

About the Romanian Journalistic Education During the Inter-war Period

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Foreword. *I have been searching for relevant information related to the start of journalistic education in our country. Some sources have assured me that such education did not exist, before the Communists came to power. Then, I happened to learn so late about some documents, that I still have hesitations about my documentation. Information I had in 2005 allowed me to publish a first volume, where I have given plenty of space to education. However, a subject such as the formation of journalists deserves more interest. This is why I am returning to this theme. “The dates of the problem” have changed after I got in the possession of the volume “Cultural training of journalists. Schools of journalists – programs – courses”, published in 1938 by Professor Anastasie Ștefănescu-Galați.*

Keywords: Romanian journalistic education; Professor Anastasie Ștefănescu-Galați; Journalism teacher; Inter-war period.

A pioneer for journalistic education

Anastase Ștefănescu-Galați was one of the first journalism teachers in the Romanian Kingdom. Unfortunately, very few information is known about him. He was born in 1881, a Law graduate (Bucharest, 1904) a Philosophy graduate (Bucharest, 1908). He was a librarian at the University Foundation Charles the First in Bucharest (1901–1914), as well as a secondary school teacher (1908–1922). He managed to get a professor post at Chernivtsi University, first as a tutor (1922) and then as a titular (1923) at “Politics and Press Department”. As of 1924 he was teaching the “Politics and Press” course, as the volume mentioned above has shown. His course is mentioned by Karl Jaeger (1926, 34–35), in his work *Von Zeitungskunde zur publizistischen Wissenschaft*¹, with a debut in 1924. If this was the case, then the department in Chernivtsi has been launched at the same time with the first journalism school in France—the Faculty of Law Journalism Department at the Catholic University in Lille².

He did not teach only the journalism courses in Chernivtsi, but also the course titled *The Evolution of Social and Political Thinking*³ published in 1926. His scientific pursuit included the education, the idea of national unity, the work of I. Kant, the personality of C.A. Rosetti and so on. In 1904 he published *The Social environment and criminality in Romania (Family, Press, Prisons)*.

Coming back to the volume that generated the present text, we notice that Ștefănescu-Galați has done a presentation of education plans for journalism schools, caught up from Karl Jaeger’s book mentioned above. For instance—what used to be studied at The Zürich University, in the two departments dedicated to journalism at the Faculty of Philosophy—the political section and the “feuilletonist” one?—History of journalism, Press technique, Journalism exercises, History of culture, Logic, Law, Philosophy, Ethics, History of Arts—these were some of the disciplines studied there. It was there where students aspiring to gain the title of *Doctor juris publici et rerumcameralium* (Doctor in Public Law) were invited to study the disciplines of the State Sciences Faculty.

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- 1 Note: there is an error in the work of Ștefănescu-Galați—Karl Jaegger’s book appeared in 1926, not in 1936, as mentioned at page 32.
 - 2 École Supérieure de Journalisme was founded in November 1924, by Paul Verschave (1878–1947)—lawyer and Law Professor and was operating inside the Facultés Libres de Lille (in some documents it is mentioned as a Journalism department of Université Catholique de Lille). The school was addressed to those aged 16, they would own a Bachelors title or a superior license and were declared admitted at the initial exam; the studies lasted three years, and the diplomas were recognized by the d Convention Collective des Journalistes. As of 1960, the state has recognized the certificate issued by this private Higher Education institution (see the presentations in different editions of the *Annuaire de la presse française et étrangère et du monde politique*).
 - 3 *The Evolution of Social and Political Thinking. I. From Renaissance to Positivism* [*De la Renaștere la Pozitivism*], Chernivtsi, 1926.

The University in Heidelberg used to have three teachers in charge of students who aspired to have a career in journalism—Adolf Koch, I.Fr. Meisner, Oscar Wettstein. Their disciplines were related to History, Politics, Copyright, Press Technique, Political Parties, Geography, Sociology, Economic History, banking Sciences, Ethics, Aesthetics and others.

That was how the educational offer of Leipzig University looked like (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 20). Students who wanted a Journalism certificate would follow the courses of the Philosophy Faculty, with its three specializations—“for Political Journalism”, “For Commercial Journalism” and “for Feuilletonistic Journalism”—with a three-year duration of classes. We shall not forget that there was a Journalism Institute in Leipzig inside the University, which was “meant to promote the scientific development of journalism and to support students who wished to dedicate to the media to get the relevant knowledge, to facilitate their practice and to guide them towards the right understanding of future duties.” (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 21). Students at Juridical and State Sciences Faculty were also able to study Journalism as part of the “Political and Economic Branch” and “Feuilletonistic Branch” modules, both of them with joint disciplines, such as The History of Journalism, The Press Technique, Universal History and so on. That was part of the educational offer in 1922.

Classes used to last three years at the University of Bern, with most courses focusing on the history of the German, French, Italian and English language and literature, followed by History, Law, Sociology and so on. Every semester had seminars and exercises on Journalism Technique. As far as the Journalism Department from the Catholic University of Lille, France, is concerned, the studies used to last three years, with most disciplines focusing on Law, religion, Sociology, Political Economics, Administrative Sciences, History of Political Parties and so on, as well as classes related to the composition of phrases and style, foreign languages, administrating a newspaper and so on. Students entering the Journalism Department did not have to take an admission exam, if they had a baccalaureate certificate. For instance, 2nd year students were hearing lectures on Journalism Ethics (10 hours), the History of Journalism (10 hours), Journalism Legislation (10 hours); journalism classification, the information service, the editorial practice (journalism genres) and so on. On the 3rd year, other disciplines were added, such as the History of Diplomacy, Industrial Legislation, Financial Legislation and particularly the module “Making and Administering a Newspaper”, which included three specialized courses, as well as practical exercises. Afterwards, another school of journalism was operational in France, la École des hautes études sociales, on the street of Sorbonne, in Paris.

In Germany, there were 10 schools of journalism inside the faculties of Philosophy, Law and State Sciences, Economic and Social Sciences and Commerce—Berlin, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Hamburg, Köln, Kiel, Leipzig, München, Münster, Nürnberg. I classified them generically as “schools”, because some of them were media in-

stitutes (Berlin, Köln, Freiburg, Leipzig, Münster), others were modules dedicated to journalism and even a specialized course (Nürnberg). In the United States, 86 institutes and foundations were operational, 50 of which were Journalism faculties.

Of course, specialized schools were also founded in London, Milan, Tokyo, Warsaw, Moscow—to complete the picture offered by Prof. K. Jaeger. He has mentioned the courses of A. Ștefănescu-Galați, but not those of Jordan Radu, that he initiated in the autumn of 1919 at Cluj University.

And another mention. Prof. Karl Bücher was the one who converted the Journalism into an academic discipline in Germany. I am insisting on the German educational offer, because both the classes in Cluj, and those in Chernivtsi followed the German model.

K. Bücher (1847–1930) studied Economy, History and Philology at universities of Bonn and Göttingen (1866–1869). With competences in Economy and Statistics (München, 1881), a Doctor in History (Bonn, 1870), he has taught Statistics at universities in Dorpat, Basel, Karlsruhe; he was a titular in Political Economy at Leipzig University’s Philosophy Faculty (1892–1921)⁴. He was an editor at *Frankfurter Zeitung*. During his professorial stage at Dorpat University⁵ (1882), he has conceived a science of the press (*Zeitungswissenschaften*), and in 1916 he founded a specialized institute which he led for ten years—“Institut für Zeitungskunde” (Institute for the Study of Journalism), inside the University of Leipzig. Definitely that the context is important—the role of the media during the First World War. Bücher has seen the newspaper as a business and did not make access to this profession dependent on journalism studies, but he underlined the need of specialized studies—post-graduate studies we would call them today—to ensure a certain level a competence to the journalist.

His belief

A. Ștefănescu-Galați (1938, 5) believed that countries needed to promote a real and active “press politics” “to guarantee and facilitate as much as possible the supply and dissemination of information”. But in order to do that, a proper legislation was needed, as well as press conferences, “training and scientific and cultural preparation of journalists” in the first place. On another hand, it was important to “ensure the social material and social position of people that dedicated their activity to press. The idea of professional trade unions with collaboration and control from the state comes in the first place (...) press freedom can be guaranteed.” (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 6).

⁴ Karl Wilhelm Bücher, Retrieved 14.12.2020 from https://research.uni-leipzig.de/catalogus-professorum-lipsiensium/leipzig/Buecher_24/.

⁵ The Tartu University in Tartu, Estonia.

The press did not have too much freedom, if we consider the experience during the First World War, when censorship was ubiquitous. The author did not insist on these aspects. Moreover, due to fears of those who lacked academic studies or did not believe in the need for education in this area, it has developed ideas contrary to its professional statute—like “Journalism has to flow through the blood of the one who wishes to become a journalist. Two are the things that must be possessed: the application towards a certain technical activity and, particularly, the journalistic call” (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 7). Yes, it did not agree those with “unfinished culture”, or “shipwrecks of education”, although some of them ended up with bright careers. But “the journalist profession is a free profession, it does not ask for any special condition: those who adhere to it and are bound to succeed are the ones lucky to be happily gifted to write easily and a very large activity field is opening up to them, where they can work without having gone to any school” (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 10). Consequently—the author shows—“journalistic profession is not learned in school; there could be no school to create journalists” (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 11) (...) the one who will want to embrace the career of the Press, journalism, will have to own an inner call towards this activity, first and foremost, to own that special and particular gift of soul that we talked about and that cannot be gained by studying in school. The one who has no innate susceptibility and inward impetus to journalism will never be a good journalist, regardless of his knowledge of theoretical and practical journalism.” (Ștefănescu-Galați, 1938, 12).

Such a presentation is confusing, as the journalism profession is placed into an area of fatality, demon, talent, violent passion, however incommensurate. Nevertheless, as “inward susceptibility to journalism” are difficult to be identified, Ștefănescu-Galați has resorted to an opera related to the psychology of talent, signed by Dr. Kurt Piorkowsky, who believed that a journalist needed “a swiftness in thought and action”.

And then, what was the point of a journalism course, under the conditions shown above? To offer knowledge to those aspiring to this profession, to fill in their culture, to make them familiar with the technique, with the legislation of the press, with running a business called press and so on.

The structure of the course

What did Professor Ștefănescu-Galați actually teach at the Judicial Faculty⁶ in Chernivtsi? This is, for instance, the curriculum of the university year 1936–1937⁷. I am writing down the text unabbreviated, given its scarcity.

6 It was officially The Judicial and State Sciences Faculty.

7 The document is titled “The Curriculum of Press and journalism course, the year 1936–1937”.

„I. Introduction. The importance of the Press⁸ nowadays, in front of the modern society's needs and, especially with the post-war political changes. The social origin of the press, its ethical, social, politic and cultural role.

1. *History of the Press.* Its beginning, its transformations, with a special view on the evolution of journalism in Romania until the current times, emphasizing its character, functions, organization and composition, as well as its dominant influences.

2. *The importance of journalist's social and cultural training.* Foreign, older and modern beliefs and opinions. The program of studies and preparation of future journalists. Personal skills. Studies. Exercises.

3. *The judicial nature of the Press.* Legislation of the Press. Press freedom. Additional course on the main laws of the press, with a special view on censorship, especially in Romania. Journalists' accountability. Anonymity in the Press.

4. *Specialization of the Press.* Divisions, on the editors' character and their need of specialization. Yearbooks, different kinds of magazines and intended goals, on the various activity fields. Newspapers: 1) political and various interests; 2) economic; 3) general information.

II. The journal technique, along with the organization and mechanism that should be known in order to execute and attain the journal. The director, the editors, informers and reporters with their responsibilities. The telephonic and telegraphic information service. The examination of each and the description of their job. Interviews. Critical and bibliographic reviews. Different kinds of chronicles. Overviews on political gatherings, as well as parliamentary, municipal, economic, financial, scientific gatherings and so on.

Political services. Ministries, the Chamber and the Senate. Requests. Internal policy with its aspects and foreign policy. Domestic information in foreign Media.

The Judiciary. The large lawsuits. Law problems and new jurisprudence. Criminal affairs.

The documentary information Service. Investigations on various issues and areas. Study trips. Opinions by specialists and authorized individuals.

The Actuality. The day's echoes, information, inventions, discoveries. Diverse facts. News. Events. Small jovial or playful chronicles. Theaters, cinemas, concerts, magazines and so on. Sports and so on.

Cultural life. Academies of science, arts, letters. Universities, issues of general and special culture. Tuition, education, school and educational issues in school, family. Societies of culture and education and so on.

8 I have written down the document using the current norms—*Press* instead of *Presii*, as stated in the document; *opinions* instead of *opiniuni*, *responsibilities* instead of *atribuțiuni*, *job/function* instead of *funcțiuni* and so on. I kept some of the forms, for their archaic air—as in *different ways*, in order to emphasize the diversity.

Other states' cultural, social and political life. The continuous connection and accurate information and documentation, with the media of all foreign countries.

Ads and Advertising. Economic, financial and social principles.

III. The management of the journal. The importance of the management, for the newspaper's success. The printing material, the machines and the most advanced technique. Paper, ink, photos, the drawers with their culture and their refinement in a continuous accordance with the printing products. Organizing spending and revenues on a budgetary basis. Remuneration: a) specialized personnel, editorial and technique; b) personnel of the printing factory. Participation in enterprises. Current problems: paper, the newspapers fund. Organizing sales by means of ration books.

Special chapter. The beginning of the press in Romania.”

Conclusion

People who went to a German school, more educated or who had a better understanding of the world around—as they used to be called—militated for the creation of some forms of journalistic education in Romania. The Cluj project, mentioned above, was possible due to figures like Onisifor Ghibu, who was educated in schools and universities in Sibiu, Bucharest, Budapest, Strasbourg and Jena. Immediately after the Great Union, he has appointed as General Secretary at the Instruction Resort in the Directing Council, a position that allowed him to search and find a Journalism professor for the Cluj University, a professor who had a German education too—Iordan Radu. The merits also fall to the Rector of King Ferdinand the 1st University, Sextil Pușcariu, who was himself educated in schools and universities in Brasov, Leipzig, Vienna, Paris. As far as I. Radu is concerned, he had achieved a Doctor's degree in Law in Berlin.

The education plans in Chernivtsi are largely due to Rector Ion I. Nistor, educated in Rădăuți, Chernivtsi, Leipzig and Vienna, a professor and minister for Bukovina (1922–1926), in the government led by Ion I.C. Brătianu.

In Bucharest, Dimitrie Gusti, who was well acquainted to the German experience in terms of journalistic education—he had studied in Leipzig and Berlin—has brought forward a plan for a faculty in this field at the University in Bucharest, but he fails due to votes of those who wanted a Pedagogic Faculty. In this sequence, let us mention Constantin Radulescu-Motru, who studied in Bucharest, Munich and Leipzig—the first Romanian who went to journalism classes taught by Prof. Karl Bühler in Leipzig. Motru has also supported the idea of a Journalism Department.

The time was also adverse.

The wounds from the First World War, the inter-war economic crisis and the Antonescian crisis and again, the war. In these conditions, a Journalism department was difficult to be preserved, not least that such an idea was discredited here by

some of the writers and even by some famous journalists, who also came from the Literature field, as Ion Vinea, for example.

Therefore, a public regular education only appeared in 1951, at the University of Bucharest (Petcu, 2012, 39–81)—the section and then the Journalism Faculty, again the section...—which was also disbanded after it was operational for 12 years. A journalism Faculty was also created at the Academy of Social-Politic Studies in 1971. It was also converted into a section (1984) and wiped off in 1989.

In 1990, a Journalism Faculty is created in the capital and is was subsequently named as a Faculty of “Journalism and Communication Sciences” (Rad, 2006; Rad, 2014).

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