

ROMANIA IN THE SOVIET SECRET POLICY OF THE EARLY 1920s

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Abstract: *The article reveals the essence of the Soviet foreign policy towards Romania, whose purpose was the establishment of the Soviet power in this state. The methods and instruments (mechanisms) used by the Bolsheviks to promote the Communist revolution in Romania are indicated. The researcher reveals that, in order to attain the above objectives, the special secret service was set up under the command of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, which was engaged in organizing subversive, reconnaissance, and terrorist activities on the territory of Romania. The circumstances of the largest terrorist attack in Romania, organized by this Soviet special service, are outlined, and the reasons for its liquidation are set forth.*

Keywords: *Romania, Foreign Policy, Soviet Power, Bolshevik revolution, Communist Party, Ukraine, Secret Service*

Rezumat: *România în cadrul politicii externe secrete sovietice la începutul anilor '20 ai secolului XX. Studiul oglindește esența politicii externe sovietice față de România, politică ce urmărea instaurarea regimului comunist în această țară. Articolul prezintă metodele și instrumentele (mecanismele) folosite de bolșevici pentru a promova revoluția comunistă în România. Autoarea arată că, pentru a atinge aceste obiective, sub coordonarea Comitetului Central al Partidului Comunist al Ucrainei a fost înființat un serviciu secret special ce avea ca misiune organizarea, pe teritoriul României, a unor activități subversive, de spionaj și teroriste. În studiu sunt prezentate circumstanțele realizării celui mai amplu atac terorist pe teritoriul românesc de către Serviciul Secret sovietic, precum și motivele desființării acestei structuri speciale.*

Résumé : *La Roumanie dans la politique étrangère secret soviétique au début des années 1920. L'article révèle la politique étrangère de l'Union soviétique à l'égard de la Roumanie où l'URSS avait pour le premier objectif d'établir son autorité. Il annonce les moyens d'action et les instruments (mécanismes) auxquels les bolcheviques ont recouru pour faire progresser la révolution des bolcheviques en Roumanie. Il constate qu'en vue de réaliser tous ces projets, on a institué un service secret, auprès du Comité Central du Parti*

Communiste des bolcheviques de l'Ukraine, qui mettait sur pied les activités subversives et terroristes ainsi que les activités de renseignement sur les territoires roumains. Il met en évidence les circonstances de l'attentat terroriste le plus important en Roumanie, organisé par ce service secret soviétique, ainsi que les raisons de la dissolution de ce dernier.

INTRODUCTION

The establishment in 1917 of the Soviet power in Russia became a prerequisite for the spread of Bolshevism in the post-imperial territories. In Ukraine, the Soviet power was established in 1920. At that time, the Bolsheviks had illusions that they could Sovietize the neighbouring Poland and Romania. But with desperate efforts and with the military and technical as well as financial support of the Western allies, the Poles still managed to stop the Red Army in the Battle of the Vistula River. The persistent attempts of the Bolsheviks to seize Poland should be explained by their desire to 'approach' the border with Germany. According to the Bolsheviks, the establishment of the Soviet power in Germany was to trigger the 'world revolution', which in its turn would lead to the creation of a 'world socialist state'.¹ In a statement to the Second World Congress of the Comintern (July-August 1920), the Soviet General Semyon Budyonny, the commander of the 1st Cavalry Army, said: "We will be happy on the day when, together with the proletariat of the West, we will enter into a decisive battle with the world bourgeoisie, when our army will receive its operational orders from Red Paris, Berlin, or London".² But the defeat on the Vistula crashed their plans for a breath-taking "world revolution".

Therefore, in the early 1920s, the Bolsheviks made some tactical changes to

¹ Сергей Пивовар, Олег Купчик, *Взаимоотношения между Украинской ССР и Польшей в контексте Рижского мирного договора* [Relations between the Ukrainian SSR and Poland in context of the Riga Peace Treaty], in *Геополитические трансформации в Восточной Европе между двумя мировыми войнами (к 90-летию подписания Рижского мирного договора): сб. материалов междунар. науч.-практ. конф.; Брест, 17-18 марта 2011 г.*, Брест, БрГУ, 2011, с. 116; Фелікс Кон, *Польша на службі міжнародного імперіалізму* [Poland in the Pay of International Imperialism], Москва, 1927, с. 8; Іванна Лісна, *Становлення української державності в Галичині (1918-1923 рр.)* [Establishment of Ukrainian Statehood in Galicia (1918-1923)], Тернопіль, 2001, с. 64; «Красная Армия придёт в Германию с запозданием» [«The Red Army Will Come to Germany out of Time»], in "Источник", 1995, No. 2, с. 30.

² Thomas Fiddick, *Russia's Retreat from Poland, 1920: From Permanent Revolution to Peaceful Coexistence*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1990, p. 290.

their foreign policy: they adopted the concept of peaceful coexistence with Western 'bourgeois' countries, but they did not completely abandon the idea of establishing the Soviet power in them.³ To reach this goal, the Bolsheviks actively engaged the Comintern, set up in 1919, which by that time had established an intelligence and sabotage network.⁴

Soviet Ukraine directly contributed to exporting the Bolshevik revolution to its neighbouring countries. On March 18, 1921, the Russian and Ukrainian Councils of People's Commissars made a peace treaty with Poland in Riga. According to the treaty, the parties established official relations, dispatched diplomatic missions and committed 'not to conduct a hostile policy toward the counterparty'.⁵ Under these conditions, extreme caution had to be exercised in reconnaissance and subversive activities on the territory of Poland.

However, the Bolsheviks did not even have formal barriers to export the revolution to Romania. Official relations were not established between Soviet Ukraine, Russia and the Kingdom of Romania. Romania refused to include the so-called 'Bessarabian issue' in the political agenda. According to the Saint-Germain Treaty of 1919, the territory of Bessarabia became a part of Romania.

The Councils of People's Commissars of the RSFSR and the UkrSSR, in their note to Romania, Great Britain, France and Italy, emphasized that the 'Bessarabian issue' was resolved by the Entente countries without notifying them thereof. For this reason, the RSFSR and the UkrSSR did not consider themselves bound by the treaty made by other governments on the Bessarabian issue and, consequently, on the eastern border of Romania.⁶ Thus, the territorial dispute between Romania, the RSFSR, and the UkrSSR remained unresolved.

³ Alastair Kocho-Williams, *Engaging the World: Soviet Diplomacy and Foreign Propaganda in the 1920s*, in http://www2.uwe.ac.uk/faculties/CAHE/HPP/staff/stafflist/A_Kocho-Williams_sovietdiplomats1920s.pdf (Accessed on 02.09.2017).

⁴ Олег Купчик, *Деякі аспекти відносин між УСРР і Румунським Королівством (1920-1923 рр.)* [Some Aspects of Relations Between the UkrSSR and the Kingdom of Romania (1920-1923)], in *Часопис української історії: Зб. наук. ст.*, Київ, 2006, вип. 5, с. 101; Алексей Богатуров (отв. ред.), *Системная история международных отношений в 4 т. События и документы. 1918-2000* [System-Defined History of International Relations], т. 1. События 1918-1945, Москва, 2000, 516 с.

⁵ *Мировий договір між Україною й Росією з одної сторони й Польщею з другої* [Peace Treaty Between Ukraine and Russia, on the one hand, and Poland, on the other hand], Рига, 1921, с. 4-5.

⁶ *Нота Правительств РСФСР и УССР Правительствам Великобритании, Франции, Италии, Румынии. 1 ноября 1920 г.* [Note from the RSFSR and UkrSSR Governments addressed to the Governments of Great Britain, France, Italia, Romania, November 1,

In the Kingdom of Romania, the Soviet government tried to actively use the anti-Romanian sentiments to spread the ideas of ‘socialism’, that is, “the socially just society”. And this, according to the Bolsheviks, would only be possible in the event of Sovietization of Romania. It is obvious that the Red Army’s ‘liberation’ campaign in Romania was to begin in Bessarabia and Bukovina, the most favourable territories for that, given the controversial views of the population and the territorial dispute.⁷

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND RESEARCH SOURCES

Scientists have studied the issue of export of the Bolshevik revolution to Europe at different times. However, they mostly paid attention to Poland, since the shortest route to Germany was through the Polish territory. The Bolshevik leaders were convinced that the establishment of the Soviet power in Poland would be the start of the world socialist revolution.⁸ Yet, the issue of export of the revolution to Romania was not thoroughly studied.

According to the author, in studying the intention and the very process of spreading the revolution to the West, it is very important to understand the phenomenon of the revolutionary movement and the establishment of the communist

1920], in *Документы внешней политики СССР*, т. 3., Москва, Государственное издательство политической литературы СССР, 1959, с. 312.

⁷ *Nota Народного Комиссара Иностранных Дел РСФСР и Председателя Совета Народных Комиссаров и Народного Комиссара Иностранных дел УССР Министру Иностраных дел Румынии Ионеску. 29 апреля 1921 г.* [Note from the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR and the Council of People’s Commissars Chief addressed to Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ionescu, April 29, 1921], in *Документы внешней политики СССР*, т. 4, Москва, Государственное издательство политической литературы СССР, 1960, с. 89; *Телеграмма народного комиссара Иностраных дел РСФСР Председателю Российско-Украинской делегации в Смешанной Российско-Украинско-Румынской комиссии по Днестровскому лиману В. И. Яковлеву в Одессе. 14 июня 1921 г.* [Telegram from the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR to the Chair of Russian-Ukrainian Delegation in the Mixed Russian-Ukrainian-Romanian Dniester Estuary Commission V. I. Yakovliev in Odessa, June 29, 1921], in *Документы внешней политики СССР*, т. 4, с. 178-179.

⁸ Ziven K. Chinburg, *Halting the Revolution: Poland and the “Miracle at the Vistula”*, in “Constructing the Past”, Vol. 16, No.1, article 4, 6 p., in <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/constructing/vol16/iss1/4/> (Accessed on 10. 09. 2017); Фелікс Кон, *Польша на службе международного империализма...*, с. 8; Іванна Лісна, *Становлення української державності в Галичині (1918-1923 рр.)* [Establishment of Ukrainian Statehood in Galicia (1918-1923)], Тернопіль, 2001, с. 64.

regime in Russia. In this context, the research by American historian Richard Pipes, who for many years has been studying the history of the Russian state, is valuable for this study.⁹ The scientist comes to the conclusion that the origins of communism stem from the historical past of Russia, namely from the fact that people living there had no notion of private property. This directly influenced the formation of a specific mentality of the Russians, making them strikingly different from the population of European countries. In addition, Chapter 4 of his work provides a comparison of the communist and Nazi regimes, finding a lot in common and explaining why the Bolsheviks failed to export the revolution to Europe.

The Comintern was an important instrument of the Soviet foreign policy at an early stage of its activity and up to its formal dissolution in 1943. Alastair Kocho-Williams, professor at the Bristol University, in his article *Engaging the World: Soviet Diplomacy and Foreign Propaganda in the 1920s* emphasizes that the place and role of the Comintern were so important that, in a sense, the word 'Comintern' can be considered a universal synonym for both the Soviet foreign policy in general and the Soviet intelligence agencies' classified operations, aimed at strengthening the influence of the Bolshevik regime on a global scale. This mainly concerns the spread of the Bolshevik propaganda and the subversion information operations by the Soviet special services.¹⁰

The Comintern activities are studied in detail in the relevant sections of the fundamental monograph by K. McKenzie *The Comintern and the World Revolution of 1919-1943*¹¹, where the author emphasizes the special role of the Soviet Union in the struggle for the world revolution, highlights the stages of the establishment of the Communist international community, analyses the strategies and tactics employed by the Bolsheviks to capture global domination. The author invites special attention to the relations of the Soviet Union with the Communist Parties of other countries and with revolutionary movements.

In this regard, the Comintern's role is a key to setting up the Communist Party of China (CPC), which is still in power in the 21st century. The monograph by American historian Liu Jianyi, professor at the University of York, *The Origins of the Chinese Communist Party and the Role Played by Soviet Russia and the Comintern*¹² covers this issue.

⁹ Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, New York, Knopf, 1990.

¹⁰ Alastair Kocho-Williams, *Engaging the World...* (Accessed on 21.08.2017).

¹¹ Кермит Маккензи, *Коминтерн и мировая революция. 1919-1943* [Comintern and the World Revolution. 1919-1943], Москва, Центрполиграф, 2008.

¹² Liu Jianyi, *The origins of the Chinese Communist Party and the role played by Soviet Russia*

The Comintern also played a very important role in the purely military aspect of the Soviet foreign policy, for example, in organizing armies or subversive operations. The chapters of the monograph by American military historian Earl F. Ziemke *The Red Army 1918-1941: from Vanguard of World Revolution to US Ally*¹³ are devoted to this issue.

The general concept of the doctrinal evolution of the Soviet foreign policy and the Comintern's role in it are reflected (as a detailed analysis of the sources) in the article by Gleb Albert *From the 'World Council' to 'The Motherland of the Proletarians'*.¹⁴ The evolution of the Soviet foreign policy is also described in Warren Lerner's article *The Historical Origins of the Soviet Doctrine of Peaceful Coexistence*, where the author, despite an apparent paradox, considers the idea of 'peaceful coexistence' to be inseparable from that of 'world revolution'.¹⁵

The Comintern was dissolved by Stalin in 1943, just a year before Stalin was ready to occupy Eastern Europe. At first glance, this also seems to be a paradox. However, Gary Blank in his article *Security, Sovietization, and Stalinism: Stalin's Plan for Post-War Eastern Europe*¹⁶ shows the role and legacy of the Comintern in transforming Stalin's policy during the transition to real domination in Eastern Europe.

As for the spread of the revolution to the West, it should be noted that the Soviet historiography¹⁷ concealed the active involvement of the Russian Communist Party of the Bolsheviks and the CP(B)U, as well as Russian and Ukrainian

and the Comintern, University of York, March 2000, 418 p.

¹³ Earl F. Ziemke, *The Red Army 1918-1941: from vanguard of world revolution to US Ally*, London and New York, Frank Cass, 2004, 415 p.

¹⁴ Gleb J. Albert: *From the "World Council" to "The Motherland of the Proletarians"*. *Anticipated World Society and Global Thinking in Early Soviet Russia*, in "InterDisciplines. Journal of History and Sociology, Vol. 3, 2012, No 1, p. 85-119.

¹⁵ Warren Lerner, *The Historical Origins of the Soviet Doctrine of Peaceful Coexistence*, in "Law and Contemporary Problems", Vol. 29, Fall 1964, No. 4, p. 865-870; <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/lcp/vol29/iss4/4/> (Accessed on 14.09.2017).

¹⁶ Gary S. Blank, *Security, Sovietization, and Stalinism: Stalin's Plan for Post-War Eastern Europe*, in "Saber and Scroll", Vol. 1, Fall 2012, No. 3, p. 77-90 (Edited and Revised April 2015); <https://digitalcommons.apus.edu/saberandscroll/vol1/iss3/8> (Accessed on 14.09.2017).

¹⁷ Владимир Дембо, *Бессарабский вопрос* [Bessarabian Issue], Москва, 1921; Станіслав Пархомчук, *Великий Жовтень і революційне піднесення в Румунії* [Great October and Revolutionary Inspiration in Romania], Київ, 1967; А. Новак, *Великий Октябрь и зарождение коммунистического движения в Румынии (1917-1921)* [Great October and Genesis of Communist Movement in Romania (1917-1921)], Кишинев, 1987; Г. Гологинков, *У Днестра*, пер. с болг. [Near the Dniester, transl. from Bulgarian], 2-е изд., Кишинев, 1966, 357 с.

Councils of People's Commissars, in the attempts to establish the Soviet power in Romania. It linked the struggle of local workers and peasants against the 'bourgeois oppression' with the Romanian Communist Party. There is also the book about Max Goldstein, one of the masterminds of subversive and terrorist activities in Romania.¹⁸ The main character of the book is certainly a victim of Romanian jailers and executioners, who carried out bourgeoisie's 'social orders'.

Nevertheless, modern Ukrainian historians V. Sidak, V. Kozeniuk, M. Vivcharyk, on the basis of archival documents that were declassified and published in the second half of the 1990s - the beginning of the 2000s prove the opposite.¹⁹ The researchers studied the activities of the Soviet state and party special services aimed at spreading the 'fire of the world revolution'. As a result, they managed to establish that in addition to state security services such as the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission and the State Political Directorate, there was another deeply conspiratorial state party intelligence service²⁰ whose function was to carry out reconnaissance and subversive activities in other states. It was called the 'Foreign Department'.

Russian historians focus mainly on the territorial dispute of the Soviet government with Romania at that time; therefore, a significant part of the Russian historiography is dedicated to the 'Bessarabian issue'. Although the chronological scope of these studies covers the early 1920s, there is no mentioning of the activities of the Soviet special services such as the Foreign Department, and their sabotage activities. We are talking only about incidents that happened on the demarcation line along the Dniester (Soviet-Romanian border). Thus, the Soviet-Romanian diplomatic correspondence of the time was filled with mutual claims about

¹⁸ Макс Гольдштейн, *Замученный в Дофтане* [Tortured in Doftana], Москва, ЦК МОПР СССР, 1931, 40с.

¹⁹ Валерій Козенюк, Михайло Вівчарик, *Предтеча органів держбезпеки* [The Forerunner of National Security Service], in "Військо України", 1996, No. 5-6, с. 48-49; Михайло Вівчарик, Валерій Козенюк, «Закордон» – агентурно-розвідувальна організація більшовиків України ["Foreign Department" as the Spy Ring of Ukrainian Bolsheviks], in "Український історичний журнал", 1997, No. 1, с. 144-149; Валерій Козенюк, «Закордон» у системі спецслужб Радянської України ["Foreign Department" in the Soviet Ukrainian System of Special Agencies], in "Воєнна історія", 2002, No. 1, с. 16-25; Владимир Сидак, Валерий Козенюк, *Революцию назначить... Экспорт революции в операциях советских спецслужб* [Revolution is to be Set... Export of Revolution in Campaigns of Soviet Special Agencies], Киев, Генеза, 2004, 248 с.

²⁰ Л.В. Шпаковські, *Радянська Україна як інструмент експорту більшовицької революції в Румунію (початок 1920-х рр.)* [Soviet Ukraine in Export of Bolshevik Revolution to Romania (Early 1920-ies)], in "Сторінки історії: збірник наукових праць", 2017, No. 44, с. 94-95.

such incidents.²¹

It is noteworthy that the contemporary Russian historiography in this matter follows the traditions of the Soviet historiography, ignoring the active engagement of the Soviet special services that was aimed at exporting the revolution to Romania.

Moldovan historians²² paid further attention to the activities carried out in the early 1920s by the Odessa branch of the Foreign Department of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) Central Committee. In their works devoted to the establishment of the Soviet power in Moldova, they disclose aspects of life and activities of the immediate leaders of the Odessa branch and the main organizers of reconnaissance and subversive operations in the Kingdom of Romania.

As for the sources, the author refers to the minutes of the meeting attended by members of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) Central Committee and related to the work of the Foreign Department, as well as reports, reviews, letters from the Foreign Department of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) Central Committee on its activities in 1921, deposited in the Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine, namely: f. 1, inv. 20, d. 408. These sources make it possible to clarify the organizational structure of the Odessa branch of the Foreign Department, the tasks and methods of reconnaissance and subversive activities undertaken by this branch on the territory of Romania, namely in Bessarabia and Bukovina. Special operations and main actors in the export of the Bolshevik revolution to Romania are studied.

²¹ Михаил Мельтюхов, *Бессарабский вопрос между мировыми войнами 1917-1940* [Bessarabian Problem Between the World Wars 1917-1940], Москва, Вече, 2010, 464 с.; Денис Мальцев, *Бессарабский вопрос в годы Гражданской войны в России* [Bessarabian Issue During the Civil War in Russia], in "Проблемы национальной стратегии", Москва, 2011, No. 4 (9), с. 162-183; Василий Каширин (ред.), *Восточная политика Румынии в прошлом и настоящем (конец XIX – начало XXI вв.): Сб. докл. Междунар. науч. конф.* [Western Policy of Romania in the Past and Nowadays (Late 19th – Early 21st cent.): Papers of Intern. Scient. Conf.], Москва, 2011, 320 с.

²² Олег Галущенко, *Евреи в составе руководящих кадров Молдавской АССР: Иосиф Исаакович Бадеев* [The Jews in Executive Staff of the Moldavian ASSR (Case of Iosif Isakovici Badeev)], in *Сборник научных трудов Института иудаики, Кишинев, Инт Иудаики*, вып. 5, 2013, с. 90–99; Олег Галущенко, *Образование Молдавской АССР: современный взгляд историка* [The View of Contemporary Historian on Genesis of the Moldavian ASSR], in "Проблемы национальной стратегии", 2014, No. 5 (26), с. 202-218; Олег Галущенко О. *Участие евреев в создании Молдавской АССР* [Jews' Participation in Establishment of the Moldavian ASSR], in *Евреи Молдовы и их вклад в развитие молдавского государства. Республ. конф. (Кишинэу, 2012)*, Кишинэу, 2013, с. 102-110.

Published documents²³ are equally important in studying this issue. Having studied these sources, we determined the role and importance of the 'Romanian' trend in the Soviet secret foreign policy, and learned about the cooperation of the Soviet party and state institutions in exporting the Bolshevik revolution to Romania. Thus, the role of the Ukrainian SSR in exporting the Bolshevik revolution to Romania in the early 1920s has not been the subject of a separate study before. At the same time, the sources made it possible to determine the role of the Ukrainian SSR in the attempts of Sovietization of Romania.

ARGUMENTS

The establishment of the Soviet power in Romania created conditions for its further spread in the Balkans. Obviously, the Bolshevik leaders counted on the support of the Bulgarians, Serbs, Greeks, etc., who remembered the Russian aid in their national liberation struggle against the Ottoman Empire. The Bolsheviks (like the Russian Empire) were interested in taking control of the Black Sea straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles, which provided the shortest route from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Therefore, the Sovietization of the Balkan countries, in its turn, enabled the export of the Bolshevik revolution to Turkey, at least to its European part. But the 'Romanian' campaign of the Red Army was to be launched from the southern part of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina.

Obviously, the Bolsheviks tried to exploit the anti-Romanian sentiments of Ukrainians in Southern Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, due to the Romanian government's centralization of power and the abolition of local self-government, appointment of Romanian citizens to most administrative posts, settlement of Romanian colonists, the policy of making education more 'Romania-oriented', etc. With the slogan of protecting the ethnic Ukrainian population, the Bolshevik leaders, typically, hoped to obtain their support in the war against the 'Romanian monarchy' and identified the latter as the second (after 'bourgeois' Poland) enemy. The Bolsheviks regarded the above-mentioned peace treaty with Poland as temporary, since they had plans to start revolutionary struggle in this region as well. In this context, one of the leaders of the Ukrainian SSR D. Manuilsky stated that even though the Soviet authorities had to give away part of Volyn and Galicia when making the Riga Treaty, 'we as Ukrainians will protect the population of these territories'.²⁴ This meant applying the same scenario of using anti-Polish sentiments

²³ «Закордон» в системі спецслужб Радянської України: зб. док. ["Foreign Department" in the Soviet Ukrainian System of Special Agencies: Collection of Documents], Київ, 2000, 213 с.

²⁴ Центральний державний архів вищих органів влади та управління України [Сен-

among local Ukrainians with the slogans of their protection.

Acts of terror against the Romanian leaders, representatives of the administration, police and court were aimed at destabilizing the situation in the state. This campaign, organized on the territory of Southern Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, was part of the Bolsheviks' aggressive plans. Moreover, the common state border with Romania predetermined the role of Soviet Ukraine in exporting the revolution to this country.²⁵ Thus, the Red Army's campaign against the Kingdom of Romania was to begin with a so-called undeclared war, that is, with subversive terrorist acts that would destabilize the situation in the state as a whole and become an introduction to the 'Romanian campaign' of the Red Army.

It is noteworthy that the expert on the propagation of revolutionary ideas in Romania was the then chairman of the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars Christian Rakovsky, who held the post of Chief of the Romanian Department of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR. His 'mature' revolutionary activities were associated with Romania, whose citizen he was until 1917 (then he moved to Russia). Being the state leader of the Ukrainian SSR, Rakovsky described his practical experience and theoretical knowledge about the revolutionary movement in this country in his historical works. In particular, a book about Romania, written by Ch. Rakovsky and L. Trotsky, was published in one of Moscow's publishing houses in 1922.²⁶ Three years later, Rakovsky, while working in the diplomatic sphere in Great Britain, published a book devoted to the 'Bessarabian issue'.²⁷

The party-state special service – established in May 1920 and named the 'Foreign Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine' – was in charge of exporting the Bolshevik revolution. It was subordinated to the CCCP(b)U and the Executive Committee of the Comintern.²⁸ The Odessa branch of the Foreign Department, led by A. L. Grinshtein, was directly engaged in the implementation of this task with respect to Romania.

tral State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine] (hereinafter: ЦДАВО України), Ф. 1, оп. 2, спр. 29, л. 9.

²⁵ Владимир Мельниченко, *Христиан Раковский: неизвестные страницы жизни и деятельности* [Unknown Moments of Christian Rakovsky's Life and Activities], Киев, 1992, с. 43.

²⁶ Лев Троцкий, Христиан Раковский, *Очерки политической Румынии* [Essays about Political Romania], Москва, 1922.

²⁷ Христиан Раковский, *Румыния и Бессарабия* [Romania and Bessarabia], Москва, 1925.

²⁸ Михайло Вівчарик, Валерій Козенюк, «Закордон» – агентурно-розвідувальна організація більшовиків України, с. 145.

Abram Grinshtein was born in Bessarabia. He was engaged in revolutionary activities in his youth in Odessa, where in 1905 he became a member of the BUND. In 1917, he actively participated in revolutionary activities in Petrograd, but soon moved to Chisinau. There he began his career. In fact, he was the leader of the clandestine Bolshevik activities in Bessarabia, so it is not surprising that the Romanian court in absentia sentenced him to life imprisonment.²⁹

According to Russian researcher of the establishment of the Moldavian ASSR O. Galushchenko, the French counterintelligence described Grinshtein as 'The chief of the Foreign Department (section of communist propaganda and espionage abroad), a former lawyer in Bălți and a teacher of the Hebrew language in Chişinău'. Grinshtein was also referred to as 'the leader of terrorists in Odessa'.³⁰

Former member of the Foreign Department I. Baddiev recalled that Grinshtein had been his 'immediate chief in the Foreign Department'. Grinshtein was also mentioned by *Staryi* (pseudonym of Gregory Borisov, a participant of the revolutionary movement), who wrote that they had 'worked together in the Foreign Department'.³¹ It is noteworthy that in 1924 Grinshtein was among those who organized the establishment of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (hereinafter – the MASSR) within the Ukrainian SSR. Yet, the Soviet historiography ignored this fact since he was a convinced 'Trotskyist'. After the establishment of the autonomous republic, he worked as a 'permanent representative of the MASSR under the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR'.³²

As a result of the 'foreign activities' carried out by the special service', Bessarabia, with its centre in Chisinau, and Bukovina, with its centre in Chernivtsi, became separate 'districts'. At the time of the establishment of the Odessa branch, it took over from the military intelligence service of the Soviet Army the 'crossing points' located near Tiraspol and Ovidiopol. In May 1920 – December 1921, another 12 'crossing points' were created. 'Authorized' members of the Foreign Department on the Black Sea coast (Greenblat) and in Ochakov (Luke) assisted Grinshtein in doing that.³³

²⁹ Олег Галущенко, *Евреи в составе руководящих кадров Молдавской АССР: Иосиф Исаакович Бадеев*, с. 116-122.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, *Образование Молдавской АССР: современный взгляд историка*, с. 211.

³¹ Дмитро Мришук, *Григорій Іванович Старий* [Grigore Ivanovich Staryi], Київ, 1974, 151 с.; Олег Галущенко, *Участие евреев в создании Молдавской АССР*, с. 107.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 110.

³³ Олег Купчик, *Закордонний відділ ЦК КП(б)У – спецслужба українських більшовиків* [Foreign Department of the CC of the CP(b)U as a Special Service of Ukrainian Bolsheviks], in "Вісник Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка.

At the same time, the Odessa branch had its own 'passport and technical division', which issued Romanian documents for the needs of the special service (passports, university diplomas, seals, stamps, etc.), as well as printed propaganda materials and literature.³⁴ For underground activists and partisans, the Odessa branch sent weapons to the Romanian territory; for example, from April to May 1921, they sent two carloads of weapons and a carload of explosives, in particular, Lewis guns (29 units), Shosha guns (50 units), machine gun cartridges (256,500 pcs.), rifles (250 units), rifle cartridges (270,000 pcs.), grenades (310 pcs.), Novitsky bombs (400 pcs.), gun spare parts (5 pcs.), field binoculars (5 pcs.), pyroxylin with capsules (20 poods*), dynamite with capsules (15 poods), TNT with capsules (over 30 kg), pyroxylin grenades with capsules (100 pcs.), detonators (337 pcs.).³⁵

The Odessa branch was funded through the local branches of the State Bank. In particular, it received money (including Romanian Lei), and jewellery. As a result of such operations, during three months of 1921, the department received money equivalent to 114,550 golden rubles.³⁶ Thus, all necessary materials and all methods of exporting the revolution to Romania, from propaganda materials to large amounts of money and weapons, were provided and applied.

On October 30, 1921, after the Polish secret services disclosed in the summer of the same year the activities of the Kyiv branch of the Foreign Department in Volyn,³⁷ the Soviet leaders discussed the issue of 'New Organization of Work Abroad'. As a result, they made a decision to liquidate the Kharkov and Kiev branches of the Foreign Department. The Odessa branch was not liquidated. In the future, it would function as part of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission, as the Secret Department thereof. Its tasks included: 1) managing foreign activities of the party in the specific area (Northern Bukovina, Southern Bessarabia and Romania); 2) carrying out reconnaissance work there. However, the party activities for the 'secret department of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission' were determined as a priority and conducted exclusively under the control of the Central Committee, while the reconnaissance sector was supervised by the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission. The chief of the Secret Department of the

Історія", Київ, 2002, вип. 62, с. 45.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

* A Russian unit of weight equivalent to about 16.4 kilograms.

³⁵ Валерій Козенюк, Михайло Вівчарик, *Предтеча органів держбезпеки*, с.48-49.

³⁶ Олег Купчик, *Закордонний відділ ...*, с. 47.

³⁷ Олександр Гісем, «Закордон» у системі дипломатичних відносин між Польщею та УСРР (1921–1923 рр.) ["Foreign Department" in the System of Diplomatic Relations between Poland and UkrSSR], in *Україна дипломатична*, 2007, вип. VIII, с. 160.

All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission was appointed by the Central Committee of the CC CP(b)U, and his assistant was designated by the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission upon consultation with the Central Committee. Generally, the chief was responsible for party and reconnaissance activities. His assistant was in charge of reconnaissance. The 'Secret Department of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission' was funded by the Central Committee of the CP(b)U and the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission: the former funded party activities, and the latter financed reconnaissance activities. The overall guidance of the Secret Department of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission was entrusted to one of the members of the Party Central Committee. No 'technical department' was established. Its functions were performed by the 'secret directive division' of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine.³⁸

The final decision on the 'Secret Department of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission' was not approved at that time, because on December 30, 1921, a meeting was held at the CC CP(b)U, which was attended by chairman of the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars Ch. Rakovsky, members of the Central Committee F. Kon, D. Liebied, V. Zatonsky, chief of the Ukrainian 'Foreign Department' F. Markus, and chief of its Odessa branch A. Grinshtein. At the meeting, the attendees discussed 'issues related to the activities of foreign entities'. The following decisions were made: '1) to stop the externally organized partisan activities in Bessarabia and Bukovina; 2) to support and develop the internally organized subversive activities; 3) to strengthen the internally organized partisan activities in Bessarabia and Bukovina; 4) to transfer the center of party activities to Romania and organize there publication of propaganda literature to be distributed in Bessarabia and Bukovina; 5) to pay special attention to the training of field agents and leading employees to be sent abroad; the nominations must be agreed upon in the secretariat of the Central Committee; 6) to 'purge' the staff of the crossing points; 7) to refer the issue of the new organizational structure of the 'Foreign Department', in relation to the Kharkov branch liquidation, to the secretariat of the Central Committee for resolution, jointly with A. Grinshtein and F. Markus, 8) to deem the Kiev branch of the Foreign Department liquidated'.³⁹

Thus, the organization of export of the Bolshevik revolution to Romania was fully delegated to the Odessa branch, reorganized into the Secret Department of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission.

It is also important to note the following results of the operative and subversive activities of the Foreign Department: in April 1921, its employees in the

³⁸ «Закордон» в системі спецслужб Радянської України: зб. док., Київ, 2000, с. 165.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Akkerman County killed Fadenko, an agent of the Romanian political police (Siguranța) and village head, and carried out an armed attack on the police outpost in the village of Nedoboivtsi. In addition, their plans were to attack Chisinau prison in order to free convicted communists. However, the arrest of the head of this group prevented them from fulfilling the plan.⁴⁰ Despite this, on May 1, 1921, members of the Foreign Department blew up the building of the local branch of the political police in Chișinău. On June 1-3, they carried out an armed attack on police checkpoints near the town of Khotyn. In July, trains were derailed in the Bendery district. Around the same time, in this county they tried to blow up a bridge across the Ialpukh river. Yet, due to technical malfunctions, the explosive devices did not work. In each village located near the railway, a 'secret agent' was recruited.⁴¹ On July 31, an armed attack was carried out on the Khotyn gendarmerie in order to kill the chief of the local police and gendarmerie. On August 3, in the village of Lenkovtsy of the Khotyn county, two agents of the Romanian Siguranța were killed, and in September a bridge across the Ialpukh river was blown up. In Bendery, a Siguranța agent and an executioner of the Orhei Siguranța were killed. In addition, there was an explosion in the administration of the gendarmerie of Ackerman in October. Three gendarmes were killed. Around the same time, there was a failed explosion attempt at the Northern Railway Station in Bucharest. Also, preparations were made to launch an armed attack on the Jilava prison to free convicted communists. Nevertheless, the Romanian police revealed and prevented the attack.⁴² Thus, over a relatively short period, the operational groups of the Foreign Department organized and carried out a significant number of operations, which, naturally, drew the attention of the Romanian security agencies.

The most successful terrorist operation organized by members of the 'Foreign Department' was led by Max Goldstein. In the autumn of 1920, he was one of the three members of the group sent to Romania to commit acts of terror. In October of the same year, there was a general strike, suppressed by the authorities. Goldstein tried to kill the Interior Minister C. Argetoianu, who directly led the pacification of the strikers. He failed to detonate the train of the minister. The Minister was lucky enough to survive: the explosion was in the front part of the wagon, and

⁴⁰ О. Купчик, *Зовнішньополітична діяльність уряду УСРР (1919–1923 рр.): між українською формою та радянським змістом* [Foreign-Policy Activities of the UkrSSR (1919–1923): between Ukrainian form and Soviet essence], Київ, Тернограф, 2011, с. 208.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Сергій Пивовар, Олег Купчик, *Діяльність Закордонного відділу ЦК КП(б)У (1920–1921 рр.)* [Activity of Foreign Department of the CC of the CP(b)U (1920–1921 pp.)], in "Українська революція 1917–1921 років: погляд із сьогодення", Київ, 2013, с. 518.

the minister was in its back part. However, the apotheosis of the activity of the Goldstein group was the bomb attack in the building of the Romanian Senate on December 8, 1920⁴³, where the senator, Bishop D. Radu, was killed, and the Minister of Justice D. Greceanu and Senator G. Spiru being wounded died in hospital. The chairman of the Senate, General C. Coandă, and Bishops Nifon and Roman Ciorogariu were injured, as well. There could have been more victims if the senatorial seats had been at the level of the presidium. A powerful explosion shook the windows of the local university and frightened the students and lecturers. They rushed to the exit and saw smoke and dust coming from the window of the Senate Hall. King Ferdinand I visited the site soon after the explosion. The police identified the terrorists and their role in the explosion, but the bombers managed to escape from Romania.⁴⁴

Taking advantage of the fact that the terrorist attack was strongly condemned by the public, the authorities immediately accused the Romanian communists. Although chief of the Communist Party of Romania G. Cristescu rejected all the accusations, a great trial took place, and members of the Communist Party as well as trade union leaders and others were brought to justice.

The investigators had information about Goldstein as an anarchist communist and about his left radical views; at the same time, they had sufficient evidence that he had acted with the help of the Bolshevik special services.⁴⁵

In 1921, Goldstein made several failed attempts to get to Romania through Bulgaria. His route lay from Odessa to Varna and then to the Bulgarian-Romanian border. At that time, the Ukrainian-Romanian border, 'though quite long ... had already become unreliable for the transition ... there were a lot of failures ... new ways through Bulgaria had to be found'.⁴⁶

⁴³ Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons. A Political History of Romanian Communism*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2003, p. 49.

⁴⁴ *The violent beginnings of Communism in Romania: a portrait of Max Goldstein*, in <https://tourofcommunism.com/2013/12/02/the-violent-beginnings-of-communism-in-romania-a-portrait-of-max-goldstein/> (Accessed in 29.01.2017).

⁴⁵ Miruna Munteanu, *Confesiunea unui terorist comunist* [Confessions of a Communist Terrorist], in <http://bucuresti-strictsecret.blogspot.in/2007/11/confesiunea-unui-terorist-comunist.html> (Accessed in: 7.02.2017).

⁴⁶ *Протоколы совещания членов ЦК КП(б)У по вопросам работы Закардонного отдела. Доклады, обзоры, письма Закардонного Отдела ЦК КП(б)У о его деятельности (1921 г.)* [The Minutes of the CC of the CP(b)U Members' Consultation about the Work of Foreign Department. Reports, Overviews, Letters of Foreign Department of CC of the CP(b)U (1921)], in Центральный державный архив громадських об'єднань

One such attempt was made in July 1921, when Goldstein landed on a Bulgarian beach near Varna, accompanied by two more persons (Chirițescu, Hagi) 'in the daytime'.⁴⁷ They were noticed by local fishermen. The Foreign Department members found no surveillance. Thus, the fishermen managed to steal their chest with dynamite. The Bulgarian communists were able to buy this chest from the fishermen before they transferred it to the police. Interestingly, Goldstein and his accomplices wrote in a report addressed to the leaders of the special service that the fishermen had also stolen their documents and money (which they are likely to have appropriated by themselves - *Author*).⁴⁸ It is obvious that the members of the 'Foreign Department' tried to get to Romania to carry out their task. The Bulgarian Communists wrote about this to the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party (hereinafter – the Central Committee of the BCP) but they had no idea that members of the 'Foreign Department' were in Bulgaria. Notably, the letter said that they had had an argument about which of them was 'the leader'. Thereafter, 'they were deported from Bulgaria by the local party organization. They were forbidden to return, of which they were informed by comrade Popov, a member of the Central Committee of the BCP'.⁴⁹

Secretary of the Central Committee of the BCP V. Kolarov, who was in Moscow to attend the Third Congress of the Comintern in late July 1921, wrote a letter to the Central Committee of the RCP(b) about the above situation. According to the letter, the Bulgarian coast was used by the Foreign Affairs Department of the Comintern for 'communication with Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece and even Italy ... And if there is another landing of the same kind, the shore will certainly be closed for all sorts of intercourse with Russia'.⁵⁰ Thus, the leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party protested against the actions of the Foreign Department which could lead to negative consequences for the BCP and the communist movement in Bulgaria.

Despite this, a month later, Goldstein, accompanied by Maria Simoiu, again tried to get to Romania from the Bulgarian border town of Ruschuk. Previously informed of this, the police searched the house where the members of the Foreign Department were living, and seized dynamite chests and valuables worth over 2 million Bulgarian Levs.⁵¹ Although Goldstein and Simoiu managed to escape, the

України [Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine – hereinafter: ЦДАГО України], f. 1, inv. 20, f. 408, p. 112.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 112-114.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 114-117.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

police searched local communists and arrested them. Again, the Central Committee of the BCP (letter dated October 4, 1921, signed by Comrade Popov, a member of the Central Committee) protested against such actions of the Foreign Department. The letter said: 'These Romanians, the Goldstein brothers, come again with a woman, Maria Simoiu, and they again have explosives and jewels worth two million. Despite our protests, these people are now organizing their base in Varna'.⁵² Bulgarian communists once again protested against the attempts of members of the Foreign Department to involve the local party organization. They strongly recommended organizing their base in Romania, justifying it by the fact that the activities that had led to the defeat of the Romanian Communist Party could contribute to the liquidation of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

However, in October 1921, Goldstein again attempted to illegally enter Romania from the territory of Bulgaria, but when he was crossing the border near the Bulgarian city of Rousse he was arrested by the Romanian police. Despite the tortures he suffered, he denied the involvement of the Romanian Communist Party in the Soviet special services and his personal role in the act of terror. Goldstein claimed that he had organized it as an anarchist and head of the terrorist group of Romanian anarchists.⁵³

After the trial on June 28, 1922, Goldstein was sentenced to life imprisonment in Doftana prison (in the Prahova County), where he died in 1924. Soviet historians associated the death of the prisoner to his second hunger strike, which lasted 32 days. According to the Romanian version, Goldstein died of disease (pneumonia or tuberculosis).⁵⁴ His brother Lupu Goldstein (sentenced to 5 years of penal servitude), was also arrested by the police.⁵⁵

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

To export the revolution to Europe, the Bolsheviks paid special attention to neighbouring countries such as Poland and Romania; their intention was to

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Петр Шорников, Павел Ткаченко во главе бессарабского подполья [Pavel Tkachenko as a Leader of Bessarabian Underground Movement], in "Русин", 2008, no. 1-2 (11-12), с. 172.

⁵⁴ Miruna Munteanu, *Confesiunea...* (Accessed on 07.02.2017); *The violent beginnings of Communism in Romania: a portrait of Max Goldstein* (Accessed on 20.03.2017).

⁵⁵ *В боярской Румынии (очерк белого террора в Румынии за последнее десятилетие)* [In Boyar Romania (Essay about White Terror in Romania During the Last Decade)], Москва, Издание И. К. МОПРа, 1924, с. 68.

spread the revolutionary ideas through these countries and further to the West. The Bolsheviks paid special attention to Romania, with which the Soviet government did not have diplomatic relations.

For the so-called 'liberation' campaign of the Red Army in neighbouring Romania, the Soviet special services organized reconnaissance and sabotage work, as well as subversive and terrorist activities on the territory of Romania. To this end, they tried to use various social, economic and national contradictions between the Ukrainian population and the Romanian authorities of Bessarabia and Bukovina to create a generally destabilizing situation in the state. Moreover, various acts of terror were carried out, which claimed many human lives.

The special service organizing such activities was the Foreign Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine. Its most successful terrorist attack was the explosion on December 8, 1920 in the building of the Romanian Senate. It caused the death of the chairman of the Senate, the Minister of Justice and two more senators. The explosion was carried out by Max Goldstein, a member of this organization who was previously trained for this type of activity. The failure in 1921 of the members of the 'Foreign Department' in Poland and arrest of M. Goldstein by the Siguranța led to changes in the organization of export of the Bolshevik revolution to Romania. From December 31, 1921, the Odessa branch of the Foreign Department operated within the system of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission as the Secret Department of the All-Ukrainian Extraordinary Commission, but its activity related to export of the Bolshevik revolution to Romania is the subject of further scientific research.