

**THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MOLDAVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST
REPUBLIC AND THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA (1970-1975).
THE FIRST YEARS OF ACTIVITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
INFORMATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WITHIN THE
CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE MOLDAVIAN COMMUNIST PARTY**

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Rezumat: *Relațiile dintre RSSM și RSR (1970-1975). Primii ani de activitate a Secției Informații și Relații Internaționale din cadrul CC al PCM.* Din nevoia de a înțelege și de a percepe cât mai clar natura relațiilor dintre București și Chișinău din perioada postbelică am constatat că urmărirea activității desfășurate de anumite secții din cadrul CC al PCM ne-ar putea servi drept sursă de informare. Începând cu anul 1970 și-a început activitatea Secția informații și relații internaționale, aflată în subordinea directă a conducerii de partid. Rapoartele de activitate, notele informative, notele de corespondență ale secției referitoare la cooperarea cu partea română cuprind detalii de o importanță deosebită, deoarece ne permit identificarea gamei largi de raporturi în care au fost implicate județele românești și raioanele moldovenești de la începutul anilor 1970.

Între Botoșani, Iași, Suceava, Galați, Vaslui și Fălești, Bălți, Ungheni, Cahul, Vulcănești au fost realizate schimburi reciproce de delegații. La început schimburile erau prilejuate de marcarea unor zile importante din istoria comună, ulterior părțile au susținut cooperarea la nivelul grupurilor specializate. Chiar dacă selectarea persoanelor care mergeau în afară, în special, a celor care mergeau în RSR reprezenta o procedură mai complexă cu instruire corespunzătoare, iar delegațiile românești erau însoțite de cele mai calificate cadre ale Societății Unionale pe Acțiuni „Inturist”, totuși, aceasta a fost o modalitate de păstrare a legăturilor dintre românii din stânga și dreapta Prutului.

Résumé : *Les relations entre la République Socialiste Soviétique de Moldavie et la République Socialiste de Roumanie (1970-1975). Les premières années d'activité du Département de l'Information et Relations Internationales auprès du Comité Central du Parti Communiste Moldave.* Avec l'objectif de comprendre et de percevoir plus clairement la nature des relations entre Bucarest et Chișinău de la période d'après-guerre, on constata dans l'article ci-joint que suivre l'activité exercée par certaines sections du CC du CPM pourrait nous servir comme source d'information. Depuis 1970, le Département de l'Information et Relations Internationales commença son activité, sous la responsabilité directe des dirigeants du parti. Les rapports d'activité, les notes informatives, les notes de correspondance du département sur la coopération avec la partie roumaine comprennent des détails d'une importance particulière,

car ils nous permettent d'identifier la vaste gamme de rapports qui impliquèrent les départements roumains et les districts moldaves au début des années 1970.

On réalisa des échanges de délégations entre Botoșani, Iași, Suceava, Galați, Vaslui et Fălești, Bălți, Ungheni, Cahul, Vulcănești. Au début, les échanges étaient occasionnés par l'anniversaire des jours importants de leur histoire, ensuite les parties appuyèrent la coopération au niveau des groupes spécialisés. Même si la sélection des gens qui sont allés à l'étranger, en particulier ceux qui sont allés en RSR faisait partie d'une procédure plus complexe avec la formation appropriée, les délégations roumaines étaient accompagnées par les cadres les plus qualifiés de la Société Unie par Actions « Inturist » ; cependant, ce fut une façon de garder les liens entre les Roumains de la partie gauche et de celle droite du Prut.

Abstract. *From the need to understand and know more clearly the nature of the relations between Bucharest and Kishinev in the post-war period, we have found that following the activity carried out by certain departments within the CC of the MCP could serve as a source of information. Beginning with the year 1970, the Department of Information and International Relations began its activity, under the direct authority of the party leadership. Progress reports, information notes, correspondence notes of the department relating to the cooperation with the Romanian party include details of particular importance because they allow us to identify a wide range of relations in which Romanian counties and Moldavian districts were involved at the beginning of the early 1970s.*

Mutual exchanges of delegations were made between Botoșani, Iași, Suceava, Galați, Vaslui and Fălești, Bălți, Ungheni, Cahul, Vulcănești. At the beginning, exchanges were occasioned by the marking of certain important days in the common history, later on the parties supported the cooperation at the level of specialised groups. Even though the selection of the persons who would go abroad, especially, of those who would go into the SRR represented a more complex procedure with the appropriate training, and the Romanian delegations were accompanied by the most qualified specialists of the "Inturist" Joint-Stock Company, however, this was a method of maintaining the connections between Romanians on the left and right side of Prut.

Keywords: *cooperation, border, MSSR, SRR, tourist, visits*

Introduction

If in a previous study¹, we have raised the issue of the evolution of the relations between the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR) and the Socialist Republic of Romania (SRR) in the light of the activity carried out by the

¹ Olesea Palamarja, *Politics and Tourism in MSSR: a Case Study of the Tourists from the Socialist Republic of Romania (1964-1979)*, „Codrul Cosminului”, 2015, nr. 2, pp. 261-286.

Department of External Tourism attached to the Central Committee (CC) of the Moldavian Communist Party (MCP), this time we intend to follow the progress of the relations between Kishinev and Bucharest presented through the materials of the Department of Information and International Relations. It is a topical subject, due to the fact that the materials contained in the files of the Department offer information, largely unpublished.

The modest number of the publications regarding the relations between Kishinev and Bucharest in the Cold War period represents a justification or perhaps a stimulus to raise issues which could trigger the curiosity of a wider category of people. And from here started the idea to insist upon the activity carried out by certain structures within the CC of the MCP dedicated to the cooperation with the SRR.

Valuable contributions to the historiography dedicated to the issue raised were brought by researchers, such as: Gheorghe and Elena Negru,² Gheorghe Cojocaru,³ Ruslan Șevcenco,⁴ Igor Cașu⁵. The works published after 1990, include materials which reflect in one manner of another the relations between SRR and MSSR, however, approached more in the context of the Romanian Soviet relations. A few important work were published with the publishing house of the National Institute for the Study of Totalitarianism by Ion Constantin⁶ and Vasile Buga⁷.

² Elena Negru, Gheorghe Negru, „Cursul deosebit” al României și supărarea Moscovei. Disputa sovieto-română și campaniile propagandistice antiromânești din RSSM. Studii și documente, vol. 1 (1965-1975), [Romania's „Peculiar politics” and Moscow's anger. Soviet-Romanian dispute and anti-Romanian propaganda from MSSR. (1965-1975). Study and documents], Chișinău, 2012.

³ Gheorghe Cojocaru, *Confruntarea sovieto-română pe frontul ideologic din RSS Moldovenească (1968-1978)*, [Romanian-Soviet confrontation on ideological front of the Moldavian SSR (1968-1978)], Iași, Tipo Moldova Publishing House, 2011.

⁴ Ruslan Șevcenco, *Relațiile internaționale ale RSS Moldovenești (1945-1955)*, [International relations of the Moldavian SSR (1945-1955)], Studia Universitatis: Seria Științe Umanistice, No. 4, 2009.

⁵ Igor Cașu, „Politica națională” în Moldova Sovietică, 1944-1989, [„Nationalities Policy” in Soviet Moldova, 1944-1989], Chișinău, Cartdidact Publishing House, 2000.

⁶ Ion Constantin, *Problema Basarabiei în discuțiile româno-sovietice din timpul Războiului Rece, 1945-1989*, [Bessarabian issue within Romanian-Soviet discussions during the Cold War, 1945-1989], București, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2015.

⁷ Vasile Buga, *Pe muchie de cuțit. Relațiile româno-sovietice, 1965-1989*, [On the edge. Romanian-Soviet relations in 1965-1989], București, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2013; Idem, *Sub lupa Moscovei. Politica externă a României 1965-1989*

For the completion of the work, we have studied documents within the Archive of the Social and Political Organisations in the Republic of Moldova, content 51 (files dedicated to the activity of the Department of Information and International Relations within the CC of the MCP) and the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova, content 2782 (Department of External Tourism attached to the Council of Ministers of the MSSR).

The volume of information in the first five years of activity of the Department is all the more important given the fact that the mutual visits involved specialists from various fields of work. Beyond having a great tourist importance, the visits at the level of border localities led to a closeness between people, between Romanians in Bessarabia and the ones in Romania.

The political context and the idea of creating a Department of Information and International Relations

Created at the initiative of the MSSR authorities, with the idea to have full power over the contacts between the citizens of SRR and the ones in Soviet Moldavia, the activity of the Department of Information and International Relations within the CC of the MCP (dedicated to the SRR), represents an important source, out of which we can deduct the particularities of the Romanian Moldavian relations between 1970-1975, but not before making reference to the political situations on both sides of the Prut, specific to the analysed period.

It is known that the relations between the MSSR and the SRR in the whole period when Soviet Moldavia was part of the USSR were shaped by the political relations between Moscow and Bucharest. Therefore, the cooperation with the Romanian party has known periods of advancement, but also of stagnation, as it is shown by the activity of the Department.

Beginning with the first post-war years until the 1970s, but even later on, the Romanian Moldavian relations have evolved differently with every year, however, the scope of cooperation has extended. An example is the number of persons who participated in mutual visits, which varied yearly, and also the composition of the delegations and specialised groups.

We must state that beginning with the 1950s, the first exchanges of official groups and delegations from both countries were organised. From the year 1966, by Judgement of the CC of the MCP Presidium on February 1st the *Measures of the*

[Under Moscow's oversight. Romania's Foreign Policy 1965-1989], București, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2015.

CC of the MCP on the spread and celebration of the important dates and events in the history of the Moldavian people were adopted.⁸ This document included a calendar of the “holidays of the Moldavian people” and a pantheon of the heroes of the “revolutionary movement” in Bessarabia, and the Supreme Soviet Presidium of the MSSR was obliged to issue a decree through which the day of June 28th would be declared national holiday of the people. In the SRR counties with which friendly relations were established, materials relating to the achievements of the Moldavian people in the field of industry, village household, science and culture in the years of Soviet power started to be sent. These led to the closeness of the relations between localities and people on both sides of Prut, especially after the year 1964,⁹ when the foundations of the Department of External Tourism attached to the Council of Ministers of the MSSR were laid, and with this exchange of tourist groups between the Moldavian and the Romanian parties started to be organised.

The internal and foreign policy led by Nicolae Ceaușescu was not the liking of Kremlin, and the attempt of the members of the Romanian delegations which went to Moscow to bring on the agenda of bilateral relations some issues such as the Romanian treasury or especially the territorial one, have led to the maintaining of tensions almost permanently between the USSR and SRR. And the activity over the years of certain departments such as the one of Information and International Relations within the CC of the MCP or of the External Tourism attached to the CC of the MCP, represents the clear proof of the fact that in Kishinev, the key positions were occupied by persons loyal to the Soviet leadership, thus, all efforts were oriented towards the restriction of the contacts between Romanian on the left and right side of Prut.

They influenced the relations between Moscow and Bucharest and certain international events, such as the invasion in August 1968 of Czechoslovakia. The SRR leadership condemns this movement of the Soviet state. Certainly, Romania’s stance bothered, and this can be deduced from the fact that the attitude of the people in the SRR changed towards the tourists in the USSR and vice versa. Romanian tourists who visited the Soviet space were welcomed and served by the most knowledgeable specialists who dealt with welcoming guests from foreign countries¹⁰. The authorities of Soviet Moldavia considered that the “anti-invasion”

⁸ Arhiva Organizațiilor Social-Politice din Republica Moldova (AOSPRM), [Archive of Social and Political Organisations of the Republic of Moldova], fond. 51, inv. 27, d. 9, p. 11-12

⁹ Arhiva Națională a Republicii Moldova, [National Archive of the Republic of Moldova], fond. 2782, inv. 3, d. 1, p. 2-4.

¹⁰ AOSPRM, fond 51, inv. 33, file 201, p. 77.

state of mind within the Romanian society “contaminated” the MSSR population, as well.¹¹ Therefore, the Ministry of Internal Affairs was obliged to take certain measures regarding the significant reduction of these mutual visits through the restriction, especially, of the individual visits and to establish a tight control on the Romanian citizens' behaviour during their time on the MSSR territory.¹²

The geographical proximity, certain aspects regarding the linguistic and cultural aspect which could be remarked between the “Moldavians” in the MSSR and the Romanians in the SRR, bothered authorities, a fact which led to the onset of a serious propagandist campaign against “Romanian nationalism”, and the main aim was to make Romania an ideological and political opponent, perhaps even more dangerous than the capitalist countries and the “American imperialism,”¹³ considered by the representatives of the communist group as being traditional opponents.

In addition to the issues regarding Romania's “special” course, the increase in tensions related to some linguistic, historical problems, which were ever more obvious, the interaction between Romanian and Moldavian citizens was seen as a danger, which had to be permanently monitored. All these factors led to the deeper study of the phenomena in the Romanian political and ideological life and, respectively, the permanent control on the state of mind of the MSSR population. To this end, the CC of the MCP (the Central Committee of the Moldavian Communist Party) requested the permission of the CC of the CPSU (the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) to form a *Department of Information and International Relations*¹⁴ within the party Central Committee, with an asset of 12 members, and the Kremlin's answer was a favourable one for the applicants. Theoretically, the scope of activity of the department aimed at all the countries with which Soviet Moldavia had certain relations, practically, however, the need to study and to have a situation as clear as possible regarding the relations with the Romanian party, the most part of its materials referred to the Romanian Moldavian relations.

The Department of Information and International Relations which worked within the CC of the MCP had the task to follow the progress of the relations

¹¹ Gheorghe Negru, *Campanii împotriva României și a naționalismului românesc din RSSM în anii '60-'80 ai sec. XX* [Campaign against Romania and Romanian nationalism in MSSR in 50-80's of XX century], *Destin românesc. Revistă de istorie și cultură, Serie nouă*, 2010, no. 1 (65), p. 152 -157

¹² AOSPRM, f. 51, inv. 29, d. 240, p. 74-75

¹³ *Ibid.*, inv. 31, d. 9, p. 60-61

¹⁴ Gheorghe Cojocaru, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

between the Moldavian party and the Romanian one, but in addition to keeping visits and the exchange of official delegations under control, it was also obliged to be up to speed with the materials and works which appeared in the SRR, especially, the ones which would make reference to the "issue of Bessarabia," the "Moldavian" language." Thus, for instance, at the end of the year 1971, an information note of the Department reached I. Bodiul, regarding the "falsification" of historical realities in the volumes "Marele pârjol al secolului al XX-lea – cel deal doilea război mondial" and „Crearea Partidului Comunist Român”,¹⁵ the authors of the work were accused of treating certain issues related to Romania's foreign policy in the post-war period "in a distorted manner."

However, despite its name, the Department of Information and International Relations, from the detailed analysis of its activity, we deduct the fact that it dealt, almost exclusively, with the "Romanian issue." The monitoring on a tight leash of the internal situation and of the contacts on the line of foreign policy of Romania and of their reflection in the Romanian and international press, informing the leadership of the superior bodies regarding these events, establishing certain measures regarding the spread locally of the Soviet stance in the dispute with the Romanian leaders were amongst its responsibilities.

A series of historical "inaccuracies" related to the area between Prut and Nistru were detected by the Department of Information and International Relations of the CC of the MCP in all the works and materials published in Romania, and its dissatisfaction was triggered by the publication of "Atlasul istoric"¹⁶ which was printed in 1971, but also many other approaches, which were not compatible with the opinion of Kishinev.¹⁷

The possibility to study the activity of the Department of Information and International Relations was made possible by the approach from another viewpoint of the relations between the SRR and the MSSR, firstly, due to the volume of materials, but mostly due to the varied and rich in detail content.

Most of the documents regarding the activity of the Department included detailed information on the mutual visits of the representatives in various fields of activity of the Moldavian and Romanian party. And the progress reports for each year, drafted by the Department, offer us the possibility to know the exact number of the delegations, specialised groups, but also of the tourist groups which came to the MSSR, as well as of those which moved in the SRR.

¹⁵ AOSPRM, fond. 51, inv. 34, d. 261, p. 22-27.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, inv. 33, d. 257, p. 68-73.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

In order to avoid the “propagation of nationalist ideas” by the citizens in the SRR who were visiting relatives in the MSSR, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the MSSR was requested to adopt measures regarding the “regulation regarding the invitation of Romanian citizens in Moldavia and of Moldavian citizens to Romania,” with the aim of reducing “the significant number of mutual visits with individual visa.” Moreover, it was requested to “keep a tight control of the Romanian citizens’ behaviour during their time in the republic, regarding the maintaining the Soviet law and the norms in force for the stays of foreigners in the Soviet Union.”¹⁸

The exchange of tourists with Romania, the private visits of the citizens in the SRR to relatives in the MSSR, which increased by the end of the 1960s, were considered by the leadership of the republic to be sources of “contamination” of the MSSR inhabitants with “nationalist” and “anti-Soviet” ideas.¹⁹ In addition, the favourable attitude of the tourists in the SRR, who came to the MSSR, towards the leadership of their country represented another safety concern for the leadership in Kishinev. I. Bodiul underlined the fact that “*in the discussions with Romanian citizens, it is felt that many of them support and share the anti-Soviet course, nursed in their country, do not hide their negative attitude towards our country, clearly support the tendencies closeness towards America and China of the Romanian leadership.*”²⁰

Practically, the creation of the Department was part of the plan of the Soviet leadership to monitor all relations between Romanians on both sides of Prut. In addition to the part of activity dedicated to the movements and delegation exchanges, severely controlled, the Department “took care” of prohibiting the import and subscription to the literature and press in the SRR²¹ by the population in Soviet Moldavia, the counteraction towards receiving radio and television broadcast from the SRR and the Western countries in the MSSR,²² but mostly, insisting on the restriction of direct contacts between the Romanians in the MSSR and the SRR, by giving as argument the fact that these did not bring any propaganda benefits and were difficult to control.²³

To a certain extent, the progress of the Department can be considered an essential component of everything that represented the propagandist campaign

¹⁸ Gheorghe Negru, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ AOSPRM, fond 51, inv. 33, file 201, p. 67.

²¹ *Ibid.*, inv. 31, file 69, p. 47.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

in the 70s against the political course in the SRR and the “nationalism” in the MSSR, which had the aim of decreasing the contacts between the Romanians in the MSSR and the ones in the SRR. Bodiul argued in favour of the idea of “significant restriction” of the number of citizens in the SRR who came to the MSSR, but also of the citizens in Soviet Moldavia who went to the SRR with “individual visa.” “The increase of the responsibilities of the persons in the MSSR who invited their relatives and created conditions for the free movement and the spread of hostile states of mind”²⁴ was requested. The citizens of Soviet Moldavia who visited the SRR were “trained and informed about what they could find there, being ready for the possible conversations with an anti-Soviet nature which they has to ignore, protest against with energy and boldly fight back.

Bodiul requested the authorities responsible for welcoming the tourists from the SRR that “the Romanian tourist groups to be accompanied by the most trained, mature, from a political viewpoint and the most principled workers of the “Inturist” Union Share Company,²⁵ who would be trained in the immune state of mind towards any unhealthy discussions. Foreign guests who will not take into consideration the observations would be asked to leave the MSSR.

In line with the objectives established by the party supreme forum, the CC of the MCP determines the town committees and the party, ministers and departments districts, party, union and komsomolist* organisations “to significantly increase the level of ideological work,”²⁶ to cultivate even more the devotion towards communism, Marxist Leninist conception towards the events in the world. And one of the most important objectives consists in the fight against “hostile” manifestations of bourgeois ideology, “correct” education of the working people, that is “in the spirit of Moldavian patriotism, proletarian internationalism and friendships amongst peoples,” focusing the work of scientists on Marxist stances of the issues related to language and history, the appropriate organisation of the localities at the border with Romania. In line with the Decision of the CC of the MCP, access to foreign literature and periodical publications, especially those from Romania, had to be regulated. In addition, the quality of the work with foreign tourists, delegations, but also with groups which went outside the MSSR had to be “improved.”

Therefore, the idea of studying the activity of the Department of Information

²⁴ Elena Negru, Gheorghe Negru, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

²⁵ AOSPRM, fond 51, inv. 33, file 201, p. 67

* Komsomol - the youth organization of the Communist Party from the Soviet Union.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80

and International Relations within the CC of the MCP is connected to the desire to approach relations between the SRR and Soviet Moldavia in the post-war period, and as a preliminary point, we intend to discuss on what occurred in the time interval within the years 1970-1975, subsequently, coming back to discussing the materials regarding the relations between Kishinev and Bucharest in the 80s-90s of the last century.

**The first five years of the activity of the Department of Information
and International Relations dedicated to the relations
between the SRR and the MSSR**

The idea to develop the relations between the localities on both sides of the Romanian Soviet border, and not only, has increased especially after forming the Department of External Tourism attached to the Council of Ministers of the MSSR, since the mid 1960's. Subsequently, relations between the leadership of the county and district party councils began to be established. And depending on the geographical position, practically it was chosen the localities between which a cooperation, interesting to follow in this temporal interval, started. The largest volume of information of the Department of Information and International Relations involved the following counties, cities, districts: Botoșani, Iași, Vaslui, Galați, Bârlad, Fălești, Ungheni, Cahul, Vulcănești. The work plan for each year was established and mutually approved by both parties. The details related to the number of days of stay, number of persons who formed the group, but also the details related to the members of the group were known.

At first, most of the visits made by both parties were occasioned by the marking of certain important dates in the history of the SRR or the SSMR/USSR, thus, it can be easily noticed that the regularity with which certain visits would repeat annually. Amongst these were included: May 1st –Labour Solidarity Day, May 9th –Victory Day, August 23rd – The day of Freeing Romania from under the yoke of fascism.²⁷

Amongst the activities in which the guests in the SRR took part, were included: participation in the festive meeting of the inhabitants in the visited locality, in the rally and/or the labourers' demonstration in the visited areas, placing wreaths at the graves of soldiers who fought in the fight of freeing the district or the town, where appropriate, visiting agricultural objectives, sovkhos

²⁷ *Ibid.*

state farms and collective farms.²⁸

Usually, in line with the work plan between the two parties - district and county, mutual visits were appointed in the same temporal interval. Thus, the exchanges of groups at the customs office were mutual and the hosts took the guests, whom they accompanied to the destination. Another interesting aspect related to the welcoming of the groups was the fact that the parties wanted to be welcomed by colleagues in the neighbouring state who occupied the same positions.

Certain comebacks which came from the participants in these exchanges were very interesting. Thus, one of the coordinators of the Romanian delegation, who arrived in the MSSR on the occasion of 25 years since the victory over fascism, Croitoru stated: *"For the achievement of its freedom, the Romanian people is indebted to the Soviet army and this will never be forgotten. After the freeing, the Romanian troops together with the Soviet army participated in the freeing of Czechoslovakia, but also in the annihilation of fascism on its own territory."*²⁹

Almost every time when in the Moldavian districts delegations in Romania arrived, these had the chance to meet with the representatives of the leadership of the host district. Appropriate occasion for the opening of subjects linked to the economic and cultural development of the visited district or town. The progress reports drafted separately for each delegation also included notes related to the impressions of the members of the group, but also the subjects discussed by them, mentioning the details connected to the approach or the lack of approach towards subjects of political nature. In the reports one can also identify those situations relating to the linguistic and identity issue. For instance, in one of the reports in 1970, the following note was found: *„in the department store, the coordinator of the group asked the seller if she knows Romanian language, and her answer was: «I know Moldavian language»."*³⁰

As of 1971, exchanges of specialised delegations were organised and we will see that the profile of the groups has extended throughout time. Visits to the production units in the localities that mutually cooperated have become ever more frequent.³¹

A special emphasis in the growth of the relations between Moldavian districts and Romanian counties was put on the cooperation at the level of organisations of pioneers. Thus, as of 1972, one can notice the promotion of a new

²⁸ AOSPRM, fond 51, inv. 31, d. 236, p. 1-2

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5-7

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8-10

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3-6.

type of relations at the level of youngsters who were part of the organisation of pioneers in the localities of both parties.³²

Also based on the progress reports of the Department, we have found that the objectives open for visit by foreign groups were selected and appropriately prepared. The objectives were divided into several categories, especially, respecting the criterion of the group's and delegation's specialisation. Thus, groups of specialists in the agricultural field were interested in visiting collective farms, sovkhos state farms, party organisations within these. Visiting represented a practical exchange of experience, where they could discuss several subjects linked to the socio-economic reality of Soviet Moldavia, details which present an interest for the guests, although many of the information were slightly erroneous and the situation in certain collective farms or sovkhos state farms cannot be considered generally applicable.³³

Also in the year 1972, we find information on the visits made at the level of the representatives of komsomol organisations which functioned attached to various factories, collective farms, sovkhos state farms, cooperative societies, plants. The groups of the representatives of the komsomol organisations exchanged opinions related to the activity and the role that komsomolists and youngsters had in labour performance. This kind of visits was considered positive on the internationalist education of youngsters and on the consolidation of friendly relations between peoples.³⁴

In the same year, exchanges of experience increased at the cultural level. Thus, border districts and counties mutually sent groups of persons who were active in the field of culture, education and sport who carried out labour visits.³⁵

Also in the year 1972, an increase in the importance of exchanges of delegations of representatives of the local, town, district and/or county administration was observed. Usually, these official visits were noticeable through the seriousness with which the activities were respected, but mostly through the fact that the members of these delegations could enjoy meetings with superior representatives of the host localities.³⁶

The following year the organisation of exchanges of delegations between the border districts of the MSSR and the counties of the SRR dedicated to the day of May 1st began. The visits made on the occasion of the Labour Solidarity Day

³² AOSPRM, fond 51, inv. 33, d. 196, p. 27-28

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 31-32.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33-36.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40-41.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45-46.

represented a very justified occasion for the presentation of certain important objectives economically, culturally, ideologically, politically or even culturally speaking. And for the most important groups who arrived in the Moldavian districts, visits to Kishinev were organised, where one could visit the ENER (Exhibit of the National Economy Resources) of the MSSR.³⁷

Establishing a work plan regarding the development of the cooperation between the two entities on the Romanian Soviet border was an important issue, thus, the Moldavian party kept a record of the number of visits made by each of the partner-localities. Thus, each district knew exactly the number of groups who went abroad, but also of the ones who arrived.³⁸

The year 1974 was beginning with a visit made by a delegation from Ungheni to Iași on the occasion of the holiday of May 1st.³⁹

Exchanges of groups of the representatives of the komsomol organisations were organised, and the subject of the discussion between the hosts and the guests were focused on the structure of the komsomol and MSSR organisations of pioneers, the forms of political training of youngsters, the training of the assets, labour education, acceptance in the Komsomol, payment of contributions, the public educational system in the USSR, cultural organisations for youngsters.⁴⁰

Also in the year 1974, exchanges at the level of the employees of the local administrations were organised, thus, in the activities of the department one could also find the exchange of experience of village Soviet in the field of coordination of economic activities.⁴¹

One can find that the cooperation of the mass-media sources had become quite obvious, for instance in the year 1974, the editorial office of the newspaper "Flacăra roșie" invited to Iași two persons from the team of the editorial office of the newspaper "Octombrie" from the Ungheni district.⁴²

We can conclude that throughout the year 1974m the activity carried out by the Department of Information and International Relations had become ever more complex, and the progress reports and the information notes had increased numerically than the previous years. These became more and more detailed and

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 96-97.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, inv. 34, d. 259, p. 51-52

³⁹ *Ibid.*, inv. 35, d. 229, p. 1-3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9-10.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11-12.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 13-14.

included data related to the movement in the SRR of the delegations in the border districts of Soviet Moldavia, but also of the arrival in the MSSR of guests from Romanian counties. The exchanges of artistic groups of amateurs became more and more frequent.

The year 1975 began with the traditional delegation exchanges. The first visits were made on the occasion of the days May 1st and 9th.⁴³

The first five years of steady cooperation between the MSSR and the SRR were followed by the first visit of the Romanian Head of State, Nicolae Ceaușescu, who arrived at Kishinev at the beginning of August 1976, and this will be approached in an individual study.

Conclusions

During the 1970-1975 period, we found that the activity of the Department of Information and International Relations was quite a varies one, with every year the spectrum of the relations between the localities at the Soviet Romanian border has become wider and wider. The experiences obtained by the members of the delegations served as motivation for the further growth of the Moldavian Romanian relations. Although some problems and dissatisfactions appeared between the parties, most of these were generated by the disagreements at the level of the state leadership of the SRR and USSR, and in the middle there were also other issues, in addition to the issue of Bessarabia.

Nowadays, when crossing the border of present Romania or of the Republic of Moldova is no longer an issue and the procedure was significantly simplified, perhaps it is difficult to realise that in the 70s of the 20th century this was complicated from various points of view. The data contained in the Department's files speak volumes, out of which we can deduct the fact that the Moldavian leadership from that time took care of the fact that the border was crossed by certain persons and the private visits attempted to reduce them to a minimum. The preparatory procedure of the package of necessary documents was quite difficult, as well. However, even in that situation, the persons who had relatives on the other side of the border were ready to face these problems and to reach to the MSSR or vice versa, the SRR.

Although they were controlled, restricted - the relations between the SRR and the MSSR in the years discussed were important and allowed keeping the connections between the Romanians who lived in the two states placed on the two

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 13-14.

sides of Prut. Cooperation during these years was certainly precisely as the plans which before materialisation were presented to Moscow and all the details were established and their infringement bothered the Moldavian party.

The principles of the cooperation fields that we have identified in the activity of the Department of Information and International Relations were related to the fields: economic, socio-political, cultural, scientific, tourist.

The economic cooperation included two milestones - the agricultural and the industrial ones. And even from the beginning of the activity carried out by the Department one could notice that both the Moldavian districts and the Romanian counties supported the exchanges of delegations of specialists in the agricultural or industrial field. The most appreciated were the visits to the objectives appropriate to the structure of the groups where one could interact with simple workers or with persons who occupied a leading position in those particular units.

The socio-politic aspect was covered by the mutual visits of the delegations of the representatives of local, district or county authorities. And these were focused on the study and analysis of various experiences. According to the progress reports of the Department, some practices regarding the carrying out of certain activities were taken by the Romanian party or the Moldavian one, certainly, through the application of the appropriate changes. Furthermore, the mutual exchanges of lecturers had already started, which consist of the giving lectures for the workers within some industrial or agricultural units. The lectures were different from the point of view of the content, and most of the times, these comprised data related to the socio-economic development, but also regarding the growth prospects of the area in which the lecturer came. However, the most popular activity with local authorities was the one of participation to various events organised on the occasion of certain events in the history of both peoples. In this regard, one must make mention of some of the days which represented the reason for many if the mutual visits: May 1st – Labour Solidarity Day, May 9th – Victory Day, August 23rd – considered to be Romania's National Day, October 25th – The Great Revolution of October.

The cultural and scientific aspect was quite important in everything that represented the bilateral cooperation between the localities placed, especially, at the Romanian Soviet border. The members of the profile delegations were involved in various exchanges of experience with the host institutions. Thus, professors and teachers went to mutual visits, where they had the chance to know the activity practice of their colleagues.

The results of the first five years of activity of the Department of Information and International Relations within the CC of the MCP dedicated to the SRR

represent a source of information “gathered” by specialists who were active in various state institutions in the MSSR. And nowadays, these are at our disposal. Any person who knows Russian language can go through the yellow pages which marked the history between the Romanians in Bessarabia and the ones in Romania. All the more important are these data for us, the ones who did not live in those times whose consequences we experience today.

In a forthcoming study, we intend to raise the issue of the activity of the Department in the second half of the 1970s, to follow the Romanian Moldavian/Soviet bilateral cooperation in the light of and based on the documents which are at our disposal.