

WARFARE ACTIONS OF THE LARGE ROMANIAN MILITARY UNITS FOR DEFENSE AND EVACUATION OF CRIMEA IN WORLD WAR II

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Abstract: *Researching the existing Romanian and foreign bibliography, regarding the circumstances in which combat forces from the Romanian Army will end up carrying out combat actions, together with Wehrmacht troops, for the defense of Crimea and then the evacuation of troops from the Peninsula, in the World War II, the authors highlight some aspects of these operations, which are less known, and which have sometimes given rise to different and even biased approaches.*

The analysis shows the steps taken by Marshal Ion Antonescu and the Chief of the General Staff of the Romanian Army, General Ilie Șteflea, to determine Hitler to order the evacuation of troops from large units of the Romanian Army in Crimea, as well as the execution thereof.

Keywords: *Crimea as strategic objective in the Black Sea; coalition war; politico-military decisions; the Soviet offensive; defense of German-Romanian forces; evacuation of troops.*

Introduction

In July 1942, after the total conquest of Crimea by German and Romanian troops, the southern flank of the German-Soviet front would become the center of gravity for military operations.

On June 28, 1942, Army Groups B and A began offensive operations with the mission to conquer the Stalingrad and reach the Volga, as well as the subsequent conquest of the Caucasus, to gain access to oil fields, a mandatory condition for the offensive continuation on Soviet territory.

In the summer of 1942, the Wehrmacht Army, although advancing in the depths of Russian territory, was stopped at Stalingrad¹, because it aimed to conquer both it and the Caucasus at the same time and not in turn, which

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¹ Benoît Lemay, *Erich von Manstein strategul lui Hitler*, Volumul I, Editura MIIDECĂRȚI, București, 2017, p.214.