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Doctoral School for Humanities and Social Sciences

PhD Dissertation

Summary

RELATIONS BETWEEN ROMANIA AND VIETNAM (1950-2019)

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Nguyen The Ha**

**Scientific coordinator,
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Abstract of the doctoral thesis

NGUYEN THE HA

Keywords: Europe-Asia diplomacy, Europe-Asia trade, Socialist states, Vietnam War, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Communist revolution, unification of Vietnam, economic aid, workforce migration

With a history of more than 70 years, the relations between Romania and Vietnam did not have a comprehensive monograph. Up to now, the subject had only been approached in very few works, some book chapters, research papers and short articles, some of them in Romanian, and some in Vietnamese.

One important theme that these works have analysed is Romania's role in mediating a peaceful resolution to the Vietnam war. In *Oaia albă în turma neagră. Lupta pe frontul intern: politica de securitate a României în perioada Războiului Rece* [RAO, București, 2018], Larry L. Watts dedicated 20 pages to this examination. Information on this matter can also be retraced in older books, some of which are direct sources. For example, we have the official report given by the R.S. Romanian Party and State delegation after the friendship visit, led by Nicolae Ceausescu, to R.S. Vietnam in May 1978 – „*Sub semnul prieteniei româno-vietnameze: vizita oficială de prietenie a delegației de partid și de stat a R.S. România, condusă de tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu, în R.S. Vietnam: 23-26 mai 1978*” [Under the sign of Romanian-Vietnamese friendship, București, Editura Politică, 1978]. Further on the subject, there is Paul Niculescu-Mizil's book, *România și războiul americano-vietnamez* [București, Editura Vânturilor, 2008]. This issue has great significance for retracing the history of relations between the two countries because, as a politician, the author was a direct witness to bilateral contacts for many years. Therefore, this book clarified many things concerning the value of Romania's mediation, from 1967 to 1972, in the conflict between Vietnam and the United States.

In 2010, the overall relationship shared by the two countries was illustrated through an anniversary review, a book celebrating their 60 years of diplomatic bonds. It included speeches and articles written by diplomats and scientists, that assessed past bilateral relations and underlined the historical, political, and economic values of each country, as well as their understanding for each other¹.

¹ A similar work is Asociația ambasadorilor și diplomaților de carieră din România, *Pagini din diplomația României (semper fidelis patriae)*, Vol I, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2019.

Several other works, of lesser dimensions, were published in Vietnamese. Through collaboration with Dan Vătămănuș, I myself have researched political, diplomatic, economic, and social aspects, past and present. In „Trade relations between Vietnam and Romania (2010-2016)”², we analysed a portion in the development of commercial contacts between the two countries, thereby providing perspectives on their future collaborations. In another article we looked at social development, namely „The process of formation and development of the Vietnamese community in Romania: advantages, disadvantages, experiences and lessons learned”³. Another study was about „Romania's economic help for Vietnam in the resistance against the United States (1954-1975)”⁴. In 2020, we continued to research „Romanian diplomatic efforts with the United States on the issue of the Vietnam War (1965-1973)”⁵, showing the efforts made to intermediate a peaceful solution to the conflict. Another Vietnamese author that has done research on the matter is Dao Tuan Thanh. His scientific articles have looked at „The process of Romania joining the European Union”, „Romanian's role in ending the US war of aggression in Vietnam”, „The Vietnamese community in Romania, opportunities and challenges”, „Some issues in modern Romanian history”⁶. All these studies only focus on small segments of the bilateral relationship, so they do not provide a comprehensive view of the past 70 years.

When documenting and writing the thesis, I used all the scientific works that I could find were related to the history of Romanian-Vietnamese relations, as well as many primary sources. I mainly turned to archives: the National Archives of Romania, especially those of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These were helpful as they include records of high-profile bilateral meetings held from 1966 to 1989. They also relate to agreements and data from different fields of cooperative work.

The thesis is divided into 5 chapters. **The first chapter** reconstructs the first period in bilateral relations (1950-1975), in which Vietnam was at war with the United States. It has 3 main segments. The first looks at the factors which had a direct or indirect influence in the establishment of diplomatic contacts. The second moves on to the formation process, and the third focuses on the development of the relationship, looking at economic, political, diplomatic,

² Nguyễn Thế Hà, Dan Vătămănuș, „Mối quan hệ thương mại giữa Việt Nam và Rumani (2010-2016)”, *Tạp chí Khoa học và Công nghệ, Đại học Sư phạm Đà Nẵng*, Nr. 27 (01), 2018.

³ Idem, „Quá trình hình thành và phát triển của cộng đồng người Việt ở Rumani, ưu điểm, nhược điểm và bài học kinh nghiệm”, *Proceedings of the Conference on Diplomatic Sciences: Theory and Practice*, Hue University, December 2018.

⁴ Published in *UED Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities & Education*, Nr. 31 (5), 2018.

⁵ Idem, „Nỗ lực ngoại giao của Romania với Hoa Kỳ về vấn đề chiến tranh Việt Nam (1965-1973)”, *UED Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities & Education*, Nr. 37 (1), 2020.

⁶ See Dao Tuan Thanh, „Quá trình Rumani gia nhập Liên minh châu Âu”, *Tạp chí nghiên cứu châu Âu*, nr. 02, 2002; Idem, Đào Thanh Bình, „Vai trò của Rumani trong việc góp phần làm chấm dứt chiến tranh xâm lược của Mỹ tại Việt Nam”, *Tạp chí nghiên cứu lịch sử*, 5 (324), 2002; Dao Tuan Thanh, „Vai trò của Rumani trong việc chấm dứt chiến tranh xâm lược của Mỹ ở Việt Nam”, *Tạp chí nghiên cứu châu Âu*, nr. 5, 2005; Idem, „Cộng đồng người Việt Nam ở Rumani, cơ hội và thách thức”, *Tạp chí nghiên cứu châu Âu*, nr. 4, 2007; Idem, *Một số vấn đề trong lịch sử hiện đại Rumani*, Hanoi, Pedagogical University Publishing House, 2009.

and social interactions. Bilateral diplomatic activities started being promoted, in several fields, since 1956. From then onto 1975, Romania offered Vietnam a direct financial assistance of 198,98 million rupees⁷, 49 822 million tons of goods of different kinds⁸, and 1,5 million lei (through the Red Cross). Simultaneously, between 1956 and 1975 the trade value between the two countries was 34,3 million rupees⁹. Moreover, since 1966, Romania took advantage of its international position and conducted diplomatic activities advocating for a peaceful solution to the Vietnam war. Its constant efforts in this direction involved talks and negotiations within the Socialist block, including permanent contacts with Vietnam's leadership, and outside of it, such as those conducted with the USA or the UN.

Chapter 2 focuses on the next period (1975-1989) and the impact that Romania's help made on the economic development of Vietnam. It has 4 segments. The first retraces the evolution of diplomatic interactions, acknowledging that, between 1971 and 1978, the two countries steadily maintained meetings and exchanges, continuously discussing their cooperation on diverse issues. In the second sub-chapter, the emphasis is on clarifying economic collaborations, how they came to be agreed upon and how they were implemented. After 1975, the two states began to sign agreements on economic cooperation¹⁰ and trade exchange¹¹. At the same time, Romania continued to help Vietnam through loans, with a payback period of 10 years¹². Moreover, Romania assisted in building several industrial facilities. It gave a total of 198.85 million rupees for mining (from 1976 to 1985¹³). One target was the implementation of a coal mining project of 2,7 million tons per year in Khe Cham, Quang Ninh. This needed a total investment of 140 million rupees¹⁴, out of which Romania credited 117,5 million (from 1976 to 1985¹⁵), consisting of machinery, equipment, spare parts, and technical assistance. Another project was the Hai Phong cement factory, with a production capacity of 1,000 tons per day¹⁶, for

⁷ See Romanian National Archives [R.N.A.], *Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party* Fund, Foreign relations section, dossier 211/1975, f. 3.

⁸ Nguyen Van Quyen, „Tìm hiểu sự viện trợ của Cộng hòa Xã hội chủ nghĩa Rumani dành cho Việt Nam trong kháng chiến chống Mỹ cứu nước, 1954-1975” [The Socialist Republic of Romania's aid for Vietnam in its resistance for the country's defence against the Americans, 1954-1975], *Tạp chí Lịch sử quân sự*, nr. 11, 2005.

⁹ R.N.A., *Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party* Fund, Foreign relations section, dossier 46/1971, Vol. 1, „Notes on the economic relations between The Socialist Republic of Romania and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam”, f. 81.

¹⁰ „The Romanian side has indicated that in principle it agrees with this, and that the experts of the two parties will meet in the coming months and establish exactly what it is about, determine the concrete possibilities and conclude the corresponding agreements or contracts”. See R.N.A., *Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party* Fund, Foreign relations section, dossier 211/1975, „Transcript of official talks between Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu and Le Duan, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, Bucharest, November 14th, 15th, 17th, 1975”, f. 34.

¹¹ „We also examined the issue of trade. We reached an agreement for 1976 and onwards to 1980. Both sides have expressed the desire to expand trade and we agreed on the basic principles of balancing it. The Vietnamese side has indicated that it will strive to balance these exchanges and, if there are small differences, we will examine them accordingly”. Ibidem, ff. 35-36.

¹² Ibidem, ff. 35-36.

¹³ R.N.A., *Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party* Fund, Foreign relations section, doss. 211/1975, „The point of view for the third session of the Joint Governmental Commission for Economic and Technical-Scientific Cooperation between the Republic of Romania and the Republic of Vietnam (November, current year)”, f. 1.

¹⁴ Ibidem, f. 3.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ Ibidem, f. 4.

which Romania offered equipment worth approximately 800 thousand rupees¹⁷. At the same time, it was proposed that bilateral trade go up to a total of 39,9 million rupees between 1976 and 1980¹⁸. In the 3rd and 4th sub-chapter, I explore the cultural, educational, scientific, and technological exchange between the two countries during this period. All these types of collaboration showed that Romania played a role in resetting Vietnam's economy after the war with the USA.

The third chapter, divided into 4 segments, follows the development of bilateral relations after 1989. First, the impact of the Romanian revolution in December – although it has been said that „changes around the world and the region did not disrupt relations between the two countries”¹⁹, diplomatic activities were no longer dynamic. From 1989 to 2002 there was a decline in the bilateral relationship. Some diplomatic contacts were revived in 1991, but they were weak; signs of recovery started in 1994, while economic exchanges did not come back to fruition until 2010. The resurgence of relations between the two countries, after they both went through crises in the 1980s, has been analysed in the second sub-chapter. In 1989, Vietnam was one of the first states to recognize the new Romanian government. In 1991, the President of the Vietnamese National Assembly paid an official visit to Romania²⁰. So did other Vietnamese leaders (in 1994, 1995, 1998, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009). Simultaneously, Romanian high-level delegations also paid official visits to Vietnam (in 1995, 1997, 2002²¹, 2011²²). The return of political diplomacy indicated the imminent revival of bilateral relations. Therefore, in the third sub-chapter, I follow their expansion and diversification after the stagnation caused by the internal crises of the 1980s. Firstly, these manifested through persisting bilateral visits by high-ranking officials, as well as collaboration groups. In 2002 Romanian president Ion Iliescu paid an official visit to Vietnam²³, the first of its kind after the events of December 1989. Both sides showed that they were interested in establishing Parliamentary relations²⁴. Trade also resumed, the exchange value increasing from 20 million USD in 2002 to 100 million in 2009²⁵. Romania invested 1.2 million USD of capital in projects in Vietnam²⁶. The two sides also strengthened

¹⁷ Ibidem, f. 6.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ Nguyen Quang Chien, „60 years of bilateral relations between Romania and Vietnam (1950-2010)” in the volume for the conference with the same name [originally in Romanian], published in Bucharest, 2010, pp. 47-48.

²⁰ Vietnam's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Department of International Relations [VCCI], *Hồ sơ thị trường Rumani* [Romania's market profile], updated 4/2015, Hanoi, The archives of Vietnam's Embassy in Romania, p. 8.

²¹ „Tổng thống Romania thăm chính thức Việt Nam” [Romanian President pays official visit to Vietnam], vnexpress.net/tong-thong-romania-tham-chinh-thuc-viet-nam-2040240.html [20/5/2020].

²² *Quan hệ Việt Nam–Ru-Ma-Ni* [Vietnam–Romania relations], vnembassy-bucharest.mofa.gov.vn/en-us/bilateralrelationship/Memorable%20Milestone/Pages/default.aspx [20/5/2020].

²³ *Chủ tịch Trần Đức Lương trả lời phỏng vấn báo chí Việt Nam sau chuyến thăm chính thức Ba Lan và Rumani, ngày 17 tháng 10 năm 2003* [President Tran Duc Luong gives an interview to the Vietnamese press after his official visit to Poland and Romania, October 17th, 2003], kept in the archives of Vietnam's Embassy in Romania, p. 1.

²⁴ Nguyen Quang Chien, „60 years of bilateral relations between Romania and Vietnam (1950-2010)”, p. 44.

²⁵ VCCI, *Hồ sơ thống kê giá trị xuất nhập khẩu của Việt Nam – Rumani, Phòng Thương mại Việt Nam* [Statistics on import and export values between Vietnam and Romania], the archives of Vietnam's Embassy in Romania, p. 3.

²⁶ President Tran Duc Luong's press interview after his official visit to Poland and Romania, p. 1.

their cooperation agreements or signed new ones, in several fields, such as science and technology, oil and gas, security and defence, education (for instance, Romania accepted to receive 10 to 20 Vietnamese students per year in a scholarship program²⁷). Finally, in the fourth segment of this chapter, I analyse the cooperation between the two countries in international forums and organizations (such as ASEM FMM, UE-ASEM, ONU, ECOSOC, IHO, etc), where they always supported and the principles of national independence, international law, and world peace, including on issues like the South China Sea²⁸. The fact that Romania supported Vietnam in its negotiations for a free trade agreement with the EU had great significance for the economic relations between the two countries²⁹. In its turn, as an official member of ASEAN, Vietnam always supported Romania's diplomatic connection to this organisation³⁰.

The fourth chapter is about cooperation between Romania and Vietnam in the context of current Southeast Asian geopolitics. In the first sub-chapter, I summarized the content of economic cooperation development. I first analysed the foundations for the two countries to continue their economic cooperation after their comprehensive crises in the 1980s. The first important factor was their long-term tradition in this sense. As mentioned earlier, it dated back to 1956. Until 1989 relations went well, but weren't strong, as after 1980 Vietnam fell into a crisis. In December 1989, although Romania changed its political institutions, Vietnam was one of the first countries to recognize its new government. On that basis, in 1991 the two began to reconnect and to discuss developing bilateral relations. Witnessing Romania's difficult situation, Vietnam accepted to pay its debts. The government emitted Circular No. 45/1998, which stipulated that the payback period was 5 years starting from 1997. The amount of 4,157,167.59 USD would be paid in 1998, and 2,5 million USD per year in the following years³¹. The second basis for renewing economic cooperation was mutual understanding through a long-lasting relationship, ever since 1950, which explains why Romania attached special importance to its relations with Vietnam³². The two nations signed several agreements, which formed the legal

²⁷ From 2010 to 2016, the Romanian side received 10 Vietnamese students per year. In 2016, a diplomatic mission led by the Romanian prime minister increased the number of scholarships for Vietnam to 20 students per year.

²⁸ *Tuyên bố chung giữa Thủ tướng Việt Nam và Thủ tướng Romania* [Joint Statement between the Prime Minister of Vietnam and the Prime Minister of Romania], doingoailaocai.vn/vi/bai-viet/5761# [6/2/2020].

²⁹ *Tuyên bố chung Việt Nam – Rumani* [Joint Statement Vietnam – Romania], hanoimoi.com.vn/tin-tuc/Doi-ngoai/932333/tuyen-bo-chung-viet-nam---romania [8/2/2020].

³⁰ „Vietnam is ready to be a bridge for cooperation between Romania and the EU with ASEAN”, baoquocte.vn/viet-nam-san-sang-la-cau-noi-hop-tac-giua-romania-va-eu-voi-asean-94171.html [13/2/2020].

³¹ *Thông tư số 45/1998 / TT-BTC ngày 9 tháng 4 năm 1998 của Bộ Tài chính, hướng dẫn thực hiện giao hàng trả nợ Rumani, Hà Nội, ngày 9 tháng 4 năm 1998, Bộ phận Tư vấn Thương mại-Đại sứ Việt Nam tại Rumani* [Circular No. 45/1998/TT-BTC, dated April 9th, 1998, of the Ministry of Finance, guiding the implementation of Romanian debt repayment, Hanoi, archived at the Trade Advisory Department of the Embassy of Vietnam in Romania].

³² „Romania values traditional relations with Vietnam”, mofahcm.gov.vn/vi/mofa/nr040807104143/nr040807105001/ns080620085012 [14/12/2019].

basis for cooperation in numerous fields³³. This was indispensable for the evolution towards new and more dynamic contacts.

Using the data obtained up to this point, I then looked at the details of bilateral economic cooperation. It can be said that trade had a relatively good growth rate over the years, but the exchange value was not as high as that of other countries. Relations between Romania and Vietnam had two phases. The first was from 2002 to 2009, and is seen as the stage of foundation building after the crises, including the global economic failure of 2003-2008. In this period, the exchange value was not high, and the growth speed was only acceptable (from 20 million USD in 2002 to 86 million in 2009, an increase of 66 million USD in 7 years³⁴). In the next period, from 2010 to 2019, the growth rate rose rapidly from 102 million USD (2010) to 218 million USD (2018), reaching 117,4 million in the first 8 months of 2019³⁵. With a diversified product structure, Vietnam sold agricultural and zootechnic products and by-products to Romania, while Romania sent technological and electronic products to Vietnam. However, the trade exchange between the two countries was small and didn't measure up to their inherent potential. In addition, investment values were also low until 2019. Romania had two such projects in Vietnam, with a capital of 1,4 million USD³⁶, while Vietnam had one project, for 600 thousand USD, but also more than 216 companies operating in Romania, with a registered capital of 2,1 million euros³⁷.

The two countries also cooperated in the field of energy. In 2008 Romania sent an expert delegation to operate the Dung Quat oil refinery in Quang Ngai province³⁸. In 2016 a memorandum of understanding was signed, but the two partners have not put much of it into practice³⁹. Vietnam has also worked with Romania in wind and solar energy projects⁴⁰. They

³³ *Hiệp định về thương mại và thanh toán giữa Chính phủ nước Cộng hòa xã hội chủ nghĩa Việt Nam và Chính phủ Cộng hòa Rumani* [Agreement on trade and payment between the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Government of the Republic of Romania], signed on December 31st 1991 in Hanoi; *Nghị định bãi bỏ các thủ tục cấp thị thực nhập cảnh, xuất cảnh và quá cảnh của Việt Nam Cộng hòa Dân chủ Cộng hòa cho công dân Cộng hòa Nhân dân Rumani có hộ chiếu thường xuyên hoặc hộ chiếu tập thể giá trị vào Việt Nam* [Decree abolishing procedures for granting entry, exit, and transit visas of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam for citizens of the People's Republic of Romania holding a valid passport or a valid collective passport to Vietnam], signed on December 20th 1956 in Hanoi; kept in the archives of Vietnam's Embassy in Bucharest; *Hiệp định xúc tiến và bảo vệ đầu tư giữa Chính phủ Romania và Cộng hòa xã hội chủ nghĩa Việt Nam, số: 69 / LPQT, ngày 21 tháng 10 năm 1994* [Agreement on Investment Promotion and Protection between the Government of Romania and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, No. 69/LPQT, October 21st 1994]; *Hiệp định lãnh sự giữa Cộng hòa xã hội chủ nghĩa Việt Nam và Rumani* [Consular Agreement between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Romania], signed on November 5th 1997 in Hanoi. All documents can be found in the archives of Vietnam's Embassy in Bucharest.

³⁴ Bùi Trọng Định, *65 năm quan hệ giữa Việt Nam và Rumani* [65 years of relations between Vietnam and Romania], the archives of Vietnam's Embassy in Bucharest, p. 5.

³⁵ Ibidem.

³⁶ *Tài liệu cơ bản về quan hệ Việt Nam – Rumani* [Basic documents on Vietnam - Romania relations], Archives of the Embassy of Vietnam in Romania, p. 12.

³⁷ „Vietnam – Romania trade cooperation: There is much room – for development”, baoquocte.vn/hop-tac-thuong-mai-viet-nam-romania-con-nhieu-du-dia-phat-trien-80116.html [25/7/2019].

³⁸ „Hợp tác VCEA-ASTI-Đại học Ploiesti: Nhiều triển vọng” [Cooperation between VCEA-ASTI-University of Ploiesti: Many prospects], nangluongsachvietnam.vn/d6/vi-VN/news/Hop-tac-VCEA-ASTI-Dai-hoc-Ploiesti-Nhieu-trien-vong-6-161-281 [17/2/2020].

³⁹ Vụ Thị trường Châu Âu - Mỹ - Bộ Công Thương, *Nội dung chính của hợp tác song phương giữa Việt Nam và Rumani*, Phòng Kinh tế, Đại sứ quán Việt Nam tại Rumani [European – American Market Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade, „Main

have also had certain cooperation in agriculture⁴¹ and banking. The latter was considered to have great potential but, beside a few agreements between banks⁴², there was no legal document signed bilaterally. A good outcome from economic collaborations is the operation of Vietnamese companies in Romania. These have had a rapid development, from 60 companies in 2003 to 216 companies in 2019 and a registered capital of 2,1 million USD⁴³. In addition, labour exchange has been a new and fast-growing field, meeting Romanian demands with 350 workers in 2013 (brought to Mangalia⁴⁴), increasing to 4,000 workers in 2019⁴⁵. At the same time, there were 700 Romanians working in Vietnam⁴⁶.

In the next sub-chapter, I looked at collaborations in science, culture, human relations and exchanges. Some were inherited from the previous period. In 1999 the two countries signed an agreement on cooperation in this sense⁴⁷, then continued to do so in 2017 and 2018 (for science and technology⁴⁸). In 2019, at the 16th session of their Joint Commission, Romania and Vietnam signed a new agreement, for a new period⁴⁹. What is presently needed are collaborations in environmental and agricultural science, petrochemicals, new generation building materials, high-tech clothing, information technology, climate change. Romania has strengths in some of these fields, and bilateral agreements are generally an extremely important basis for the relationship between the two countries. Culture has been also an important field in their cooperation, enhancing mutual understanding. In fact, the two nations had a certain cultural exchange before 1989, with more than 3,000 Vietnamese intellectuals graduating from universities or research institutes in Romania⁵⁰. More so, many Vietnamese literary works were translated into

contents of bilateral cooperation between Vietnam and Romania”, Economic Department, Embassy of Vietnam in Romania], p. 2.

⁴⁰ „Cooperation between VCEA-ASTI-University of Ploiesti: Many prospects”, nangluongsachvietnam.vn/d6/vi-VN/news/Hop-tac-VCEA-ASTI-Dai-hoc-Ploiesti-Nhieu-trien-vong-6-161-281 [17/2/2020].

⁴¹ During an official visit in 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in this respect. Currently, the two ministries are exchanging proposals in this respect, see „Main contents of bilateral cooperation between Vietnam and Romania”, p. 3.

⁴² On November 27th, 2019, the Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam (Agribank) participated in the Business Forum of the Bank for International Economic Cooperation (IBEC), which was held in Hanoi and meant to set the tone for improving trade cooperation between Central-East Europe and Asia-Europe. This was a big forum, attracting many businesses and investors from many countries. Here, Agribank signed a memorandum of understanding with IBEC, and one with Romania and another country (on several cooperation and trade support areas). Also, Vietinbank signed a similar document with participating members, including Romania. See agribank.com.vn/vn/ve-agribank/tin-tuc-su-kien/tai-chinh-ngan-hang/agribank-ky-ket-bien-ban-ghi-nho-voi-ngan-hang-ibec [9/2/2020].

⁴³ According to data given by the Vietnamese Embassy in Bucharest.

⁴⁴ „Basic documents on Vietnam – Romania relations”, p. 13.

⁴⁵ „Main contents of bilateral cooperation between Vietnam and Romania”, p. 8.

⁴⁶ „Basic documents on Vietnam – Romania relations”, p. 13.

⁴⁷ „Triển vọng hợp tác khoa học, công nghệ và đổi mới sáng tạo Việt Nam – Rumani” [Prospects of science, technology and innovation cooperation between Vietnam and Romania], most.gov.vn/vn/tin-tuc/16773/trien-vong-hop-tac-khoa-hoc--cong-nghe-va-doi-moi-sang-tao-viet-nam---rumani.aspx [11/2/2020].

⁴⁸ „Toàn văn Tuyên bố chung Việt Nam – Rumani” [Full text of Vietnam - Romania Joint Declaration], vov.vn/chinh-tri/toan-van-tuyen-bo-chung-viet-nam-rumani-529648.vov [11/2/2020].

⁴⁹ „Prospects of science, technology and innovation cooperation between Vietnam and Romania”, most.gov.vn/vn/tin-tuc/16773/trien-vong-hop-tac-khoa-hoc--cong-nghe-va-doi-moi-sang-tao-viet-nam---rumani.aspx [11/2/2020].

⁵⁰ Đại sứ quán nước Cộng hòa xã hội chủ nghĩa Việt Nam tại Rumani, *60 năm quan hệ ngoại giao giữa Việt Nam và Rumani 1950-2010*, Công bố tại București, Rumani [Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Romania, *60 years of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Romania 1950-2010*, published in Bucharest], p. 56.

Romanian and kept in Romanian libraries⁵¹, and vice versa⁵². In addition, the two embassies promoted mutual understanding through other activities, such as tourism, cultural exchanges, connecting people and human resources in diverse fields. A very important factor in bilateral collaboration have been the students that graduated from Romanian programs in the past and are currently living either in Vietnam or Romania. The second factor is the Vietnamese workforce present in Romania, which has increased rapidly in recent years. At the same time, many Romanian experts continue to go and work in Vietnam. These people developed a natural process of cultural exchange and connection between the two countries which, to some degree, created cultural cohesion. Just as important was the cooperation between settlements (cities, ports, etc). These have been taking place thanks to the similarities between localities: Da Nang and Timișoara, Ben Tre province and Tulcea, Lao Cai and Hunedoara, Hoa Binh and Prahova, Hue and Iași, etc. Provinces and cities with similar qualities and prospects, that can support each other in economic development, have connected and planned to cooperate; results are yet to be desirable, but potential still exists. Clear results are yet to be obtained in terms of joint practice in security and defence, too, although the two sides signed an agreement in this sense⁵³.

Through all the analyses in the previous chapters, in **Chapter 5** I look at the prospects for bilateral relations development. I first argue that future cooperation in diplomacy and politics is based on the foundations that existed before 1989 and were revived in the 1990s and 2000s. The two countries have always had a good relationship, that tended to develop rapidly, especially from 2016 to 2019, when delegation exchanges took place continuously. Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș visited Vietnam in 2016, and from 2017 to 2019 four Vietnamese delegations visited Romania and worked with their counterparts on collaboration projects. The two sides agreed to promote cooperation in international organizations, to contribute to maintaining world peace. Other fields have also been discussed, creating good prospects for diplomatic and political relations in upcoming years.

⁵¹ The works of famous poets such as Nguyen Gia Thieu and Nguyen Trai. In addition, works by Ho Xuan Huong, Doan Thi Diem, Ba Huyen Thanh Quan („Second Wife”, „The Story of Vu Lang”) or poems composed after 1950, such as „Prayers” by Huy Can, „Poetry” by Xuan Dieu, „Towards a distant sister” by Nguyen Dinh Thi, „The Train of Love” by Chinh Huu. All are classics, that show the image of Vietnamese cultural and social life. To Huu, To Hoai, Anh Duc, Xuan Thieu, Nguyen Dich Dung, Nguyen Ban, Mai Ngu, Le Khac Khoan, Nguyen Tien Kiem and Pham Van Doan have also been translated and published in Romania. In particular, the best-known work of Vietnamese literature – „Kieu's Story” by Nguyen Du. Romanian authors have also published books on Vietnamese culture, see *Books and travel* by Corneliu Vlad or *Vietnamese mythological stories* collected by Georgeta Simion. See *60 years of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Romania 1950-2010*, pp. 87, 92.

⁵² The National Library in Hanoi and the National Institute of Letters keep many Romanian works such as *Hanul Ancușei* by Mihail Sadoveanu, *A second chance* by Virgil Gheorghiu, *O noapte furtunoasă* by Ion Luca Caragiale, *The City on the River Mureș* by Francisc Munteanu, works by Elie Wiesel (see his Nobel Prize speech), Eugen Uricaru, books by crime-writer Haralamb Zinca, and many more, on various subjects (Romanian folktales, children's stories, *Learning Romania's common law*, etc).

⁵³ *Hiệp định giữa Chính phủ nước Cộng hòa xã hội chủ nghĩa Việt Nam và Chính phủ Romania về hợp tác trong lĩnh vực quốc phòng* [Agreement between the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Government of Romania on cooperation in the field of defence], kept at the Embassy of Vietnam in Romania.

Economic perspectives are another important factor for general bilateral relations. This field promises good growth. According to Ambassador Dang Tran Phong, in the future the two countries will exploit all their inherent potential⁵⁴. They have supported each other in approaching new markets, such as Europe for Vietnam and Southeast Asia for Romania. Sectors with good outlooks, such as tourism, receive mutual backing. Vietnam's natural landscapes suit Romanian and European tastes, while Romania's old castles attract Vietnamese and Asians. At the 16th Joint Conference in Bucharest (2019), the Minister of Sports and Tourism of Vietnam signed a memorandum of understanding with Romania on tourism development⁵⁵. This predicts strong progress in the coming years.

In the commercial sector we saw that, although exchange values were not high from 2010 to 2019, the growth rate was very fast (143.19% in 2010-2016). Meanwhile, there is a lot of potential that the two countries have not fully exploited yet. On June 30th, 2019, in Hanoi, Romania represented the EU in signing a free trade agreement with Vietnam, which will be an important lever for promoting the development of bilateral trade value, especially for agricultural and marine products exported from Vietnam to Romania.

The two countries also have good possibilities for enhancing collaboration in other fields. For instance, in the oil and gas industry, giving the strengths of Romania and the current expansion of oil exploitation in Vietnam⁵⁶. Labour exchange is another example. Introduced in 2013, its values have had ups and downs since 2017, but are increasing, indicating that the outlook is strong. Science and technology are also being looked at, as well as ties between regions and cities, although the latter are not expected to become as strong as other fields.

The final segment of this chapter draws an ultimate evaluation of Vietnam-Romania relations from 1950 to 2019/2020. *First*, the two countries possess a long common history, which is more than 70 years old. *Second*, their fields of cooperation are diverse and tend to grow well. *Third*, the exchange of workforce is developing very quickly. *Fourth*, geographical distance makes it difficult to promote cooperative activities. Therefore, the inherent potential of the two countries has not been fully exploited. *Fifth*, «people's diplomacy» is going well and tends to develop positively.

⁵⁴ „Thủ tướng tham dự Diễn đàn doanh nghiệp Rumani–Việt Nam” [Prime Minister attends Romania–Vietnam Business Forum], thoibaotaichinhvietnam.vn/pages/thoi-su/2019-04-15/thu-tuong-du-dien-dan-doanh-nghiep-romania-viet-nam-70161.aspx [24/12/2020].

⁵⁵ „Phiên họp thứ 16 của Ủy ban hỗn hợp hợp tác kinh tế Việt Nam–Rumani” [The 16th session of the Vietnam–Romania Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation], phunurovn.com/ttsk-khoa-hop-thu-16-uy-ban-hon-hop-viet-nam-rumani-ve-hop-tac-kinh-te/ [25/2/2020].

⁵⁶ *Trà lời nhân dịp Phó Thủ tướng và Bộ trưởng Ngoại giao Phạm Gia Khiêm thăm chính thức Rumani và chuẩn bị kỷ niệm 60 năm Việt Nam - Rumani thiết lập quan hệ ngoại giao, Ngoại trưởng Rumani Cristian Diaconescu bày tỏ mong muốn rằng tình hữu nghị và hợp tác giữa hai nước các quốc gia sẽ tiếp tục được thúc đẩy và mở rộng, ngày 22 tháng 6 năm 2009* [Answering to the official visit in Romania by vice-prime-minister and Foreign minister Phạm Gia Khiêm, and preparing to celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Romania, the Romanian minister for Foreign Affairs, Cristian Diaconescu, has expressed his wish that the friendship and cooperation between the two countries will be promoted and extended further, June 22nd, 2009], document kept in the archives of the Embassy of Vietnam in Bucharest, p. 3.

In the **Conclusion**, I summarize the content analysed through the chapters of the thesis. It should be reaffirmed that Romania-Vietnam relations are important for both countries. They were established in 1950 and went through many special historical periods. Between 1950 and 1989 the two countries were diplomatic partners with the same Socialist political system. This was also the period when Vietnam experienced a major confrontation with the USA. Romania always showed good spirit to support Vietnam, both mentally and materially, and contributed to increasing its combat strength. From 1975 to 1989 Romania continued to assist Vietnam in its post-war reconstruction. Cooperation went on in all fields, but financial values gradually decreased because of the crises each country went through in the late 1980s.

The events of December 1989 in Romania had a strong impact on the bilateral relationship. Although the cooperation process did not break entirely, the interval between 1989 to 1999 saw a visible decrease in bilateral contacts. Signs of development reappeared in 2000-2019, after the leaders of the two countries started doing official state visits again and trade exchanges were resumed. The latter began with a value of 20 million USD in 2002 and reached more than 200 million in 2018. In 2016-2019 the two countries tried to promote joint activities through working delegations. Fields such as culture, education, science and technology, and exchange of labour force also came into interest. Workforce exchanges were a new endeavour, but became a highlight in the bilateral relationship, with a rapid growth rate (from 350 workers in 2013 to 4,000 workers in 2019).

At the same time, Romania and Vietnam are supporting each other in foreign policy development and in accessing new trade markets.

It can be said that the dissertation's results are the first complete research on the bilateral relationship developed, in a multitude of fields, between 1950 and 2019/2020. The thesis will be an important support for history students, in Vietnam especially. When published, along with other research done on the subject (see the articles of Nguyen The Ha, Dan Vătăman, Dao Tuan Thanh), it will form a series of references for all those interested in the relations of the two countries, as well as for those studying the history of international relations. If kept at the Vietnamese Embassy in Romania, the thesis will also be useful in supporting the orientation of the Ambassador's policy on developing bilateral relations after 2020. In addition, the thesis is an important basis for other studies on the bilateral relationship before or after 2020.

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