Bucharest. Visions of Bulgarians crossing the Danube and marching on the city were on many minds. "It appeared to me that everything was caving in around me," wrote one prominent citizen. "In one moment, the entry of the enemy into Bucharest, invasion, evacuation and all the miseries of exile passed before my eyes." Reassurances, especially those in the government press, were received with skepticism.⁸⁸ To stop the spread of alarmist rumor and criticism of the regime, popular restaurants and coffee houses were closed; street gatherings of more than two persons were prohibited. Citizens of means began to desert the capital for Moldavia or even Russia.⁸⁹ Perhaps the one positive result of the catastrophe of Turtucaia for the public was that it replaced dreams of an easy victory with the realization that the war, if it could be won, would be long and bloody.

The surrender of Turtucaia and the reaction to it in Bucharest unnerved the Romanian High Command. On 7 September it restricted and on 15 September it halted altogether the promising advance of its armies in Transylvania, before they had linked up on a defensible front. With troops transferred from the north, MCG undertook to launch a major offensive across the Danube "to quiet fears in Bucharest and to restore morale in the army." The intention was to resume the advance in Transylvania after "stabilizing" the situation in the south. But the assault crossing of the Danube west of Turtucaia at

Flămânda took time to organize and began only on 1 October. It resulted in another humiliating failure.⁹⁰ In the meantime, the window of opportunity closed for Romanian armies in the north. To be fair, one must point out that Romania's French and Russian allies not only approved of what amounted to an ill-advised abandonment of the original war plan but insisted upon it.⁹¹

For the Central Powers, on the other hand, the consequences of the Battle of Turtucaia were a godsend. The Bulgarians were "beside themselves with joy," more self confident and committed to the war by this "Cannae victory."⁹² News of the capture of Turtucaia brought relief to Austro-German leaders. "Long live the Fieldmarshal [Mackensen]..." exclaimed General Hans von Seeckt, the German chief of staff of the Austro-Hungarian Southeastern Front.⁹³ Kaiser Wilhelm, who had been particularly depressed by Romania's entry, celebrated with a champagne party for the Bulgarian representative at OHL.⁹⁴ The plan of the Austro-German leaders to undermine the advance of Romanian armies in Transylvania with an attack in Dobrogea had succeeded more quickly and completely than they had dared hope. The suspension of the Romanian offensive in Transylvania, which had threatened to overrun the province, gave them time to bring in new forces and then to go over to the attack. During the month of September, while Romanian attention and resources were concentrated on the south, more than 20 trains per day rolled into Transylvania bearing reinforcements from all over Europe, including the elite German Alpine Corps.⁹⁵ On 16 September, General Erich von Falkenhayn arrived to take command of the newly-created German IX Army. He was determined to smash the enemy whose untimely entry into the war had been the catalyst for his dismissal as head of OHL.⁹⁶ In only two weeks (26 September-10 October), his forces drove the weakened and strategically distracted Romanians out of Transylvania. Then, in November, together with Mackensen's forces attacking across the Danube, the IX Army overran Wallachia. On 6 December, as the Romanian army and government fled eastward into Moldavia, Bucharest surrendered. Only 100 days after entering the war, more than half of Romanian territory lay under enemy occupation. While the disastrous defeat of the Romanian Army in the campaign of 1916 was conditioned by many factors, the Battle of Turtucaia was its catalyst.

Notes

1. Constantin Kirişescu, *O viaşă, o lume, o epoca: memorii* (Bucharest: Editura sport-turism, 1979), 211.
2. Ulrich von Henning, "Kriegs Erinnerungen," Bundesarchiv, Militärarchiv (Freiburg), Bestand N 440, Teil III, 41. Henning was German liaison officer with the Bulgarian III Army in Dobrogea.
3. Glenn E. Torrey, "The Romanian Campaign of 1916: Its Impact on the Belligerents," *Slavic Review*, 34:1 (1980), 227-32. (Reprinted in Glenn E. Torrey, *Romania and World War I: A Collection of Studies* (Iaşi: Center for Romanian Studies, 1998).
4. Constantin Argetoianu, *Pentru ce de mîine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, vol. III, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 35.
5. Constantin Kirişescu, *Istoria războiului pentru întregirea României, 1916-1919*, vol. I (Bucharest: Casa şcoalelor, n.d.), 168; Ioan Diniu, "1916. Primele doua luni de front," *Magazin istoric*, 34:3 (2001), 37.
6. Boris Cholpanov, "Atakata ovladiavaneto na Tutrakanskata krepost prez purvata svetovna voina," *Voennoistoricheske sbornik*, 59:3 (1990), 103; Henning, "Erinnerungen," 11.
7. Ivan Popov, *Die Einnahme der Brückenkopffestung Tutrakan in Jahre 1916 und die bulgarische Wehrmacht von heute* (Berlin: Heymanns, 1941); Volodya Milachkov, "Nachna konferentsiia za tutrakanskata epopeia i osvobozhdenieto na Dobrudzha," *Istoricheski pregled*, 53:2, (1997), 170-172.
8. Petur Boichev, "Purvata svetovna voina 1915-1918 g. Bitaka za Tutrakan," *Uchastieto na tutrakantsi vuv voinite: sbornik s izsledvaniia* (Tutrakan: Istoricheski muzei, 1995), 148.
9. Nicolae Negrescu, *Comment on fit la guerre sur le Danube 1916-1918* (Bucharest: Imprimeriile naţionale, 1938), 104-105; Gheorghe A. Dabija, *Armata română în războiul mondial, 1916-1918*, vol. I (Bucharest: Eminescu, n.d.), 179-181. Reichsarchiv, *Der Weltkrieg 1914 bis 1918*, vol. XI (Berlin: Mittler, 1938), 203.
10. Negrescu, *Comment*, 105.
11. Ion Cupşa, *Armata română în campaniile din anii 1916-1917* (Bucharest: Editura militară, 1967), 65.
12. Alexandru Ioanişiu, *Războiul româniei 1916-1918* (Bucharest: Tipografia genului, n.d.), 47-48; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 182-185; Negrescu, *Comment*, 110, 113-118; Nicolae Negrescu, *Rotul marinei în războiul pentru întregirea neamului şi recompensa finală* (Bucharest: Gutemberg, 1920), 20-21.
13. Pamfil Şeicaru, *La Roumanie dans la grande guerre* (Paris: Minard, 1968), 304.
14. Cupşa, *Campaniile*, 65-66; Popov, *Tutrakan*, 7.
15. A French military attaché, visiting Turtucaia in June 1916, recognized the obsolescence of the fortifications but out of concern for Romanian *amour propre* refrained from pointing this out to the Romanian chief of operations who accompanied him. Major Jules Pichon, "Historique de négociations poursuivies avec le gouvernement roumain en Juin 1916," Archives de la Guerre (Vincennes), Attaché Militaire Rapports (Roumanie), Carton 8.
16. Ilie Ceauşescu, et. al., *România în anii primului război mondial* [hereafter RAPRM], vol. I (Bucharest: Editura militară, 1987), 339; Negrescu, *Comment*, 190.

17. Andrei Zaiionchkovskii, "Dobrudzha avgusta-oktiabr' 1916 goda," Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstyennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv (Moscow), fond 69; Glenn E. Torrey, "Indifference and Mistrust: Russian-Romanian Collaboration in the Campaign of 1916," *Journal of Military History*, 57:2 (1993), 282. (Reprinted in Torrey, *Collection of Studies*).

18. Argetoianu, *Amintiri*, III, 33; I.G. Duca, *Amintiri politice*, vol. II (Munich: Dumitru, 1981), 15.

19. His chief of staff, General Gheorghe Mărdărescu, had received advanced military training in Vienna and Berlin. His chief of operations, Lt. Colonel Gheorghe Dabija, the former military attaché in Sofia was knowledgeable on the Bulgarian army. Both had distinguished careers later in the war. C. Căzănișteanu, et. al., *Comandanți militari dicționar* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1983), 214-215.

20. Mihail Aslan, *Memoriu asupra caderei capului de pod Turtucaia* (Iași: Ecoul, 1918), 5-6.

21. Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 252-253. Reportedly Teodorescu refused to cooperate when MCG wanted to replace him with an engineering officer and give him command of a field division. Negrescu, *Comment*, 102.

22. Constantin Teodorescu, "Memoriu asupra caderei capului de pod Turtucaia," Arhiva Statului (Bucharest), Fond Casa Regală, 53/1916; Kirijescu, *Războiului*, I, 171; Negrescu, *Comment*, 113.

23. Kirijescu, *Războiului*, I, 171.

24. Teodorescu, "Memorii"; Duca, *Amintiri*, II, 15.

25. Diniu, "1916," 39.

26. Alexandru Lupașcu-Stejar, *Din războiul româniei în lumea adevărului* (Bucharest: Tipografia serviciului geografic al armatei, 1921), 32; Sterea Costescu, *Din carnetul unei căpitan. Însemnări și amintiri din războiul pentru întregirea neamului 1 August 1916 - 1 April 1917* (Focșani, n.p., 1927).

27. Teodorescu, "Memoriu."

28. Costescu, *Carnetul*, 38, 41, 56-7, 132; Romulus Scărișoreanu, *Fragmente din războiul 1916-1918* (Bucharest: Tiparul cavaleriei, 1934), 32.

29. *Der Weltkrieg*, XI, 204; Kriegsarchiv, *Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg 1914-1918*, vol. V (Vienna: Militärwissenschaftlichen Mitteilungen, 1934), 275.

30. Glenn E. Torrey, "The Redemption of an Army: The Romanian Campaign of 1917," *War and Society*, 12:2 (1994), 22-42. (Reprinted in Torrey, *Collection of Studies*).

31. When Romania declared war, Mackensen moved from the Macedonian front to Tŭrnovo in Northern Bulgaria to take personal command of the forces of the Central Powers on the Danube. Wolfgang Foerster, ed., *Mackensen. Briefe und Aufzeichnungen* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1938), 277, 282.

32. Popov, *Tutakan*, 3.

33. Toshev (1859-1924) commanded the III Army 1915-1916 and later the IV Bulgarian Army on the Macedonian Front. Ivan Stoichev, *Stroitelii i boini vozhdove na Bulgarska Voiska 1879-1941* (Sofia: Todorov, 1941), 41.

34. Henning, "Erinnerungen," 24; Cholpanov, "Atakata," 128, 130.

35. Kurt Baron von Hammerstein (1878-1943). Postwar leader in the Reichswehr (1929 - chief of the Truppenamt, 1930 - chief of the Heeresleitung). An associate of General Kurt von Schleicher in opposing National Socialism. He was involved in the "generals' plot" of 1938.

36. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 112; Henning, "Erinnerungen," 16. Noykov later served as chief of operations for the Bulgarian High Command and after the war as chief of staff of the Bulgarian Army. Stoichev, *Stroitelii*, 37.
37. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 131.
38. These ratios are figured on the basis of battalions. Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 186; Cholpanov, "Atakata," 113; Boichev, "Tutrakantsi," 153.
39. Negrescu, *Rolul*, 18.
40. Foerster, *Mackensen*, 284; *Der Weltkrieg*, XI, 203.
41. Boichev, "Tutrakantsi," 142; Ioanijiu, *Războiul românesc*, 48.
42. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 106, 112; Boichev, "Tutrakantsi," 134-135; Popov, *Tutrakan*, 35.
43. Negrescu, *Comment*, 141-142; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 196-197.
44. Popov, *Tutrakan*, 16.
45. Ministerul Apărării Naționale, Marele Stat Major, serviciul istoric, *România în războiul mondial 1916-1919*, vol. I [hereafter *RRM*], (Bucharest: Monitorul oficial, 1934), Documente-Anexe, #305, #306; Teodorescu, "Memoriu"; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 198.
46. Nicolae Iorga, *O viața de om*, (Bucharest: Stroila, 1934), 227.
47. *RRM*, I, 474.
48. Toma Dumitrescu, *Jurnal. Războiul național 1916* (Bucharest: Academie militare, 1999), 31; Aslan, "Memoriu," 11; Kirițescu, *Războiului*, I, 176.
49. *RRM*, I, 486.
50. Henning, "Erinnerungen," 36.
51. Radu Rosetti, *Mărturisiri 1914-1919* (Bucharest: Editura Modelism, 1997), 110.
52. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #432; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 209; Aslan, *Memoriu*, 13; Rosetti, *Mărturisiri*, 110.
53. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 103; Popov, *Tutrakan*, 17-19; *RRM*, I, 553.
54. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #325, #327, #328.
55. Ioan Anastasiu, *Războiul pentru întregirea neamului: Studiu critic* (Bucharest: Bucovina, 1937), 300-301; Scărișoreanu, *Fragmente*, 34-35; Cupșa, *Campaniile*, 70-71.
56. Zaionchkovskii to Alekseev, 10/23 August, Zaionchkovskii, "Dobrudzha," 2-5; *RRM*, I, 494.
57. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #443; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 211-212, 291; Zaionchkovskii, "Dobrudzha," 12.
58. Lupașcu-Stejar, *Din războiul*, 75-78; Cupșa, *Campaniile*, 69.
59. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #342, #346, #348; Lupașcu-Stejar, *Din războiul*, 24 ff, *RRM*, I, 525-529.
60. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #334, #554; Lupașcu-Stejar, *Din războiul*, 46-62; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 274-277; *RRM*, I, 558-561. Cholpanov ("Atakata," 122) summarizes the battle from the Bulgarian perspective.
61. *RRM*, I, 509-511; Negrescu, *Rolul*, 25; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 216 ff.
62. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 119.
63. Negrescu, *Comment*, 153-154; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 216, 222.
64. Henning, "Erinnerungen," 41.
65. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 117-118, 126; Lupașcu-Stejar, *Din războiul*, 14; Kirițescu, *Războiului*, I, 187.
66. *RRM*, I, 516 ff; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 222-225.

67. Henning, "Erinnerungen," 38-39.
68. Popov, *Tutrankan*, 27-28; Cholpanov, "Atakata," 117, 119, 126, 130.
69. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, I, #339; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 232-233, *RRM*, I, 523.
70. Teodorescu, "Memoriu"; Negrescu, *Comment*, 154.
71. *RRM*, I, 525; Dumitrescu, *Jurnal*, 32.
72. Argetoianu, *Amintiri*, III, 35; Kirişescu, *Războiului*, I, 180; Negrescu, *Comment*, 166.
73. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #340; Nicolae Ionescu, *Generalul Eremia Grigorescu* (Bucharest: Editura militară, 1967), 29.
74. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 120-121.
75. Negrescu, *Rolul*, 31.
76. Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 240; *RRM*, I 548 ff.
77. *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #359; Rosetti, *Mărturisiri*, 110.
78. Negrescu, *Comment*, 173-174; *RRM*, I, 550; *RRM*, I, Documente-Anexe, #360. Teodorescu's critics are wrong when they maintain that he "deserted" or "fled" his post.
79. *RRM*, I, 551; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 244. *Comitadji* were Bulgarian irregulars who, according to Henning ("Erinnerungen," 40), "took no prisoners, neither men nor women, neither children nor elderly."
80. Negrescu, *Rolul*, 35.
81. Argetoianu, *Amintiri*, III, 34; Cholpanov, "Atakata," 122; Negrescu, *Comment*, 174-176; Kirişescu, *Războiului*, I, 185.
82. Negrescu, *Comment*, 173.
83. Kirişescu, *Războiului*, I, 185-186.
84. Boichev, "Tutrakantsi," 160; *RRM*, I, 552; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 245. No complete accounting of casualties exists. The Bulgarians admit 1500 killed in action at Turtucaia. Among the Romanians, the 79th Infantry Regiment alone suffered over 1500 dead; their total must have been twice that. The best estimate is that each side counted 8000-9000 men and officers dead, wounded, and missing. Cholpanov, "Atakata," 126; Dabija, *Armata română*, I, 246-247.
85. Şerban Rădulescu-Zoner, Beatrice Marinescu, *Bucureşti în anii primului război mondial 1914-1918* (Bucharest: Albatros, 1993), 57.
86. Alexandru Marghiloman, *Notice politice*, vol. II (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1927), 171, 173; Duca, *Amintiri*, II, 18; Argetoianu, *Amintiri*, III, 34-35; D. Iancovici, *Take Ionescu* (Paris: Payot, 1919), 129.
87. St. Aulaire to Paris, 8 September, Archives Diplomatiques (Paris), Serie Guerre 1914-1918, vol. 99; Argetoianu, *Amintiri*, III, 36, 46.
88. Universul (Bucharest), 26/8 September, Neli Cornea, *Însemnări din vremea războiului* (Bucharest: Steinberg, n.d.), 14-18; Vasile T. Canticov, *Impresiuni şi păreri personale din timpul războiului României*, vol. I (Bucharest: Universul, 1921), 44.
89. Rădulescu-Zoner, *Bucureşti*, 60; Canticov, *Impresiuni*, I, 47; Marghiloman, *Note*, II, 173.
90. Cupşa, *Campaniile*, 79-81; *RRM*, II, 4-7; Alexandru Averescu, *Operaţiile de la Flămânda* (Bucharest: Cultura naţională, 1923), 4.
91. Glenn E. Torrey, "The Entente and the Romanian Campaign of 1916," *Rumanian Studies*, 4 (1976-1979), 180-184. (Reprinted in Torrey, *Collection of Studies*).
92. Foerster, *Mackensen*, 286-287.

93. Friedrich von Rabenau, ed., *Hans von Seeckt, Aus meinem Leben 1866-1917* (Leipzig: Hase & Koehler, 1938), 451.

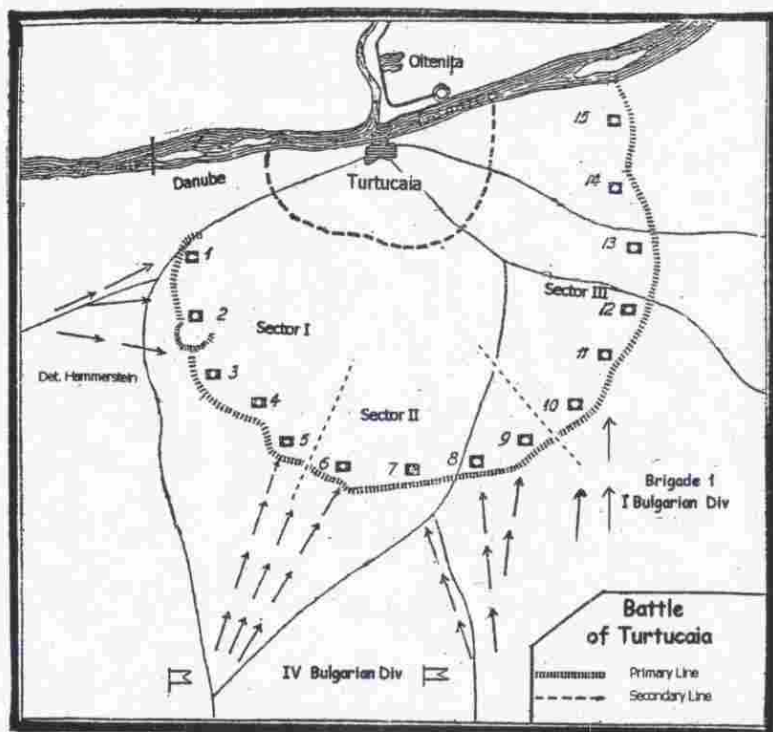
94. Georg Alexander von Müller, *The Kaiser and His Court*, ed. Walter Görlitz (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), 101-102.

95. *Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg*, V, Beilage 8; *Der Weltkrieg*, XI, 216-219.

96. Günther Hebert, *Das Alpenkorps* (Boppard: Boldt, 1988), 98; Erich von Falkenhayn, *Campania armatei 9-a împotriva Românilor și Rușilor 1916/1917*, trans. Al. Budiș and C. Franc (Bucharest: Socec, 1937), 17 ff.



Adapted from Constantin Kirilăscu, *Războiului pentru întregirea României*, vol. I (Bucharest, n.d.)



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