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Romania and the Solidarity Crisis of 1980–1981: A Distinct Approach?

Abstract: The article questions the official narrative concerning the Romanian reaction towards the Solidarity crisis of 1980–1981. Considering an extended period during which Nicolae Ceausescu had a distinct attitude in the socialist bloc regarding the Solidarity crisis, the new sources show that things were more complex than a simple opposition against an intervention in Poland. The situation in Poland was perceived with great fear in Bucharest, just like in Moscow or Berlin.

Zarys treści: Artykuł kwestionuje oficjalną narrację dotyczącą rumuńskiej reakcji na kryzys Solidarności w latach 1980–1981. Biorąc pod uwagę to, że w ramach bloku socjalistycznego Nicolae Ceausescu zajmował przez długi czas jasne stanowisko wobec kryzysu solidarnościowego w Polsce, nowe źródła pokazują, że sprawy były bardziej złożone, nie chodziło o zwykły sprzeciw wobec interwencji w Polsce. Bukareszt, podobnie jak Moskwa czy Berlin, z ogromną obawą przyglądał się wydarzeniom w Polsce.

Keywords: Solidarnosc, Ceausescu, Poland, Romania, communism, crisis, the 1980s

Słowa kluczowe: Solidarność, Ceausescu, Polska, Rumunia, komunizm, kryzys, lata osiemdziesiąte XX w.

Unlike the crisis in Czechoslovakia, when Romania was in the process of distancing itself from Moscow and Nicolae Ceausescu was a dynamic leader, during the Solidarity crisis, this situation had changed. Twelve years after his famous speech before the Central Committee, in which he condemned the Prague invasion and won the support of the Romanian people, the Socialist Republic of Romania (SRR) had become “the most independent country in Eastern Europe in terms of foreign policy and the most Stalinist in its social structures”.¹ Sociologist Pavel

¹ P. Câmpeanu, *Ceaușescu, anii numărătorii inverse*, Iași, 2002, p. 271. A similar statement was made by Silviu Curticeanu, who claimed that between the internal and external policies of the SRR,

Câmpeanu's observation perfectly illustrates the challenges that the Solidarity crisis was to pose for the Romanian leader. Nicolae Ceausescu, who was not a supporter of reform but rather "a fanatic of power",² could not tolerate the existence of a trade union outside the authority of the party, as this would have contradicted the Marxist-Leninist dogmas and would have jeopardised the very existence of the regime. As Silviu Curticeanu argued, the head of the Romanian Communist Party's Chancellery (RCP), Ceausescu was "reluctant to any renewal, remaining firm to the idea that the party must be a strictly centralised and disciplined organisation".³

Beyond this ideological danger from Warsaw, another threat was posed by the Soviet Army, concentrated on Poland's eastern border throughout the entire existence of the Solidarity Trade Union. Thus, as long as the Trade Union continued to act in the Polish People's Republic (PPR), the Soviet Union maintained numerous divisions on the western border, creating a taut situation within the socialist bloc, as well as many fears in Bucharest. For this reason, the crisis in the PPR was to represent 'a double-edged sword' for the Romanian regime. On the one hand, the situation was perceived "as a threat to the foundations of the communist system and the monopoly of the communist party", but at the same time, "the events in Poland raised again the possibility of a Soviet threat to Poland's national sovereignty".⁴

In this paper, we will answer the following research questions: was Bucharest's attitude towards the Solidarity Trade Union so distinct from other socialist countries? Did this differentiation imply a particular perception of Solidarity, or did it have more similarities with the other socialist countries? What were the common elements, and what were those that particularised the SRR in the socialist bloc?

The paper's subject is to question the official narrative that Romania opposed intervention in Poland during the Solidarity crisis, which would have given it a distinct position within the socialist bloc. Thus, to understand the Romanian leadership's approach to the situation in Poland, we will first analyse the steps taken by the authorities to counter the possible effects of the Polish crisis. In the second part, we will investigate the public and bilateral discourse to identify Nicolae Ceausescu's perception of the situation in Poland, especially during

"there was a difference like the one between heaven and earth. This difference was mainly determined by the fact that in domestic policy, Ceausescu, influenced by an unbridled thirst for power, did, especially in the last few years, practically whatever he wanted, while in foreign policy, he did only what he could", S. Curticeanu, *Meditații Necenzurate*, București, 2007, p. 196.

² The description was first used by the historian Ion Petcu in his book *Ceaușescu, un fanatic al puterii. Biografie neretușată* (București, 1994).

³ Curticeanu, *Meditații Necenzurate*, p. 58.

⁴ Anneli Maier, 'Romanian media comment on Poland', in *Radio Free Europe*, Romanian Situation Report no. 5, 15 January 1981, Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale [Central Historical National Archives] (hereinafter: ANIC), Fund Anneli Ute Gabanyi, folder 298/1980–1983, p. 14.

the Polish delegation's visit. The period covered includes the 16 months of the existence of the Solidarity Trade Union and the moment of General Jaruzelski's seizure of power by introducing martial law and outlawing Solidarity.

Generally, in Romanian historiography, the Romanian leadership's perception of the crisis in Poland in the early 1980s has been studied fragmentarily, without utilising all the sources that became available later. Among the historians who have dealt with the early period of the crisis is Petre Oprea,⁵ whose work is one of the most complex on the situation in the PPR from August 1980 to December 1981. Although the author provides numerous details on the evolution of the crisis in the 1970s, both in Romania and in other socialist countries, only sources from the National Archives are used in the work. A small contribution is a study by Constantin Morariu,⁶ but he uses only a telegram from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and the new research possibilities were not pursued. Dennis Deletant and Mihail E. Ionescu dealt with Romania's attitude to the Polish crisis in the Warsaw Treaty.⁷ Another work to be considered is Ion Constantin's *Poland in the "Solidarity" Era, 1980–1989*, which contains a chapter dedicated to Polish-Romanian relations in the 1980s. The author uses only secondary sources, without any archive, which is why he does not make a consistent contribution to this issue.⁸ An exception seems to be Filip-Afloarei Daniel's book, *A Tempestuous Decade. Romania and the Crisis of the Communist Regime in Poland in the 1980s*, but the author analyses the Polish crisis as a whole during the last communist decade without focusing on the issue we are analysing in this paper.⁹

The narrative that Nicolae Ceausescu opposed a military intervention in Poland was constructed by the people around him, who sought to emphasise the discordant note of communist Romania in its relations with Moscow. The most relevant example is that of Ștefan Andrei, foreign minister from 1978 to 1985 and member of the Permanent Bureau (PB) until the collapse of the communist

⁵ P. Oprea, *Criza poloneză de la începutul anilor '80. Reacția conducerii Partidului Comunist Român*, Ploiești, 2008.

⁶ C. Morariu, 'România și criza poloneză din 1981', *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, no. 3–4 (2012), pp. 249–253.

⁷ D. Deletant, M.E. Ionescu (eds), *Romania and the Warsaw Pact, 1955–1989. Selected Documents*, București, 2004.

⁸ See the chapter 'Răcirea relațiilor oficiale dintre RS România și RP Polonă în anii '80', in I. Constantin, *Polonia în epoca „Solidarității”, 1980–1989*, București, 2007, pp. 153–161. Other articles concerning this topic and written by the same author are: 'Aspecte privind relațiile româno-polone în perioada anilor '80', *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, no. 3–4 (2005), pp. 123–128; 'România și Sindicatul Solidaritatea, 1981–1989', *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, no. 1–2 (2011), pp. 125–32. I also took into consideration the volume coordinated by Felician Duica, but it does not bring any new information on the topic, see F. Duica (ed.), *Solidaritatea, Revanșa Poloneză*, București, 2007.

⁹ D. Filip-Afloarei, *Un deceniu zbuciumat. România și criza regimului comunist din Polonia în anii '80*, Cluj-Napoca, 2023.

regime, in the volume of interviews he had with Lavinia Betea, *Stăpânul secretelor lui Ceaușescu. I se spunea Machiavelli. Ștefan Andrei în dialog cu Lavinia Betea* [Master of Ceausescu's secrets. They called him Machiavelli. Ștefan Andrei in dialogue with Lavinia Betea]. Asked whether "Ceaușescu still feared Soviet intervention in Romania after 1968?" the former foreign minister replied: "Yes. In 1981, there were people in the Political Bureau of the CC of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union who supported intervention in Poland. However, it is not true that this was also Ceaușescu's position. There is his speech at the meeting of the general secretaries in Moscow before the introduction of the exceptional state by General Jaruzelski".¹⁰ This assertion is indeed supported by documents,¹¹ but also by the defence minister sent to Moscow at the time, Constantin Olteanu, another close friend of Nicolae Ceaușescu, who, like Ștefan Andrei, highlighted Romania's distinct attitude in the socialist bloc in his memoirs.¹² This rhetoric has even been taken up by Polish historiography. For example, in the volume of documents coordinated by Andrzej Paczkowski and Malcolm Byrne, the two argue that after the Solidarity Congress of September 1981, Romania would not have joined the critique of the socialist countries, but the reality was different, as we will see throughout our paper.¹³

If we look at the context, Romania's attitude was indeed distinct in that it did not agree with a military intervention in Poland. But if we consider the essence of the matter, namely the salvation of the Polish communist regime, in this case, this is the common denominator of all communist countries in the socialist bloc, and the SRR was no exception. This is recognised even by Ștefan Andrei, who claims that Ceausescu himself suggested to Brezhnev at a meeting in Moscow in 1981 that Poland should use its own army if the regime were endangered: "In discussion with him, it was agreed that if there happens to be a foreign intervention, we will not participate. **But we are not going to criticise as he did for Czechoslovakia.** Because there are other conditions and because, indeed, there are strong forces in Poland – Solidarity, the support of the Vatican, of the

¹⁰ L. Betea, *Stăpânul secretelor lui Ceaușescu. I se spunea Machiavelli. Ștefan Andrei în dialog cu Lavinia Betea*, București, 2011, p. 176.

¹¹ 'Meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the States participating in the Warsaw Treaty, Bucharest, 1–2 December 1981', in ANIC, Fund Ministerul Afacerilor Externe [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] (hereinafter: MAE), Warsaw Treaty Department, folder 99/1981.

¹² Constantin Olteanu is known to the public for the positions he held in the last communist decade: Minister of National Defence (1980–1985) and Secretary of the CC of the RCP (1988–1989). He took part in numerous activities of all the political and military structures of the Warsaw Treaty and was able to have inside knowledge of many of the details, as recounted in his memoirs, *România, o voce distinctă în Tratatul de la Varșovia: memorii, 1980–1985. Dialog cu Dumitru Avram*, București, 1999, pp. 102–114.

¹³ A. Paczkowski, M. Byrne et al., *From Solidarity to Martial Law. The Polish Crisis of 1980–1981. A Documentary History*, Budapest–New York, 2007, p. 365

Americans – that socialism is even in danger there”.¹⁴ In this situation, one can only wonder how distinct Romania’s position was.

This study starts from the hypothesis that the RCP perceived the crisis in Poland as a threat to the communist regime. Despite the discourse emphasising “non-interference in the internal affairs” of Poland, the Romanian side was equally interested in saving the communist regime in the PPR but also in stopping the rise of Solidarity in political and social life. To demonstrate this hypothesis, we will use the concept of ‘axiological operators’ developed by Gisele Sapiro. According to the French sociologist, who also used Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of ‘reproduction crisis’, the concept ‘axiological operators’ represents “notions or expressions such as ‘progress’, ‘modernity’, ‘freedom’ and ‘human rights’ or conversely, ‘tradition’, ‘roots’, ‘social order’ and ‘civilization’, which provide systems of cultural oppositions, and at the same time their meaning and their position in hierarchy of values through spatial designators – in this case high and low – with a moral connotation of worthy (*digne*) and unworthy or undignified (*indigne*)”.¹⁵ In the case of this research, given that we are analysing the communist period, the key notions do not have a moral connotation but a social one, which provides legitimacy to the regime, such as ‘Marxism-Leninism’, ‘single party’, ‘social rights’ and ‘socialist construction’ vs ‘reform’, ‘multi-partyism’, ‘human rights’ and ‘democracy’. Further, Sapiro argues that “*axiological operators* play a major role in symbolic struggles, especially in periods of social transformation... Situations of crisis or critical moments make these symbolic struggles more intense, more explicitly ideological and more concentrated...”.¹⁶

As the Polish anthropologist Jan Kubik pointed out in his work *The Power of Symbols against the Symbols of Power*,¹⁷ Polish Solidarity was not only a struggle for free trade unions but also a struggle against the dominant discourse of the time – the Marxist-Leninist one – which led to the possibility of creating a new social order, since most political crises are characterised by “struggle around the monopoly of symbolic and physical violence”.¹⁸ To maintain its power, the state needs not only a monopoly on physical violence but also on symbolic violence, defined as “a form of ‘soft’ violence, which relies on the complicity of dominated, because they have interiorized the principles of their domination, through

¹⁴ Betea, *Stăpânul secretelor lui Ceaușescu*, p. 139.

¹⁵ G. Sapiro, ‘Structural crises vs situations of (political) crises: A Bourdieuan approach’, *Rassegna italiana di Sociologia*, no. 63 (2) (2022), p. 321. This concept was initially developed in a study published in 2021: ‘Against self-interest: The codification of “disinterestedness” as an axiological operator in religion, aesthetics, and the ethics of intellectual professions’, in Christine Zabel (ed.), *Historicizing Self-Interest in the Modern Atlantic World. A Plea for Ego?*, London–New York, 2021, pp. 241–260.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 321–322.

¹⁷ J. Kubik, *The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power. The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland*, University Park, PA, 1994.

¹⁸ Sapiro, ‘Structural crises’, p. 301.

education and/or vectors of the dominant ideology”.¹⁹ While the Romanian communist regime had a monopoly on physical violence, the same was not true of symbolic violence. The decline in the economy, in living standards and in Nicolae Ceausescu’s popularity meant that the situation in Poland was not just a local crisis, but one with possible repercussions at the regional level, which is why it became a challenge to the leadership. Thus, the concept of ‘axiological operators’ will help us better understand the struggle of the RCP to maintain the political *status quo*, but especially the fact that at the discursive level, the Bucharest regime had more in common with other socialist countries than elements that individualised it.

The Solidarity crisis came at a time when the regime in Bucharest was no longer in a favourable domestic situation. Although the level of contestation never reached the scale of that in Poland, critical voices against Nicolae Ceausescu did exist. A first attempt was made by the writer Paul Goma, who, inspired by Charter 77, sent a letter of solidarity in January 1977 and then sent a new one, this time to the countries participating in the CSCE Belgrade, where he demanded respect for human rights in Romania. Paul Goma’s letter was signed by 75 people, including psychiatrist Ion Vianu, but he was immediately arrested and eventually forced to emigrate to France in November.²⁰ The heaviest blow for the regime came from the working class. On 1 August 1977, the three-day miners’ strike in the Jiu Valley began, with an estimated 35,000 miners taking part in the largest protest of the communist era.²¹ A year before Solidarity appeared in Poland, in February 1979, a group of intellectuals from Bucharest and workers from Drobeta Turnu-Severin founded the Free Trade Union of Romanian Workers (Sindicatul Liber al Oamenilor Muncii din România, SLOMR), led by Ionel Cană.²² The trade union was conceived as a means through which workers could oppose the excessive control exercised by the RCP. Although the SLOMR did not operate for an extended period, one of its members, Vasile Paraschiv,²³ became a symbol of communist repression in Romania in the West, and the case became known with the help of the non-governmental organisation Amnesty International.²⁴

¹⁹ P. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. and introd. J.B. Thompson, transl. G. Raymond and M. Adamson, Cambridge, 1991, p. 141.

²⁰ D. Deletant, *Ceașescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965–1989*, London–New York, 2015, pp. 235–242.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 243–246.

²² See I. Cană, *Sindicat liber și dictatură*, Iași, 2015.

²³ See his memoirs: V. Paraschiv, *Lupta mea pentru sindicate în România. Terorismul politic organizat de statul comunist*, Document, Iași, 2005, pp. 81–117.

²⁴ For a comprehensive history of SLOMR, see D.-A. Săvoaia, ‘Human Rights and Independent Trade Unionism in late 1970s Romania: the case of SLOMR’, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie ‘A. D. Xenopol’*, vol. 55 (2018), pp. 343–360. In the case of Amnesty International and the communist repression in SRR, see its report from 1987: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/EUR390021987ENGLISH.PDF> (accessed on 13 Aug. 2024).

However, the biggest problems of the Bucharest regime were economic. The oil crises of 1973 and 1979, the earthquake of 1977, the continuation of forced development of industry, the outbreak of war between Iraq and Iran, from which the SRR imported cheap oil, and the bad weather in 1980–1981 exacerbated the problems in the Romanian economy so that at the end of 1981 the government asked its creditors to accept a postponement of up to six months of the payment of its loans.²⁵ Thus, like Poland, Romania was also faced with the problem of foreign debt and the repayment of the loans obtained in the 1970s.

At the international level, the Solidarity crisis began with the end of détente after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the outbreak of the Second Cold War.²⁶ There was a cumulation of factors behind these tensions, but the situation in Poland was a good pretext for Washington to step up its new offensive against Moscow. Following the USSR's decision to move troops to the Polish border on 1 September 1980, President Jimmy Carter sent a letter to his Western allies, urging them to take a common position in the face of Moscow's threats to intervene in the PPR. At the same time, President Carter sent a similar letter to the Soviet leader, warning him of the severe consequences that an intervention in Poland would have on East-West relations. Moreover, the US Secretary of Defense held a press conference where he publicly outlined the negative impacts of a military intervention in Poland on international relations. In the broadcast speech, he said that such an action would represent the irreversible end of détente and economic cooperation between East and West and would lead NATO countries to increase their defence budgets.²⁷

As a result, the Solidarity crisis came at a complicated time for the Ceausescu regime. On the one hand, the country had entered a period of economic decline, and on the other, Romania was caught in the middle of the new Soviet-American conflict. Bucharest's room for manoeuvre in international relations became increasingly limited, as it tried to maintain a policy of balance between the two superpowers. It was in this context that the increasingly active rapprochement with the countries of the Third World in the last communist decade was to be seen. However, unlike the crisis in Czechoslovakia, the threat posed by the situation in Poland was an existential one; firstly, the removal of the Polish United

²⁵ Opreș, *Criza poloneză*, pp. 81–83, 89. For Adam Burakowski, the turning point for the Romanian economy was 1977, when stagnation and decline began; see A. Burakowski, *Dictatura lui Nicolae Ceaușescu: 1965–1989. Geniul din Carpați*, transl. V. Olaru, Iași, 2008, pp. 198–206, 212–233, 237–263.

²⁶ F. Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War*, 2nd edn, London, 1986.

²⁷ On the coordination of Western leaders' response to the Polish crisis and the marginalisation of socialist countries internationally, see H. Sjørusen, *Western Policy-Making in the Polish Crisis (1980–83): The Problem of Coordination*, PhD thesis, London School of Economics, February 1997, <http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/2477/1/U615426.pdf> (accessed on 9 Aug. 2024).

Workers' Party (PUWP) from power would mean the end of the party-state in Poland, but at the same time it could lead to Soviet intervention in the PPR. Secondly, Poland became the place where two worldviews were to be contested: the Marxist-Leninist and the liberal one. In this situation, the legitimacy of the communist regimes was questioned in the PPR, so its outcome could not be ignored even by Bucharest.

Romania's Reaction

The reaction of the Romanian leadership was much more complex than simple press releases or statements made during meetings of international organisations where SSR was a member. The reaction resulted from a combination of the factors mentioned above, but also of continuous gathering of information on the evolution of the situation in the SRR and the RPP, as well as of information regarding the relations between the two superpowers. The reaction was twofold: the first level involved gathering information internally and externally, and the second level consisted in expressing its views on the situation in Poland, both within the CC and bilaterally or multilaterally, after receiving the information.

Gathering Information

The first and most important channel of information was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, notably the Romanian Embassy in Warsaw, but it was not the only one. In the Embassy headed by Ion Cozma,²⁸ the crisis in Poland was the subject of careful investigation in different aspects: political, economic, social, ideological, and cultural. Close monitoring of the situation was requested by the MFA headquarters in Bucharest, which asked it "to pay particular attention to informing on the development of the political, economic and social situation in Poland", more specifically on "the realisation of the Gdańsk–Szczecin and Jastrzębie Agreements, the situation in the ranks of the PUWP and the objectives of increasing its leading role in Polish society, the situation in the trade union and youth movement, economic reform in all its aspects (industry, agriculture, investment, trade, etc.), the involvement of the intelligentsia in solving the major problems of the internal

²⁸ According to the information found in his biographical file at the Cadre Section of the National Archives, in 1955 he was elected CC Secretary of the Romanian Workers' Party, in 1956 he became minister of the Romanian railways, and between 1957 and 1962, he served as minister of agriculture. In 1970, he was appointed minister of tourism, and between May 1978 and November 1984, he was an ambassador of the RSR to the PPR, see ANIC, Fund Comitetul Central al Partidului Comunist Român [Central Committee of the RCP] (hereinafter: CC al PCR), Secția Cadre, C/865, pp. 2–3.

situation, relations between the state and the Catholic Church, the role of the younger generation, the role of the army, etc”.²⁹

The MFA telegrams were completed by those sent by the AGERPRES correspondent in Warsaw. They included press releases from Poland and beyond, closely reflecting the ideological unrest in society but also the fact that Marxist-Leninist ideology had sometimes come to be questioned even by party members or their ideologists. At the present research stage, I have been able to identify only two AGERPRES files in the National Archives, 126 and 127, which cover a short period. The first covers the period between 3 and 24 January 1981, and the second, between 9 March and 27 May 1981. However, the scale of the documentation, 296 pages for about four months, demonstrates the meticulousness with which the evolution of the crisis in Poland was monitored, as well as the high interest of the Bucharest authorities. Many of the AGERPRES releases are annotated in blue lead pencil, with the headings “Dosar Polonia” or “Dosar Polonia-81”, and the period chosen coincides with the worsening political situation in the PPR. Although most of the information were collected and sent to Bucharest by D. Tinu, AGERPRES correspondent of the *Scînteia* newspaper, none of them was published, but remained in a closed circuit. Finally, in addition to the AGERPRES correspondent, the press attaché of the Romanian Embassy, Ilie Ivan, also dealt with the situation in the Polish media.

If externally the most intense monitoring campaign was initiated by the MFA, internally this role fell to the Department of State Security, or shortly *Securitate*. Even if the tone adopted by the Romanian leadership at the public level did not suggest any concern, the measures taken with the outbreak of the PPR strikes and the emergence of Solidarity speak for themselves. In this regard, on 18 October 1980, the First Directorate of *Securitate*³⁰ asked all County Inspectorates to investigate “persons who have praised the events in the PPR or expressed intentions to undertake similar actions in our country”.³¹ At the same time, their mission was “to be constantly concerned with knowing the state of mind of the population [...] to prevent and put an end to any action likely to jeopardise the security of the State”.³² Although the objectives of this operation were not clearly specified, the measures taken by the *Securitate* give us some clues: surveillance

²⁹ Arhivele Ministerului Afacerilor Externe [The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs] (hereinafter: AMAE), Fund 1980, Polonia, Problema 20, dos. 2016, pp. 62–63.

³⁰ It dealt with “domestic information”, see: F. Banu, L. Țăranu (ed.), *Securitatea, 1948–1989. Monografie*, vol. 1, Târgoviște, 2016, p. 71.

³¹ “Note și informații adresate Direcției I de către Inspectoratele Județene de Securitate, Serviciul I, privitoare la starea populației”, Arhivele Consiliului Național pentru Studiul Arhivelor Securității [National Council for the Study of Security Archives] (hereinafter: ACNSAS), Fund Documentar, dos. 13.314, vol. 26, p. 71.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

of workers in large industrial centres in the counties of Timiș, Iași, Cluj, Bacău, Galați, Brașov, Suceava, Neamț, Ploiești, etc., of former sympathizers or members of SLOMR, but also of the way the situation in Poland was perceived by the population. The most likely reason for starting this operation was to check whether the emergence of Solidarity in Poland would revive the SLOMR or spur the creation of similar organizations. Although SLOMR was short-lived and its members and leaders were silenced,³³ SLOMR's ideas could be reactivated because of the discontent within Romanian society.

The *Securitate's* information action was not limited only to workers or intellectuals, but also targeted the Polish minority in Bukovina, as well as Polish tourists coming to Romania. Thus, even though the number of Poles in Bukovina was small,³⁴ the renewal of contacts between them and those who had left for the PPR in the post-war period, thanks to the Helsinki Agreements, as well as the increase in the number of Polish tourists visiting or transiting the SRR, raised the concern of the Romanian authorities about the possibility of espionage or even infiltration of the ideas of Solidarity in the SRR. The fears arose even before the signing of the Gdańsk Agreements, more precisely after the election of Pope John Paul II, when UM 0110³⁵ launched operation "Allies I", with the aim of monitoring contacts between Poles in Romania and their fellow countrymen. This operation took on a new dimension after the formation of the Solidarity Trade Union, following suspicions of espionage, and was continued and diversified until the fall of the communist regime under the name "Allies II".

Although there were several campaigns of surveillance of Poles in Bukovina, as well as of Polish tourists, the *Securitate's* activities were centred on the operations "Allies I" and "Allies II", which targeted the compact Polish community in the localities of Poiana Micului, Solonețul Nou, Gura Humorului and Pleșa, in Suceava County. Most of them lived here and often met Polish tourists coming to the SRR or members of the PPR Embassy in Bucharest, with which they had started to develop ties in the 1970s. As it appears from a memorandum dated 9 March 1981, the aim of the "Allies II" case was to identify the nature of the relations between the Polish Embassy in Bucharest and the small community in Suceava, the nature of the relations between Polish tourists and those from this community, as well as "the conceptions they express towards the policy of our state".³⁶

³³ The founding members were Ionel Cană, Gheorghe Brașoveanu, Vasile Paraschiv, and Priest Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa.

³⁴ At the 1977 census, the number of Poles in Romania was 4,641 people, the most compact group being in Suceava county, with 2,527 Poles; see D. Hrenciuc, 'Minoritatea polonă din partea de Sud a Bucovinei (1945–2000)', *Analele Bucovinei*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2000), p. 298.

³⁵ Independent counter-intelligence unit for socialist countries, see Banu, Țăranu (ed.), *Securitatea*, pp. 223, 228.

³⁶ ACNSAS, Fund Documentar, dos. 8803, vol. 2, p. 51.

The fear of the *Securitate* concerned the possibility “of using Polish tourists in the activity of gathering information on the economic and social situation of Romanian citizens of Polish nationality by the adverse intelligence service, due to the fact that during the summer season, in Suceava County, were entering daily through the two border crossings approx. 2,000 tourists”.³⁷

Although no information has been discovered that would indicate an imminent danger to the Romanian communist regime, the scale of the intelligence gathering is proof of the fear created by the Solidarity crisis in Bucharest. The fact that all possible resources were put into action shows the Ceaușescu regime’s attempt to eliminate any possibility of the Polish “virus” spreading in Romanian society. This attempt was not only limited to the internal sphere, but also targeted the external one, as the Romanian leadership sought to use its speeches to seek the best solutions in line with its own vision in order to save communism in Poland.

Romanian Leadership Discourse

The Romanian leadership’s discourse was gradually shaped by at least three factors: the information received, the evolution of the domestic situation in the PPR and the SRR, and the international situation. Initially, the leadership adopted a cautious approach, seeking to avoid both Soviet intervention in Poland and Western support for the Solidarity trade union, which was increasingly questioning the future of the Polish communist regime. With the worsening of the crisis in both countries, but especially after the first Congress of Solidarity in September 1981, the attitude of the leadership shifted from one of defusing tensions to one of supporting Moscow’s pressure, together with the other socialist countries, to stop the rise of the Movement on the political level. In this situation, the Romanian leadership’s discourse manifested itself on two levels³⁸: at the public level, through the media or during Warsaw Treaty meetings, and at the bilateral level, through discussions with Polish officials, but also within the CC.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

³⁸ The Polish ambassador in Bucharest came to a similar conclusion when he assessed the Romanian leadership’s reaction to the crisis in the PPR, stating that it was manifested on two levels. The first level involved “assessing the events through careful observation, drawing conclusions from the situation and incorporating them into Romanian practice”. The second level was a veiled criticism of Solidarity, followed later by a more open criticism after the September 1981 Congress: Doc. no. 406, [1982 luty przed 26], Bukareszt – Raport polityczny ambasady PRL za 1981 r. (fragmenty), in Ł. Kamiński (ed.), *Przed i po 13 grudnia. Państwa bloku wschodniego wobec kryzysu w PRL 1980–1982*, vol. 2: (Kwiecień 1981 – grudzień 1982), Warszawa, 2007, p. 540.

Public

Unlike the other socialist countries, in particular, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, which considered the situation in Poland as “counter-revolutionary”, like that in Prague in 1968, and demanded measures accordingly, Romania apparently distanced itself from such criticism by the article: “With full confidence in the Polish people’s ability to solve the problems of socialist development”.³⁹ This article was in no way an agreement with the concessions that the PUWP was preparing to make to Solidarity, but a disagreement with a possible intervention. There was no mention of workers’ grievances in the article, but only statements about “the need to strengthen the leading role of the party [...] to improve the work of mass and public organisations ... to strengthen the Party’s links with the masses”, calling for the adoption of a “style of work based on living contact with the people”.⁴⁰ In other words, the regime in Bucharest did not perceive the Polish crisis outside the ideological lens either, claiming like the different countries of the socialist bloc that the PUWP is the vanguard of the working class and that the workers have no right to violate Marxist-Leninist norms. This can be seen, in particular, from the following statement: “Communists and working people in Romania firmly believe that **the Polish people, under the leadership of the PUWP**, have the full possibility and the sovereign and inalienable right to solve their internal problems themselves, without any outside interference”.⁴¹

After this moment, no further articles on the RCP’s position were published in the press until the Warsaw Treaty heads of state met in Moscow in December 1980. Those expressed at the end of August became the guiding principle in the attitude adopted by Bucharest during the Polish crisis, and they were mentioned in all meetings between Romanian officials and delegations from the West and from socialist countries. Even in December 1980, when a Soviet intervention in Poland seemed imminent, the Romanian leader still maintained that “everything must be done by the Polish comrades [...] to solve the problems with their own forces, **ensuring the development of socialist construction**”.⁴²

The Romanian leadership’s rhetoric was notable not only for the discordant note it was making towards Moscow, but also for its reluctance to inform Romanians about how the situation in Poland was developing.⁴³ At the same

³⁹ *Scînteia*, 50, no. 11.825 (28 Aug. 1980), p. 5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² ‘Stenograma întâlnirii conducătorilor de partid și de stat al țărilor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia, Moscova, 5 decembrie 1980’, ANIC, Fund CC al PCR, secția Relații Externe, dos. 209/1980, p. 110.

⁴³ In a briefing delivered by the Polish ambassador in Bucharest to Warsaw after the Central Political Committee meeting in Moscow, he predicted “a continuation of the trend of isolation of public opinion in Romania regarding the situation in Poland”; Doc. no. 120, 1981 styczeń 7,

time, he also stood out for his veiled criticism of the situation in Poland, either during the plenary sessions of the CC, or during the speeches Nicolae Ceaușescu made during his visits in the country or abroad. Their analysis shows that for the Romanian regime, investments in heavy industry, centralized organization and the unchanged ideology were three pillars it could not abandon, and the measures proposed by Solidarity and some Polish communist reformers were considered “anti-socialist tendencies and manifestations”.⁴⁴ This was explicitly mentioned by Nicolae Ceaușescu in his speech at the 14–15 October 1980, plenary session. Although he spoke of the implementation of the mechanism of “self-government and self-management”, he then mentioned the need to “improve the management and planning of the economy”, by further increasing “the role of the leadership of ministries and the management of central offices and enterprises”, but also by “strengthening the role of the Party”.⁴⁵ So, no reform could be accepted outside of Marxist-Leninist norms, norms that were rather close to the Stalinist ones, which provided for excessive centralization of the economy and continued investment in heavy industry.

Beyond the emphasis placed on respect for communist ideology, Nicolae Ceaușescu seemed to be aware of the existence of a “series of shortcomings and minuses” due to which the provisions of the 1976–1980 five-year plan could not be fully realized, a fact recognized at the Second Congress of the Councils of Working People.⁴⁶ He proposed as a solution “to replace the notion of dictatorship of the proletariat with the notion of ‘workers democracy’ or workers’ democratic state”.⁴⁷ Moreover, he asked for an increased role for trade unions “in all socio-economic activity”.⁴⁸ All this phraseology was intended only to appease the discontent in Romanian society, giving the impression of democratisation. The changes were not real, because the party continued “to ensure the exercise of the role of leader of the working class”,⁴⁹ which meant that the relationship between state and society remained unchanged. The only concrete measures were an increase of

Bukareszt – Szyfrogram nr 186/I z ambasady PRL do MSZ, tajne, in Ł. Kamiński (ed.), *Przed i po 13 grudnia. Państwa bloku wschodniego wobec kryzysu w PRL 1980–1982*, vol. 1: (Sierpień 1980 – marzec 1981), Warszawa, 2006, p. 331.

⁴⁴ ‘Cuvântarea la Plenara CC al PCR din 14–15 octombrie 1980’, in N. Ceaușescu, *România pe drumul construirii societății socialiste multilateral dezvoltate. Rapoarte, Cuvântări, Interviuuri, Articole, Octombrie 1980 – Mai 1981*, vol. 21, București, 1981, p. 48.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39.

⁴⁶ ‘Expunere la Congresul al II-lea al Consiliilor Oamenilor Muncii din Industrie, Construcții, Transporturi, Circulația Mărfurilor și Finanțe – 24 iunie 1981’, in N. Ceaușescu, *România pe drumul construirii societății socialiste multilateral dezvoltate. Rapoarte, Cuvântări, Interviuuri, Articole, mai – noiembrie 1981*, vol. 22, București, 1982, pp. 154, 178.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

the number of domestic visits made by Nicolae Ceausescu after the signing of the Gdańsk Agreements.

The Solidarity Congress in Gdansk in September 1981 and the “Message to the Working People of Eastern Europe” changed the perception and approach of Bucharest. In essence, the “Message” was addressed to all workers in Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, East-Germany, Hungary, and the Soviet republics and stated that Solidarity was the first independent trade union in the post-war era and supported those “who have decided to join the struggle for a free trade union movement”.⁵⁰

Because this message went beyond the borders of Poland, it was treated harshly. This became evident on 22 September when appeared the article: “In the interests of the working class, of the whole Polish people, **of the firm development of Poland on the path of socialism**, independence and peace”.⁵¹ The publication of the article at this time was not a coincidence, because on 13 September the meeting of the Committee for the Defence of the Country was held, where it was announced that the technical preparation for the introduction of martial law was complete,⁵² and the Romanian regime was aware of this.⁵³ A proof in this sense is represented by the urge of the Romanian leadership that “in case of supreme necessity [...] to apply any means within the prerogatives of the state”.⁵⁴ Although the “need for firmness” had been expressed by the RCP before, this was not done publicly, as a signal from Bucharest that it agreed to introduce these measures to save the regime. The agreement is particularly evident in the requirement that “state organs [...] act with all intransigence towards anti-state activities [...] with a categorical retaliation against action aimed at weakening state order and discipline”.⁵⁵ In the leadership’s view, the most crucial condition for overcoming the crisis was that it had to be done within the existing regime, warning that “overcoming the difficulties [...] is inconceivable without the fulfilment of the leading role of the PUWP”.⁵⁶ Thus, unlike the other articles on Poland, this time, the tone of the leadership was characterised by a particular fear about

⁵⁰ T.G. Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity*, New York, 1985, pp. 167–170. The whole debate was published by George Sanford (ed.), *The Solidarity Congress, 1981. The Great Debate*, ed., transl., and introd. G. Sanford, New York, 1990.

⁵¹ *Scînteia*, 51, no. 12.156 (22 Sept. 1981), p. 3.

⁵² Cf. Paczkowski, Byrne *et al.*, *From Solidarity to Martial Law*, doc. no. 62, pp. 350–366.

⁵³ The Romanian ambassador in Warsaw had been informed by Deputy Prime Minister of the Polish Government Mieczysław Rakowski that if Solidarity became a political party at the Second Congress, “we have already prepared a plan for the introduction of a state of war. The plan is being worked out in every detail, and the bodies called upon to carry it out have received the necessary instructions”, AMAE, Fund 1981, Polonia, Problema 220, dos. 1519, f.n.

⁵⁴ *Scînteia*, 51, no. 12.156 (22 Sept. 1981), p. 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

the situation in the PPR and the fact that the “Polish virus” could spread abroad. Therefore, postponing a decision was becoming less and less tolerable, and the Romanian part aligned itself with the other socialist countries to increase pressure on Warsaw to solve the problem by its own means before it was too late.

This discursive rapprochement of the RSR with the communist bloc became evident after the introduction of martial law in Poland. Thus, on 15 December, in an article entitled ‘Measures to normalize the situation and establish order and discipline’,⁵⁷ martial law was euphemistically labelled “state of siege”, most probably to reduce the public awareness of the seriousness of the events in Poland. The article does not clearly explain why it was necessary to take such a measure only for “a group of persons threatening state security”.⁵⁸ The Party’s public position was also expressed in the same issue of the newspaper in the article “For a socialist, prosperous, free and independent Poland”,⁵⁹ but the article does not contain anything more than the position of the Romanian leadership in 1980 and 1981. On the contrary, the same double discourse was continued in relation to the Polish crisis, which implied public support for the Polish regime and criticising it in domestic discussions.

After the introduction of Western sanctions, a new article entitled ‘The solution of the problems of the development of socialist Poland – in the sole responsibility of the Polish people’,⁶⁰ showed a much more positive attitude towards the new regime. From the very beginning, it was mentioned that following the introduction of martial law, “there has been an improvement in the state of affairs in the overwhelming majority of sectors of activity”.⁶¹ In Nicolae Ceausescu’s opinion, “the problems in Poland are problems that concern the Polish people and the political forces in Poland, including the PUWP [...] let this country solve its own problems without outside interference”.⁶² By “outside interference”, he had in mind not only the military meaning of the expression, but “the question is not to encourage in any way, from outside, and not to give support to those elements which question the construction of socialism and the alliances that Poland has”.⁶³ This could include the criticism circulating internationally about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of Jaruzelski’s regime. A unique aspect in the Romanian leadership’s speech was the mention of “the alliances that Poland has”, an element rather reminiscent of the Brezhnev doctrine than of the distinct position that the SRR had adopted until then. Even in September 1981, when the RCP had

⁵⁷ *Scînteia*, 51, no. 12.228 (15 Dec. 1981), p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Scînteia*, 51, no. 12.238 (26 Dec. 1981), p. 6.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

joined the other socialist countries in their concerted criticism of Poland, there was no mention of the “alliances” of the RPP, a sign that this time the rescue of the communist regime had acquired crucial importance.

Bilateral

Despite the moderate attitude adopted by the Romanian side at the public level, it shared the same fears that the other socialist countries had about the Polish crisis, even if it did not let it be seen to do so. This fear manifested during meetings with various Polish delegations and partly within the CC debates. That explains why, although at the end of August, the RCP had expressed “full confidence” in the PUWP’s ability to solve problems on its own, three weeks later, during the visit of CC member Zdzisław Kurowski to Bucharest to inform about the internal situation in Poland, the Romanian leader had a completely different assessment of the Polish crisis. During this meeting, Nicolae Ceaușescu openly expressed his dissatisfaction with the situation in the PPR, and also with the compromise made by the authorities. Although he did not mention Solidarity, he felt that these concessions had been made to “several anti-socialist elements”.⁶⁴ In addition, the Romanian leader asked his interlocutor whether “there is a full guarantee that the situation will be resolved and normalised within a short time”,⁶⁵ criticising the measures implemented by Stanisław Kania. At the same time, he called for action “with all the force at the disposal of the socialist state against anti-socialist elements (Solidarity)”⁶⁶. The fact that during the discussion, Nicolae Ceausescu mentions the “need for firmness” in the actions of the PUWP nine times shows both his concern about the development of the crisis in the PPR and his fear that the existence of the Warsaw political regime could be jeopardised.⁶⁷ Discussions with various Polish delegates also took place on 14 October with Kornel Henshke, the PPR’s chargé d’affaires, a.i. in Bucharest,⁶⁸ on 15 May 1981, with

⁶⁴ ‘Stenograma convorbirii tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu cu Zdzisław Kurowski, membru CC al PMUP, din ziua de 12 septembrie 1980’, ANIC, Fund CC al PCR, Secția Relații Externe, dos. 159/1980, p. 16.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶⁷ The Polish documents of the meeting between Ceaușescu and Kurowski are equally incisive, Ceausescu repeating several times that: “It is necessary to act more resolutely, with all the means available to socialism. We do not know whether it would not be more correct first to take such measures and then to explain to the masses the need for them. [...] It is necessary to act now with all firmness against those elements who want to undermine the basic principles of the socialist state”, Doc. no. 29, 1980, wrzesień 13, Bukareszt – Notatka ze spotkania Zdzisława Kurowskiego z Nicolae Ceausescu 12 września 1980 r., tajne, in Kamiński (ed.), *Przed i po 13 grudnia*, vol. 1, p. 56.

⁶⁸ See ‘Stenograma convorbirii tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu cu Kornel Henshke, însărcinat cu afaceri a.i. al RPP la București, din ziua de 14 octombrie 1980’, ANIC, Fund CC al PCR, secția Relații Externe, dos. 174/1980.

Mieczysław Rakowski, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers,⁶⁹ and with Józef Czyrek, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 2 June 1981,⁷⁰ but this approach remained unchanged.

The first more open discussions in the Permanent Bureau [PB] took place only after the introduction of martial law in Poland when the Romanian leader expressed his opinion on the Solidarity crisis. Just as the discussions were conducted before the introduction of martial law, the Romanian leadership analysed the situation through an ideological lens, accusing the Polish communists of not respecting Marxist-Leninist norms, as the PB discussions show: “The Polish leadership is to blame”.⁷¹ By this guilt, the Romanian leader referred to the autonomy given to the Catholic Church, the toleration of private property in the countryside or the lack of discipline and unity in the party, all of which were “exploited by anti-socialist elements (Solidarity)”. He further pointed out that the national sentiment of Poles was neglected by the Party and used by the Catholic Church, which in this way strengthened its authority in society and supported the Solidarity Movement.⁷²

Conclusion

In the end, we believe that the Romanian regime had both elements that set it apart within the socialist bloc, as far as the Solidarity crisis was concerned, and common points. If we follow the form of the problem or, instead, the public reaction of the Romanian leadership, then it was notable for its refusal to accept military intervention in Poland throughout the Solidarity crisis. However, the response of the RSR was not limited to this aspect. If we look at the PCR leadership’s overall approach to the Polish crisis, the situation is much more complex; first, a wide-ranging campaign was launched to monitor the external and internal situation, backed by the implementation of measures aimed at stopping the possible contamination of Romanian society with the Polish “virus”. Nonetheless, the element that may provide more answers to our question is the Romanian leadership’s own discourse. Following its evolution both during the meetings with the Polish delegations and during the discussions in the CC, we can see that the

⁶⁹ See ‘Stenograma convorbirii tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu cu Mieczysław Rakowski, vicepreședintele Consiliului de Miniștri al RPP din ziua de 15 mai 1981’, ANIC, Fund CC al PCR, secția Relații Externe, dos. 55/1981.

⁷⁰ ‘Stenograma convorbirii tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu cu Józef Czyrek, ministrul afacerilor externe al RPP, din ziua de 2 iunie 1981’, ANIC, Fund CC al PCR, secția Relații Externe, dos. 135/1981.

⁷¹ ‘Stenograma ședinței Comitetului Politic Executiv al CC al PCR din ziua de 13 decembrie 1981’, pp. 5–6.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

same axiological operators existed in the discourse of the Romanian leadership as in the other socialist countries: Marxism-Leninism, single party, or socialist construction. Moreover, they were present in a veiled form even in Nicolae Ceausescu's speeches at home and abroad. So, how distinct was the Romanian position in the Solidarity crisis?

The efforts of those close to Nicolae Ceausescu to portray his reaction as a distinct one are more likely to result from their intention to equate the August 1968 and the 1980–1981 moments. Although it is impossible to ascertain their exact intentionality, this seems to be the direction in which they constructed narratives after the collapse of the communist regimes. Upon closer analysis, however, we could see that the two situations were almost entirely different; this time, Nicolae Ceausescu no longer emphasised that each state has the right to follow its own path “to build socialism”, but the emphasis was shifted to the fact that the Polish people can solve their own problems, but only “under the leadership of the PMUP”. In the Polish crisis, unlike the Czechoslovak one, the right to self-determination became conditioned on preserving the “socialist construction” without any concessions to Western norms. Aware of the danger of the collapse of communism in Poland, Nicolae Ceausescu was cautious in expressing his disapproval concerning the Solidarity crisis, his main objective being not only to avoid military intervention in Poland but also to save the communist regime there. This became even more evident after the Trade Union Congress in September 1981, when saving the Warsaw regime was also a priority for Bucharest, which joined the concerted pressure from Moscow and the other socialist countries against Poland. The introduction of martial law in December 1981 was the final element that brought the SRR closer to the discourse of the other socialist countries, with the Romanian regime supporting this measure despite the immense pressure put by the USSR on the PPR. So, once the Solidarity crisis turned into an existential threat to the communist order, the distinct attitude of the RCP dissipated, especially by identifying a suitable way to remove Solidarity from the public scene: the Polish army.

Summary

Usually, the historiography and the former collaborators of the Ceausescu regimes present the reaction of the Romanian Communist Party towards the Solidarity crisis as different from that of the fraternal socialist countries. The article starts with the hypothesis that the Romanian leadership saw the Solidarity crisis as a threat to the communist regimes despite the fact that Romania tried to promote a distinct approach in public discourse. Because Romania had to respect its central principle of foreign policy of „non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries”, it did not mean that its leadership was not worried about the evolution and the consequences of the Polish crisis. Like Poland, Romania also had problems with foreign debts, human rights violations, and domestic market supply.

The first objective of my paper is to go beyond the official discourse and to identify the measures taken by the Romanian leadership on the domestic level to avoid the possible effects of the Polish crisis. Secondly, I will analyse the discourse not only through press releases or multilateral meetings

but also at a bilateral level during the visits of Polish delegates to Romania. All of these will help us better understand the Romanian reaction to the Solidarity crisis. To do that, I used the Romanian diplomatic correspondence from Warsaw, the archives with the discussions of Politburo and the *Securitate* archives.

Rumunia i kryzys solidarnościowy w latach 1980–1981 – inne podejście? (Streszczenie)

Zazwyczaj historiografia i byli współpracownicy reżimu Ceausescu przedstawiają reakcję Rumuńskiej Partii Komunistycznej na kryzys solidarnościowy w Polsce jako odmienną od reakcji bratnich krajów socjalistycznych. Artykuł rozpoczyna się od hipotezy, że rumuńscy przywódcy postrzegali kryzys wywołany przez powstanie Solidarności jako zagrożenie dla reżimów komunistycznych, mimo że w dyskursie publicznym Rumunia starała się promować odrębne podejście. Mimo że Rumunia musiała przestrzegać głównej zasady swojej polityki zagranicznej „nieingerencji w sprawy wewnętrzne innych państw”, nie oznaczało to, że jej przywódcy nie byli zaniepokojeni ewolucją i konsekwencjami kryzysu w Polsce. Tym bardziej że podobnie jak Polska, Rumunia również miała problemy z zadłużeniem zagranicznym, łamaniem praw człowieka i podażą na rynku krajowym.

Pierwszym celem mojego artykułu jest wyjście poza oficjalny dyskurs i zidentyfikowanie środków podjętych przez rumuńskich przywódców na poziomie krajowym w celu uniknięcia możliwych skutków polskiego kryzysu. W następnej kolejności przeprowadziłem analizę dyskursu nie tylko na podstawie komunikatów prasowych czy spotkań wielostronnych, lecz również na poziomie dwustronnym podczas wizyt polskich delegatów w Rumunii. Wszystko to pomoże lepiej zrozumieć rumuńską reakcję na kryzys Solidarności. W tym celu wykorzystałem rumuńską korespondencję dyplomatyczną z Warszawy, archiwa z dyskusjami Politbiura oraz archiwa *Securitate*.

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