

## INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF POLAND AND THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY. PART II – THE 1930s

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### Summary:

*In the period between the two World Wars, Turkey played quite an important role in the security system of the Second Republic of Poland, especially after the May Coup in 1926. Poland promoted the establishment of the Central European Bloc, which in some variants would also include Turkey. Furthermore, the state played an important role in the Polish Promethean politics because it had borders with the Caucasus, and in addition there was the large Caucasian emigration. As early as in the 1920s Poland initiated intelligence cooperation with Turkey against the USSR, as a result of which Polish intelligence missions operated in the Turkish territory and Turkish intelligence officers underwent specialized training in Poland. The more Turkey approached the Western countries before the outbreak of World War II the more this cooperation intensified.*

**Keywords:** *military intelligence (Poland) ; military intelligence (Turkey); Poland 1918-1939; USSR*

### INTRODUCTION

Poland established formal diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire in the first months of 1919. The Poles considered the Turks as potential allies in the fight against the Bolsheviks, and therefore Kemal Pasha's bringing together with the Bolsheviks, who provided the Turkish leader with substantial assistance in the war against Greece, remained the matter of serious concern for the Polish party. However, formal relations with the newly formed Republic of Turkey were established on 23rd July 1923. Then

the Treaty of Friendship between Poland and Turkey was signed in Lausanne. Apart from establishing official relations, there was agreed the form of diplomatic cooperation between the two countries, the consent of both governments to sign the trade and settlement convention was confirmed, and the promise to ratify the Treaty was included as well (Dz. U. R. P. z r. 1924 Nr 21 poz. 3).

The activities of Polish diplomacy at that time aimed to lift isolation of Ankara from Western powers and contribute to loosening its relations with Moscow and in the longer terms the development of joint Polish-Turkish anti-Soviet policy (Bartoszewicz 2012, p. 228-230).

Polish diplomacy also carried out Promethean activity in Turkey. For example in 1925 on the Polish initiative there was set up the Committee of the Liberation of the Caucasus, intending to liberate the Caucasus and establish on its territory the federation of the Caucasian countries, which would be in alliance with Turkey and Iran, and under the protection of the Republic of Poland.

Despite the signing of the rapprochement and the Turkish-Soviet Treaty in 1925, the Turks were ready to cooperate with Poland, and it was possible to lead to the Polish-Turkish rapprochement. It manifested itself, among others, in economic exchange. Moreover, the quite limited military cooperation began. The Poles managed to encourage the Turks to support the Promethean action (Ibidem).

Most likely already in 1919 the first Polish military intelligence post was established in Turkey. It functioned at the Polish diplomatic agency in Constantinople, then at the attaché. It was terminated in September 1921. Later, other posts under various cryptonyms and management operated there. Among others, in April 1926 the post *Konspol* was set up; it was headed by Capt. Jan Kozierowski and cooperated with Turkish services. The Turks showed a large interest in the intelligence training in Poland.

The possibility to conduct the intelligence works from the Turkish territory into the Soviet Caucasus, as well as the northern Black Sea coast belonging to the Soviet Union, was of significant importance for the Polish military intelligence. The Turkish side was also interested in gaining intelligence information on the Soviet direction. The Turks, however, did not want any conflicts with the powerful northern neighbour, to whom they owed so much in the formative years and during the initial period of the existence of the Republic of Turkey. Therefore, they decided on quite extensive intelligence cooperation with the Poles and gave the unofficial consent to install Polish intelligence posts in Turkey. The intelligence cooperation was continued in the 1930.

## **1. THE POST TRZASKA**

*Trzaska* was set up in May 1930 as an unofficial and secretive cell organically incorporated in the Turkish intelligence agency in Istanbul. Its establishment was the result of Aziz-Bey's suggestion that the Division II would send to Turkey an expert in maritime affairs. Organisational and personal costs of the post's activity were borne the Polish side (The remuneration for the post's personnel was determined as follows: *Trzaska's* salary – US \$ 175, the press bonus – US \$ 25, organisational expenses – US \$ 50, agency expenses – US \$ 100. The last two budget lines were accounted in detail, and an in-

crease in the last amount was possible when the works continued to develop), while by the Turks - half of the agency's expenses, which was up to 200 Turkish pounds in the beginning. Its Head was Cavalry Capt. Jan Zakrzewski. Aziz-Bey provided technical assistance in installing the post, as well as *its freedom of movement*. *Trzaska* treated him as a superior, although without disciplinary power. The Head of *Trzaska* officially appeared as a correspondent for 'Gazeta Polska' and 'Kurier Warszawski', and he also sought subsistence measures from trade. Communication of *Trzaska* with the Headquarters was to be organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs using the post L.3.

Zakrzewski went to Istanbul on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1930 and with the help of L.3 on 11<sup>th</sup> June of the same year, he met with Aziz-Bey declaring that he had been sent at his disposal and put forward proposals for cooperation under the guidelines received at the Headquarters. The Turkish officer accepted them. The post's task was conducting intelligence on the Black Sea and the Soviet coast in cooperation with the Head of the Turkish intelligence agency - Aziz-Bey. *Trzaska* also got counterintelligence tasks aimed at investigating the real attitude of the Turkish authorities to the Polish party, in the context of their relations with the USSR.

When analysing the Turkish offer, the Division II considered a number of possible variants of motivating the Turkish side. In the framework of the first of them it was thought that the then friendly Soviet-Turkish relations were merely the result of the momentary political situation and the Turks did not actually trust the Soviets. The official nature of these relations had not let the Turks lead the intelligence operations in the USSR *under their own name*; therefore, they wanted to pursue it with the help of the Division II. If unmasked, all the odium would fall on the Poles.

There was also a possibility that the Turkish-Soviet alliance was significant, of deep and permanent basis. In this case, the Turkish proposal of intelligence cooperation could have been made at the Soviets' command for the purpose of controlling part of Polish intelligence's activity, or provoking a scandal, which would harm the Polish party in the Turkish or international opinions.

Another variant considered the possibility that it was done without the Turkish Staff's knowledge and was a Soviet intrigue conducted by Aziz-Bey *being in the pay of the Soviets*. However, in the last variant it was stated that it was Aziz Bey's self-initiative *who wanted to do his job for other people's money and with other people's hands, and then collect official results of the work*.

The last of these options, however, was quickly rejected. It was considered unlikely that Aziz-Bey had decided to make such a move without the knowledge of his superiors. The penultimate option was treated likewise, since this provocation would involve too large amount of people, including among other things, the Turkish Consul in Tbilisi. However, the first two options seemed likely. Therefore, the work of *Trzaska* was conducted with the greatest care, not only with a focus on intelligence offensive work, but also on countermeasures aiming to examine the sincerity of Aziz-Bey's and the Turkish party's intentions. In addition, *Trzaska* was to provide the characteristics of the organisation and activities of the Turkish intelligence.

While working with Aziz-Bey, *Trzaska* was commanded to deal only with the technical side of intelligence work, i.e. the agency work. The Turkish side assessed materials and agents' work. Aziz-Bey was to provide a safe secretive place. The post's archives, besides the agents' dossiers, should have been kept to a minimum. Particular no intelligence materials on Turkey were allowed to keep so as to avoid the possible use of this fact by the Turkish party for provocation. In the beginning, the recruitment work was conducted in close consultation with Aziz-Bey, especially turning to him for opinions on candidates. Zakrzewski also emphasised that he was not an independent head of intelligence activity, but subject to the Polish intelligence agency. What is more, he could not get drawn into intelligence action carried out by Aziz's agency in the Balkan states, and any such attempts he was obliged to record in counterintelligence observations. The technical side of the post's work consisted in applying methods, which Zakrzewski had familiarised with when in Agency No.1 in Vilnius, and later adapted them to the local Turkish conditions.

Shortly after arrival, the first task Zakrzewski received from Aziz was to familiarise himself with the Soviet newspapers. He was given responsibility for Hassan, who was to serve as a *beater*. Hasan proposed two candidates for recruiting agents with the possibilities of working on the Black Sea. One of them worked with handling of Soviet ships, while the latter was the owner of the port store, where Soviet sailors came. None of them, however, managed to recruit a single candidate for the offensive work.

In the light of the reports of the Division II, both Aziz Bey (In October 1930 Naci-Bey was appointed the Head of the Turkish agency, which had been led by Aziz-Bey by then) and his deputy Nedru-Bey showed a complete inability to intelligence work, for example by committing a series of conspiracy errors, which Zakrzewski pointed them in a polite but firm manner. Their work was characterised by the *blatant slowness*.

## **2. POLISH – TURKISH INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION**

At the end of February 1931, Aziz-Bey and another officer of the Turkish intelligence - Şahap-Bey came to Poland. The purpose of their arrival was to get acquainted with the intelligence work of the Division II. They were shown, among others, the Intelligence Department, the Administrative Department, the Technical Office, the police laboratory and one of the Western branches (It has not been established which of the Western branches the Turkish intelligence officers visited) Turkish officers were also familiarised with methods of intelligence and counterintelligence work.

The issue of further cooperation was also raised. It was agreed that bilateral Polish-Turkish registration conferences would be held about once a year. The frequency of technical and intelligence conferences was to be the same. The most important current affairs were to be passed by *Trzaska*.

Before leaving, Aziz-Bey promised to facilitate the work of *Trzaska*, and also raised the possibility of organising a new Turkish post in the area of Kars-Erzurum. It was to lead intelligence activity through the Turkish-Soviet land border, which would complement the work of *Trzaska* leading the work on the Black Sea, and would help to transfer its people.

After returning to Turkey, Şahap-Bey ran a photo quartz lab and created the intelligence agency in Kars with the three frontier posts directed against the USSR. The Turks were obliged to make every effort to install their intelligence officers as the staff in their consular offices in the Caucasus and in Persia. Those actions resulted from the aforementioned Turkish intelligence officers' visit to Poland.

The Division II drew lessons from the Turkish officers' visit; they realised that their intelligence work was at a very low level, which the Turks had been aware of, and they had to make attempts to raise it to a higher level. Among others, their visit to Poland served that purpose. The Turks were also very favourably disposed towards *Trzaska*, fearing, however, disclosure of their intelligence cooperation with the Poles.

However, contrary to previous announcements, neither the Turks' cooperation with them nor activity of *Trzaska* advanced. As a matter of fact, in April 1931 Nedru-Bey ensured assistance for the post and probably owing to this they could start the recruitment of a few people; in fact due to the lack of the Turks' greater involvement, the operations did not produce any concrete results. In mid-May of that year during the meeting with Naci-Bey, Zakrzewski stated that in the previous year both the agency intelligence and the press intelligence did not bring any results, for which he blamed the Turkish side. Therefore he asked directly whether the Turk *found his further presence* [at the post in Turkey and in cooperation with the Turkish intelligence] *appropriate, because he did not see any opportunities to improve* [the current situation].

The allegations resulted in boosting the cooperation, which, however, still did not translate into concrete results. The Turks handed to the Polish post the material (as a revelation) from an unknown source concerning the military agreement between France, Poland and Czechoslovakia, which proved to be the inept inspiration. The next material submitted by Naci-Bey was the development on the Ukrainian military district, which turned out to be the summary of the information given them beforehand by the post *L.3*. In addition, two beaters recruited three Soviet seamen, from whom they did not achieve any valuable information.

At the same time, the Turks turned to the Division II with many requests. In September 1931 Naci-Bey speaking on behalf of the Turkish General Staff asked the Poles for organisational data of a border post, because they wanted to organise one, and also for contacts in the USSR, including organisations hostile to the Soviet power.

Trzaska replied that the Polish side might have transmitted only guidance relating to such a post, but despite friendly relations, they could not count on more. Generally, in the opinion of the Division II, the cooperation with the Turks involving the exchange of materials produced no effective results for the Polish party. Naci-Bey delivered to the Poles the incomplete, unchecked and in many cases false materials (Naci-Bey explained that he handed the information in the form in which it was sent from the Headquarters). In return, he did not receive any materials, and only the assessment of the materials and opinions issued by the Division II. Even the *Trzaska's* development of press materials encountered considerable difficulties as the Turks delivered newspapers irregularly. Also contacts obtained by Naci-Bey were determined mostly as *very poor*.

The Polish-Turkish intelligence cooperation often depended on the current Soviet-Turkish relations. In early May 1932, the Turkish delegation including İsmet-Paşa and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tefvik Rüştü Aras-Bey left for the USSR. This trip was one of the most important diplomatic events at that time. The aim of the Soviet Union was the rapprochement with Turkey, which had increasingly better relationships with the West. At the press conference before his departure, İsmet-Paşa using expressions like *Bolshevik Russia* and *patriotic Turkey* ('Akşam Gazetesi' of 25th April 1932) wanted to emphasise the difference between the systems of government of the two countries and prevent calling a potential impression in the West that Turkey was on track to approach to communism (Ertem 2013, p. 157-183). At the time, the temporary cooling of relations between Naci-Bey and *Trzaska* was reported. It did not have a significant lasting impact on the Polish-Turkish cooperation. Within a short time a return to the previous relationships was made.

In September 1931 Zakrzewski, with the help of one of the beaters, succeeded in recruiting the captain of the Soviet ship 'Franz Merina' - Gawrylychenko, who agreed to cooperate and had opportunities for this; but in return he asked for issuing passports for him and his family, in order to be able to escape to America in the event of unmasking. However, he did not get passports. Even though he did not stop cooperating, but he was not very active and tried to get the least risk. The contact with him existed at least until 1933.

In July 1932, *Trzaska* managed to recruit from among the refugees a candidate for the agency work. He was a young Circassian, who had *broad possibilities* of intelligence work. They planned to transfer him by sea into the Soviet Union.

In 1933, when assessing the three-year work in the post *Trzaska* the Division II in its report stated that the results of the evidential work were minimal, but the benefits were absolutely excellent, especially when it came to *mutual trust*. Taking advantage of the current favourable situation - despite appearances of approximation (The reason for the apparent approximation between Turkey and the USSR was the will of both countries to cooperate in the economic, industrial and technological fields after the visit of İsmet-Paşa in May 1932 in Moscow, increasing the participation of the state in the Turkish economy and the implementation of many investments through financial support and advisors from the USSR) - the attitude of the Turks to the Soviet Union was more negative. It was also found that the Turkish declaration of granting more freedom to *Trzaska* and allowing greater contacts with the refugees from the area of the Soviet Union should have contributed to the increase in opportunities of agency activity of the post.

In early September 1932, Maj. Stanisław Gano (the then head of the Department East of the Intelligence Department of the Division II) was in Turkey, where he met with Naci-Bey in Istanbul, and then in Ankara with Şahap-Bey. Officially, he explained his stay in the country as a private travel - during the holiday. When talking to Naci-Bey Maj. Gano proposed new solutions to the common anti-Soviet activity. First of all, he suggested not recruiting people on ships, but manning them with their own previously recruited and trained agents. He also advocated cooperation of the post *Trzaska* with

the Turkish post in Kars - the Turks would seek out and recruit agents among the refugees from the Soviet Union, while the Poles' task would be to prepare them for intelligence work before being sent, particularly, into the area of the Caucasus.

Şahap-Bey invited him to his office. The Turkish officer informed the Pole, that among the Turks there were also voices against the cooperation with the Poles, however, his opinion outweighed because, as he said, he saw benefits in it for the Turkish party. He also pointed out that at that time this cooperation *came to a standstill and a step forward must be taken*.

Major Gano replied that he did not believe in achieving good evidential results by *Trzaska*, which was regarded by the Polish party as *a bridge to mutual understanding and approximation*, and this had already occurred. Thus, *Trzaska* fulfilled its task. Another step in this direction - according to Maj. Gano - was the establishment of direct intelligence communication between Ankara and Warsaw and placing by both parties appropriately undercover liaison officers, for example in Embassies. Gano also took up Şahap-Bey's proposal to create a common mobilisation centre in Tabriz, and he proposed Zakrzewski as its Head. The Turkish officer, in turn, suggested assigning the latter Timur-Bey to help. The final determination of the details in this matter was postponed to a later date.

In the second half of 1932 the cooperation on part of *Trzaska* was confined to the exchange little relevant information with the Turks, and therefore Zakrzewski decided to meet with Naci-Bey, which took place in mid-February 1933. At this meeting he categorically presented the sterility of the cooperation, and on the one hand he recalled their obligations and promises towards the Division II, on the other hand the lack of assistance and negligence on their part.

On 28<sup>th</sup> March 1933 in Naci-Bey's office there was held a conference, which was attended by representatives of the Division II and the Turkish intelligence. Maj. Tomczuk, Lt. Niezbrzycki and Zakrzewski represented the Polish party, while Naci-Bey and Timur-Bey - the Turkish side. They discussed principles and the course of hitherto cooperation. It was recalled that the Polish side had seconded the intelligence specialist Maj. Zakrzewski to work with the Turks. He was performing his duties in close communication with the Turkish side and in the relation of subordination to them, and the entire gathered material was to be jointly owned by both parties. The Polish side also took on the responsibility for maintaining the precautionary measures so that the information on this cooperation could not be revealed. When establishing the cooperation the Turkish side committed to providing beaters and candidates for agents, allowing *Trzaska* the recruitment from among refugees and providing counterintelligence information. In addition, the Polish side expected from the Turks that in the course of expanding the cooperation *Trzaska* would receive information gained by them from other sources, as well as the post would be used to conduct press intelligence and exchange materials.

In response, Naci-Bey explained that the shortcomings of the cooperation resulted largely from the duty of care in order not to disclose it. He also implied that this coop-

eration had influential opponents, most likely in the Turkish General Staff, the orders of who not only broke off all the established contacts with promising prospects, but made the ongoing recruitment almost impossible. He included the lack of experienced beaters among his other weaknesses.

The Polish party proposed intelligence contacts at a level higher than before (In this case, the Poles postulated in their letters to Şükrü-Bey) and more intensive work of the Istanbul post in close contact with the Turks in order to improve the cooperation. In addition, Poland offered to help with *all loyalty* in familiarising the Turkish intelligence with the latest technical achievements, such as radio intelligence and chemical and photo laboratories. The Turks suggested that there should be no major obstacles and supervisors would probably accept all these proposals. They said that only intelligence contacts at a higher level would require *serious reflection* of their superiors in Ankara.

The Polish side also asked the Turks to formulate their vision on the future activity of *Trzaska* in posing the question as to whether the post would continue to operate under the existing conditions, i.e. in close contact with the Turkish intelligence and in their office, or more on their own, keeping with them looser contacts than before. The Poles assured that all Turkish desiderata would be respected provided that *the Turks must ensure the assistance and care of CI [counterintelligence], because their own CI created can be regarded as Polish organs of INT [intelligence] against Turkey.*

It was only in July 1933 that *Trzaska* sent the Turks' answers to the questions put by the Polish officers during the March conference. The Turks agreed to permanent intelligence contacts at a higher level. They appointed Şahap-Bey, who at that time was still during a probation period, as a representative seconded to the Division II. As for the work of *Trzaska*, it was allowed to work more freely, provided that the contact would be more careful. Also they declared constant assistance for Poland any time (CAW, I 303.4.2078).

### 3. OTHER POLISH INTELLIGENCE POSTS IN TURKEY IN THE 1930S

From May 1932 to October 1933 the post *Ali-Baba* functioned in the Polish Consulate in Istanbul. Its Head was Waław Niezabitowski (CAW, I 303.4.1869). While, the post *Gazi* existed at least from July 1933 (financial documents existed from this month) to September 1937 (CAW, I 303.4.1963). Its Head was Jan Litewski (CAW, I 303.4. 1965). He was removed from Istanbul and designated to the Headquarters on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1937 under the letter of the Chief of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Wiktor Tommir Drymer of 24<sup>th</sup> August of the same year (CAW, I 303.4. 1965). His successor was to be Wiktor Zalewski (Pepłoński 1996, p. 178). As A. Pepłoński wrote - almost all persons cooperating with *Trzaska* turned out to be agents of Turkish intelligence. The post *Gazi* (Ibidem, p. 184) was established with the aim to break the dependence on the Turkish intelligence.

On 20<sup>th</sup> February 1937, in connection with travel of the Head of *Gazi* Capt. Niezbrzycki conducted a briefing, at which the Head of the post *Gazi* and Zakrzewski were present. Due to the removal of *Anitra* (Karol Dubicz-Penther was the Head of the post existing in Turkey in the mid-thirties) from the area, *Gazi* had to adapt to new working condi-



tions. After the liquidation of *Anitra* it was expected that both the Turks and the Soviets would try to get information as to who took over the agenda of *Anitra*. Therefore, it was decided to limit the operation of the post to the following activities:

- intensifying trade issues;
- proper preparations for the travel Trabzon-Tabriz. Its purpose was to explore the post's commercial possibilities in the area, as well as additionally opportunities to undertake intelligence activity;
- maintaining contacts with the French (Leuleu) only with regard to conducting intelligence activity and exchanging materials on the Soviet Union. The intelligence towards Turkey should not have been run, as it was not of interest to the Division II;
- maintaining contacts with the British was not expected;
- the post would use its personal contacts, such as the Italian - Bella, Godymirski (for several months) Buczyński, Alactlin and Haydier;
- acquiring detailed knowledge on Promethean work. However, it was necessary to reckon with the fact that the Soviets could quickly decipher the Promethean work of the post;
- besides Gazi was to continue to explore the area in terms of their intelligence capabilities and above all to observe the Soviet expansion on the Turkish territory (CAW, O II, E 2, file no. I 303.4.1965).

The intelligence post *Gazi II* was located at the Polish Consulate in Istanbul from September until at least December 1938 (the last documents were of this month). Its Head was Wiktor Zalewski. The post acquired political and military information on the Soviet Union, as well as on the Soviet-Turkish relations (CAW, I 303.4.1964).

In September 1937 the post *Gazi* sent the encrypted message in which, citing reliable sources, informed the Headquarters of a note of protest handed over by the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires of the Turkish Foreign Ministry on Yunus Nadi's article of 23 August 1937. The Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in his conversation with the Deputy Minister of the Turkish Foreign Ministry protested against actions carried out by the Poles in Turkey among the Caucasian emigration and against cooperation of the Turkish military authorities with the Poles. He also reported the arrest of immigrants on the Soviet border. The Turkish Deputy Minister responded that he had not known about it (CAW, I 303.4.1965).

In the letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> June 1938 Niezbrzycki informed the Head of *Gazi II* about the planned Jerzy Grobicki's (Before that Jerzy Grobicki was the Head of the post of the Division II in Tehran under the pseudonym Nabuhodonozor) arrival to Greece for 3 months with a task to examine the possibility of taking action from this area towards the Soviets. Grobicki was to come by boat from Constanta via Istanbul after 1<sup>st</sup> August, therefore Niezbrzycki asked Zalewski to meet and accompany Grobickiemu throughout his stay in Istanbul.

In accordance with instructions Zalewski received, before the meeting he had to prepare all the information on Greece he possessed from the standpoint of carrying out intelligence work from its territory to the Soviet Union, such as personal data of people useful in the work, contacts held in the area, movement of ships, etc. He had to also give a thought to how Grobicki's stay in Greece could be useful for the work of the post *Gazi II* and how they would maintain communication with each other.

The post created by Grobickiego was called *Hippocrates*. For his three-month stay in Greece he obtained PLN 1500 (intended for field trips, maintenance and hotel stays) and an additional PLN 500 for other expenses. Funds for conducting intelligence activity were not provided (CAW, I 303.4.1965).

In the beginning of August 1938 Litewski met with the Head of the post *Hamal* (The Polish intelligence post in Tehran. Its Head was Capt. Mikołaj Telatycki), who was staying in Istanbul. The Heads of both posts discussed a number of matters relating to the work on the areas within which they operated. What is more, Litewski gave the Head of *Hamal* letters of introduction to the leaders of the Turkmen tribes inhabiting the Soviet border territory in Iran from the President of the Turkmen emigration who resided in Istanbul (Ibidem).

In August of 1938 the post *Gazi* reported that after the arrival to Turkey of the new Soviet Ambassador Terentiev in the middle of the year, the attitude of the Turkish authorities to the Caucasian and Turkestan emigrations became significantly negative. The change was seen in the confiscation of emigration publications, frequent searches conducted at activists in exile, there were refusals to leave and the closure of the company *Turan*. All this was done as a result of the Soviet factors' intervention (Ibidem).

Despite this, as reported by *Gazi* in September 1938, it was difficult to describe the Soviet-Turkish relations on the border as neighbourly. According to information obtained from one of the agents, in June of that year a captain of the Turkish intelligence was kidnapped on the border by the GPU.

However, according to agent Bella's report, in the region of Ardahan (the city and the province in Turkey ast the border with Georgia) in the territory of Turkey GPU abducted a Georgian – a Turkish citizen who had worked for the Soviet political police before. Later, he changed the principal and began to work for the Turks at the same time revealing the secrets of the GPU. The Turkish authorities unsuccessfully demanded the release of their citizen. The same report also noted the effective pressure of the Soviet authorities, which resulted in liquidation of the Caucasian emigration organisations existing in Turkey, including the arrest of eight activists from the region (CAW, I 303.4.1965).

On 22<sup>th</sup> January 1938 in Bucharest there was held a meeting attended by Capt. Paprocki, the head of the post *Lecomte* – Cavalry Capt. Baliński and Halif A. Hotin. The latter was a native Turk, a close relative to many Turkish high dignitaries staying in Istanbul as well as abroad (One of his wife's brothers was the Turkish military attaché in Rome, the second one - the General Consul in Beirut, one of his uncles - a Turkish envoy in Bucharest, another - an advisor at the Turkish Foreign Ministry. He also had oth-

er relatives in important positions). In the past, he maintained contacts with the Soviet trade office in Istanbul, where he met Ibrahim Mustafa Ibrahimov – a sales representative of that office. Through these contacts he earned a large sum of money, and he met the then Soviet envoy in Bucharest - Ostrowski. After some time, Ibrahimov deserted from the post to Paris. In the absence of livelihoods he became the agent of *Pilgrim* (Wiktor Bohomolec, of a pseudonym Valentin, was the Head of the intelligence group 'Pilgrim', who initially in the years 1920-1933 worked for the British intelligence in Romania, and then for the Polish intelligence), and through it, the Head of the post *Lecomte* recruited him to cooperation.

Ibrahimov sent to Cavalry Capt. Baliński a message about the possibility of recruiting Hotin to intelligence work, and for this purpose he brought the latter to Paris in December 1937. There, through *Pilgrim* Hotin was also recruited to cooperation. Both of them, however, for a time were not aware which organisations and which state they worked for. Probably they thought that for the British Intelligence Service, as previously *Pilgrim* had worked for the British.

The Division II checked Hotin's work opportunities in the Middle East, which were verified positively. He was eventually informed that would be working for the Polish intelligence. He was directly subordinated to the Chief of the Headquarters. Istanbul was the place of his post and received the salary of 250 Turkish pounds (Then the value of 1 Turkish pound was US \$ 1.25) a month, and covering any expenses incurred. Communication with Hotin was through *a trust ed person* who was to come to him saying the verbal password and having his business card with the signature.

Hotin's tasks were as follows:

- the recruitment of Soviet aviation instructors, who allegedly were to stay in Turkey and did not want to go back to the USSR;
- gathering information about Soviet aviation and armoured vehicles through the Turkish airmen who returned from training in the USSR;
- gathering political information about the relations between the USSR and countries in the Middle East;
- working out the Soviet of the GPU agent network in the Middle East;
- recording the passage of Soviet ships through the Bosphorus.

The sequence of the above tasks was also determined in the hierarchy of information and materials acquired.

Hotin's helper in his intelligence work was Ibrahimov, who had been brought for this purpose from Paris to Kars (the city in the north-east Turkey near the present border with Azerbaijan and Iran) where he was to create the information and recruiting post near the Soviet border. Hotin promised him a government position. Ibrahimov's salary from the Division II was to be dependent on his salary on the abovementioned position. It was expected that the Headquarters would have to spend 50-60 pounds Turkish a month (CAW, O II, file no. I 303.4.1966).

## CONCLUSIONS

Since 9<sup>th</sup> February 1934, when the Balkan Pact under the leadership of Turkey was created (the members of which were among others Romania and Bulgaria) the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union started cooling down (Düstur 3. Tertip, Cilt 15, p. 185-186). Bilateral relations even more deteriorated after the conference launched by Turkey on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1936 in Montreux. Turkey wanted to cancel the military restrictions of the Treaty of Lausanne concerning the maritime straits and take full control over them. While, the USSR insisted on the concept of the common defence of straits (Bilge, Komşuluk 1992, p.116). Despite the fact that at the conference the USSR managed to push through its demands, in subsequent years Turkey intensified its pressure on the issue of the marine straits (Meray-Osman Olcay 1976, p. 475).

Political changes and the upcoming war in Europe, as well as gaining strength by the Soviet Union and attempts to pull Turkey into its sphere of influence meant that the paths of the two countries diverged as a result of the process initiated at the conference in Montreux in 1936. Turkey's growing concern about the Soviet Union in the period before World War II led to the approach of the country to England and France and consequently forming the Security Pact of the three countries. The USSR did not join the pact (Sander 2007, p. 64-65).

The occupation of the territory of Albania by Italy, which began in April 1939, resulted in talks between Turkey and the UK finalised on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1939 with signing of the declaration on the cooperation in the Mediterranean. Turkey signed a similar agreement with France on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1939. However, in October 1939 there was signed the joint agreement on the cooperation between three countries: Turkey, Great Britain and France, which, according to some Turkish historians puts into question the neutrality of Turkey in World War II, and even the country's opting for the Western Allies at the very beginning of the conflict (Atabey 2014).

The approximation of Turkey to the UK and France also resulted in closer relations of the country with Poland. For Poland it was so much very important that in the event of an armed conflict the favour on part of Turkey would allow the transit to Poland through the Turkish Straits, the Black Sea and the ally to Poland- Romania. In Turkish government circles the atmosphere to Poland became so friendly that its representatives informed the Polish government about the course of the Turkish-Soviet negotiations in April and May 1939. At the end of June of that year, the Polish-Turkish quota agreement was signed providing the supply of different strategic raw materials for Poland (Chmielowska 2006, p.372-373).

After the annexation of Poland in 1939, the German Ambassador von Papen intended to take over the building of the Polish Embassy in Ankara. He met with strong opposition from the Turkish side and throughout the entire period of the war he had to watch through the window of his apartment the waving Polish flag, since he lived 150 metres from the Polish Embassy. The Turkish government maintained diplomatic relations with the Polish government in exile. He even sent his Ambassador to the seat of the Polish government in Angers in France. In this period also the Turkish society showed

Poland and the Poles much sympathy evidenced, among others, by organising demonstrations of support for Poland (Ibidem, p. 373-376).

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