

Evacuations from Bucovina, Bessarabia, Moldavia and Transnistria in Archive Documents of Arad (1944)

(Abstract)

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The paper analyses several documentary sources preserved in the National Archives – Department of Arad branch –, aiming to reveal and verify a less known segment of recent history, i.e. the population's and of the authorities' refuge from the area of military operations at the eastern front under the control of the Red Army, in the spring and summer of 1944.

Arad, situated quite far from the front, in the western area of the country, but other towns in the south and the west of the country as well, regarded as safer regions, provided at that time a shelter for the thousands of refugees. The evolution of this kind of events could be followed until August 1944, when, after Romania left the alliance with the Axis powers and the war with the United Nations (Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States and America) stopped, the population's exodus from the front area stopped too.

The study also mentions the facts occurred after the Armistice Convention was signed, on 12 September 1944, by the Romanian government and the governments of the Soviet Union, of the United Kingdom and of the United States of America. The documents reveal the ample action that the Romanian authorities took over under the pressure of the Allied Control Commission, an organism established by the Convention and headed by the Allied High (Soviet) Command, regarding the identification of the refugees from Bessarabia, north Bucovina and Transnistria, considered to have Soviet citizenship, with a view to their "repatriation".

According to the data provided by the Romanian Commission for the Enforcement of the Armistice, until 30 September 1946 a number of 38,325 Bessarabians, 8,198 Bucovinians and 9,900 Romanians east Dnister returned to USSR.

From bibliographic sources we know that most of the people who returned to their homes were sent to the Soviet gulags, especially to Siberia, and not few people ended up being executed as presumptive collaborators of the "Romanian-Fascist" authorities.