

**The Bucharest School of Journalism
(1951–1989)
– Recent Histories –**

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Abstract: The present study contains unpublished archival information on the history of teaching journalism in Romania. It describes the attempts to institutionalize some forms of instruction, then the appearance of the journalism school in Bucharest, initially within the public academic education, later in the institution training the cadres of the Romanian Communist Party, the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy. The paper presents enrolment numbers, admission modalities, and curricula in the different stages of the school's evolution.

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A recent event granted me access to the archives of the former Faculty of Journalism that functioned within the Academy of Social-Political Studies in Relation to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (known mainly by its older name – Ștefan Gheorghiu). At present the archives are the propriety of the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, and they are in a state which makes their use difficult (they are not open to researchers).

The documents I found there, but also other contextual information convinced me that the Romanian journalistic education is a communist creation. I am going to demonstrate why. On the other hand, the education-training pattern of this institution marked the entire intellectual creation in Romania, mainly but not exclusively the written culture, which makes the identified documents all the more important.

A quick glance on the problem – in Bucharest

Discussions on the necessity of establishing some institutional forms of instruction for journalists had already appeared before 1900 in different contexts. However, nobody made a firm proposition; instead comparisons were made – naturally disadvantageous to us – with what was happening in other countries.¹

During the Congress of Press in 1922 (Bucharest, December 5) there were discussions related to the founding of some specialized university departments, and Pantelimon Halippa presented the proposal made by the students of the University of

¹ Iordan (Iorgu) Radu was the first professor of journalism in Romania. In autumn 1919, he began to hold courses of journalism at the University of Upper Dacia in Cluj, following the model of German universities. He was born in Bacău and obtained his doctor's degree in law.

Bucharest to create a faculty of journalism similar to those abroad. Neither initiative was realized.

In 1927, Pamfil Șeicaru promoted the idea of a journalism school, but neither did his initiative obtain the attention of the professional community. Nevertheless, something did happen – the debates regarding the training of journalists became more and more frequent in the press, and on January 17, 1929, at the School of Documentation and Administrative Science, Nichifor Crainic held the first course of journalism in Bucharest. In 1932, State Secretary Ion Pangal asked Professor Nae Ionescu to plan the Open Academy for Journalistic and Diplomatic Studies, and in 1936, at the Faculty of Law in Bucharest the idea of a training programme in journalism under the form of some optional courses was promoted. Neither did these actions have the reaction they deserved. Merely in the autumn of the year 1940 the so-called “Open University of Journalism”, an extension of the Faculty of Letters, where people with the most varied occupations could enrol, was inaugurated. The courses did not last long (it seems that there was hardly any people to teach...), thus in 1943, Minister Mihai Antonescu asked Pamfil Șeicaru to plan a journalism school attached to the Faculty of Law. Șeicaru took the task seriously, and made an educational plan for three years long postgraduate journalism courses (meant mainly for students who had obtained a BA in law, letters, and philosophy). But the war thwarted this project as well.¹

After August 23, 1944 numerous journalists were removed from the press under the motive of applying the dispositions of the Armistice Agreement, which decreed the de-fascistization of press, culture, etc. This is why in the editorial offices of the big daily papers trainings were initiated for the new journalists, many of whom were workers, persons most often without a secondary education. Thus a journalism school was improvised under the form of a barrack camp in Băneasa, a school where experienced journalists taught. As higher party schools were being organized, they also developed “journalism sections”, that is specialized lectures (such courses were held until 1989).

In 1951, at the C. I. Parhon University's Faculty of Philosophy a journalism section was established, which would be transformed into the Faculty of Journalism (studies lasted five years) in 1953. The founders had taken for a model the similar faculty of the Lomonosov University of Moscow. The following subjects were taught in this institution: “The students' ideological education is ensured by the disciplines: the bases of Marxism-Leninism, political economy, dialectical and historical materialism. Such disciplines as economic and political geography, universal history, history of the Romanian People's Republic, history of international relations, history of universal literature, art history, the bases of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics, and others offer journalists the possibility to improve their general education level. The formation of literary style is aided by the study of Romanian language and literature, of stylistics at the faculty. The faculty also gives special attention to the study of Russian language and other foreign languages (French, English, German). The acquisition by students of the specialized skills of the journalist profession is ensured by means of specialized disciplines: theory and practice of press, history of press in Romania, history of communist and workers' press abroad, bases of industrial and agricultural organization in RPR, technology of polygraphic production, as well as other specialized disciplines.

¹ Marian Petcu, *Jurnalism în România – Istoria unei profesii* (Journalist in Romania – The History of a Profession) (București: Comunicare.ro, 2005), 106.

The course of journalistic theory and practice arms the students with the Marxist-Leninist principles of party press, with the *scientific theory of party press* (...). Special emphasis is laid on the work forms and methods used in the central and local editorial offices. The study and mastery of the main journalistic genres, article, report, sketch, feuilleton, review, press review, correspondence, information, etc., occupy an important place within the students' professional training..."¹

I shall return to the evolution of the curriculum later on.

It is important to remember that this was a "party" university education form, that is, parallel with the public university education system. But this bipolar pattern also had a history – against the background of the loss of human lives in World War II, the purges after the war, political power holders established "party" education forms – , namely the Ștefan Gheorghiu Party School and the A. A. Jdanov Social Sciences Higher School (the courses of which lasted two years). The students were selected and appointed to different functions after graduation according to the results they obtained and according to their behaviour (meaning their conformation to official ideology).

But on December 20, 1954, the newspaper of the Communist Party, *Scânteia* (The Spark) published an announcement that the graduates of the two above mentioned schools could take a supplementary examination and state examination in order to "assimilate them to the graduates of higher state education".²

In 1966, a political decision established the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy of Social-Political Studies to replace the former Ștefan Gheorghiu Higher Party School. The transformation meant more than a change of title; it also affected the organization of the institution (three faculties appeared, the duration of studies increased, etc.), and what was more important, it functioned under the direction of both the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee and of the Ministry of Education (the diploma issued by the institution began to have legal value). Here the Faculty of Journalism functioned, beginning with academic year 1969–1970, created by a Decision of the Council of Ministers (signed by Prime Minister Ion Gheorghe Maurer). In 1986, this was transformed by the Rector of the Academy, Dumitru Popescu into a section of the Institute for Training Leading Cadres (the institution disappeared in December 1989).

It is to be remembered that in 1969 former journalist Nestor Ignat, editor of the journal *Era socialistă* (The Socialist Era), was commissioned to organize the Faculty of Journalism at the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy, which he would direct until 1981.³ Nestor Ignat admitted that he did not believe in this formula. He belonged among those who considered that journalism can be of any scientific origin and can have some vocation.

Beginning with the year 1960 optional journalism courses were introduced in the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bucharest as well, journalism also figuring in the educational programmes of foreign language and literature faculties. The first courses at the Faculty of Letters were held by Angela Ion, and then, from the year 1961, by Octavian Butoi. The courses lasted for two years (in the third and fourth year of

¹ Constantin Antip, "Învățământul ziaristic în R.P.R." (Journalistic Education in RPR), *Presa noastră* (Our Press) 1 (1956): 21.

² *Scânteia*, Decembrie 20, 1954, in *Istoria Universității din București. Documente (1864–1972)* (The History of Bucharest University. Documents), by Adina Berciu Drăghicescu (București: Editura Universității din București, 2008), 448.

³ The often censured Ștefan Gheorghiu was not a Communist – he died on March 19, 1914 in Bucharest. That is, long before the emergence of the Romanian Workers' (Communist) Party.

study), periods of practice in editorial offices being included (a month each summer). The graduates obtained a specialization in journalism as well, mentioned also on their diploma, which made possible for them to work in editorial offices (they had the benefit of “governmental” appointments, as it was then called). By this measure, besides the party journalism education, there were also some state faculties where one could become qualified in journalism – Philosophy, Letters, Foreign Languages. “The theory and practice of press” courses were later held, following the Bucharest model, at the universities of Cluj (the professor was Tudor Cătineanu) and Iași. A journalism group also existed at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Philosophy until 1989.

Admission to Journalism

1971. The entrance exam took place in the period December 1–4, 1971 on the basis of a bibliography, tests being given in Romanian literature and journalism. 147 candidates took the exam. They had been recommended by the county party committees, the leadership of the central newspapers, the Ministry of the Armed Forces, the Council of State Security, and the Ministry of Interior (all proposals had been approved by the Press Section and the Cadres Section of the Central Committee and the Romanian Communist Party). Those who obtained marks between 7 and 10 were admitted, therefore the first year consisted of 70 students: 62 men and 8 women; 61 Romanians, 7 Hungarians, and 2 Germans. 27 were between ages 21 and 25, 39 between 26 and 30, and 2 were above 30 years; 24 were workers, 23 masters and technicians, 14 press workers, 2 primary school teachers, and 7 officers. The Communist Party structure was rigidly observed in the admission process, which means that the ethnical, socio-professional etc. proportions were respected. We must specify that the persons labelled “press workers” were journalists without higher education, and the officers did not necessarily represent the military press, but the different national security organizations (the Department of State Security, Ministry of Defence – Ministry of Interior). All admitted persons were members of the RCP, 58 were coming from the counties, 12 from Bucharest. On December 30, 1971, through Decision no. 165, on the basis of the RCP’s Central Committee Secretariat’s approval no. 4402/4195 from December 28, 1971, the Rector of the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy ordered the enrolment of the 70 admitted persons to the regular courses, and of other 103 persons who had higher studies to an one year long regular course for those.¹

The programme of study consisted of the following disciplines: first year – dialectical materialism; capitalist and socialist political Economy; the present stage of the international communist worker’s movement; economic and political geography; the system of law and legislation in the Socialist Republic of Romania. Second year – historical materialism; the language and the style of press; Romanian literature; the history of the homeland, of the Romanian workers’ movement, and of the Romanian Communist Party; political economy of the RCP; the sociology of propaganda; international relations; party construction; scientific socialism; stenography; ethics; journalistic practice. Third year – party politics in culture and art; functions in press;

¹ Faculty of Journalism dossier, regular course, three years. Opis. 1971–1974 series, without page numbers.

ways of discussing current internal and international events in the press; the organization and direction of economy and industry; foreign language.¹

1972. We ought to say a few words about the postgraduate journalism courses, simply because the majority of journalists from the radio and the television, from the local and central press (terms used at that time) attended them.

For example, the first courses were organized between January 1972 and July 1973 with the participation of over one hundred young journalists working for three–four years in this profession, having chances to occupy important positions in the leadership of different editorial offices. Later on, these one year long courses became obligatory for those who had no specialized training. Officially, the first postgraduate course of journalism ended on September 22, 1972, when a festivity was organized for the first class. In the same year, the second entrance exam took place at the Faculty of Journalism with the participation of 63 applicants (the second year had 71 students). The faculty also had a distance education section to which 150 first and second year students were enrolled, later on an international section also being established, to which students from different countries led by leftist parties enrolled.

1973. In 1973 the additional courses of the technique of press photography and of film; car driving; the functions of press in socialist society were introduced. The practice in editorial offices took place between April 1 and May 11. At the end of their studies (after the diploma examination), the Faculty recommended only 38 graduates for work in the press, 24 being appointed to other institutions, “the party, the Union of Communist Youth (UCY), and trade union apparatus, as cultural activists, in the distribution of press”. In this class five students were officers of the Ministry of National Defence and two of the Ministry of Interior (Securitate troops). It must be mentioned that a great number of days – approx. 300 hours – were dedicated to practical activity in editorial offices and in the field, which ensured that the theoretical notions were applied in journalistic practice.

Regarding correspondence courses (1973–1977), we can specify that among the recommended candidates there were also 11 editors, translators, cameramen, and correspondents of the Radio Television, such as Munteanu C. Neculai (reporter at the Editorial Office of Culture and Art Programmes), Sebastian Domoziņa (correspondent), Florin Brătescu (editor and announcer), and others. The examination consisted of a Romanian literature and a journalism written test. The former offered a choice between the following subjects: “George Călinescu as a journalist”; “The poem *Cântare omului* (Hymn to Mankind) and its place in Tudor Arghezi’s work”; “The main heroine’s portrait and significance in the novel *Baltagul* (The Hatchet) by Mihail Sadoveanu”. During the latter candidates were requested to write an article-commentary about the Plenary Meeting of the RCP’s Central Committee in June 1973 or about the Helsinki Conference. 65 students were admitted to the first year, out of which 58 remained in the second year, and 54 finished their studies.

¹ Register of students, class of 1971–1974, passim. Beginning with 1970 journalism studies lasted for four years.



Ana-Maria Călinescu, *The Door. Orange Light*, Tempera-gouache on paper (420 × 297 mm.)

1974. Entrance exams were held for the first time for four year long studies, according to the new system. The eliminatory examination organized on July 19–20 was meant to verify journalistic abilities. On July 21 the results were announced, on July 22 the written examination in Romanian literature, on July 24 the oral exam in scientific socialism took place, and the final results were announced. The applicants had the following subjects in the Romanian literature test: “The national and popular character of Ion Creangă’s work” and “The village and its villagers in *Moromeții* (The Moromete Family) by Marin Preda and (in) *Setea* (Thirst) by Titus Popovici”. It must be mentioned that the persons selected for the entrance exam had to take a “psychological test of intellectual abilities”, those who obtained marks between 1 and 5 being eliminated from the competition. 72 candidates applied for admittance; after the first tests 60 remained. As there were only 40 places, only those who obtained an average grade above 6 were admitted. Among the 40 admitted students there were 14 workers and technicians, 4 nursery and primary school teachers, 13 press workers, 2 cultural activists, 3 officers (one of them a journalist), 3 civil servants, and 1 UCY activist.¹

2 persons were Hungarian, 2 German, the others Romanian. There were 15 women and 25 men, 22 party members and 18 UCY members. At the end of the academic year, a committee analyzed the students’ progress based on their activity on courses, seminars, laboratory activity, and practice, and they decided that three persons had “no abilities for press work”, proposing not to enrol them in the second year, but to send them back to their former workplace.

It must be remembered that the institution was named the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy for Training Leading Cadres for Party Activity, Social-Political, Economical Activity, and State Administration. From the first class studying for four years only 37 students graduated, 14 workers, masters, and technicians, 11 journalists, 4 primary school teachers, 3 officers, and 5 civil servants. Political authorities proposed that 13 should be assigned to the central press, 19 to local press, 3 to the publications of the Ministry of National Defence, 1 to Iași County Committee for Socialist Education and Culture, 1 to Cluj County Film Company.

The correspondence courses – the 1974–1979 class – were organized only for those who had already worked in mass media. For the candidates from this category the exams were identical with those for the regular courses, but they took place between July 26 and 30. 59 students were admitted (to distance education) according to the Decision No. 7419 of the Secretariat of the RCP’s Central Committee from September 10, 1974. The Romanian Radio Television recommended 18 persons for the entrance exam, employed in different functions, but without higher education (for example, a person who finished secondary school or a metallurgical vocational school, a commercial school etc. could become a journalist, local correspondent, etc.). There were 59 applicants, but the Secretariat of the RCP’s Central Committee authorized only 30–40 places. Since many applicants had already been working in the press, the Faculty demanded that all should be admitted to the courses. From among the 59 candidates 10 were workers, masters, and technicians, 11 primary and secondary school teachers, 30 journalists, 4 civil servants, and 4 officers. 46 were Romanian, 11 Hungarian, 1 was

¹ “Activists” were officially called “political workers”, in fact they were militants of the political structure and they were paid by this. “Cultural activists” could be librarians, managers of community centres, employees of different cultural institutions, paid by these. UCY was the abbreviation for Union of Communist Youth.

German, and 1 Serbian; 6 were women and 53 men. By the time this class finished their studies, the name of the educational institution had been changed to Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy for Training and Improving Leading Cadres Affiliated to the RCP's Central Committee.

The one year long **postgraduate course** also began in 1974. For this, 22 journalists from the local press, 21 from the Romanian Radio Television (RTV) and the central press (among them 2 readers from the General Management of Press and Printing¹) and 7 from editorial offices were recommended. The data summarized at the end of the admission process shows that 46 applicants participated in the competition, 35 men and 11 women, 41 Romanians, 4 Hungarians, and 2 Germans. 15 worked in the local press, 6 at the RTV, and 7 in editorial offices. According to their initial profession, 6 were engineers, 1 physician, 1 economist, 12 journalist, and 26 secondary school teachers. According to their social class, 39 belonged to worker and peasant families (19 workers, 19 peasants) and 8 to families of civil servants. The Central Committee of the RCP authorized 50–60 places, but since not all of them were occupied in September, another entrance examination was organized on October 4–5. Finally 55 persons were admitted.

It seems that in 1974 political authorities showed a special interest in the professional formation of journalists. This seems to account also for the new law of the press. In the archives I have found a document entitled *Propositions Regarding the Unified Organization of Journalists' Political-Professional Education*, which reveals that an average of 100–120 students graduated from the regular and correspondence courses, and 50–60 journalists (“press workers”) from the postgraduate course. “Until the end of 1975” – pointed out the authors of the document – “all journalists (except those enrolled in different forms of higher state education, PhD students, or those on the verge of retirement) will have completed a further education programme.” Until 1978, all press workers were required to learn a foreign language and the modern techniques demanded by the Law of Press, for taking a test. In order to optimize the journalists' training process, the Union of Journalists, having branch organizations in Cluj, Timișoara, Iași, Brașov, Târgu Mureș, was also requested to collaborate, the branch organizations having to organize their own courses as well as Bucharest.

According to a decision of the Secretariat of the RCP's Central Committee, the Faculty of Journalism was to function as a methodology centre for the journalistic education organized in editorial offices, the essential function of the centre being to contribute to the “definition and realization of a unified conception for the professional training process within editorial offices, to raise continuously the ideological, scientific level of this activity.”²

Finally, the Faculty was to test 100–120 journalists each year and undertook to organize evening courses of stenography, photo-reportage, registering, and typewriting.

1975. This time the admission process was organized on the basis of the specifications formulated in the booklet entitled *Admission to Higher Education*, which contained indications on the subjects of the competition (Romanian literature and scientific socialism disciplines). The exams took place in the period 16–20 July for

¹ The readers were the censors of the General Management of Press and Printing (GMPP), the official name of Censor's Office.

² The dossier *Documents of Postgraduate Students. 1974–1975 Class*, page 24.

regular courses, and 22–25 July for correspondence courses. The above mentioned tests were preceded by a written eliminatory exam, named “the verification of journalistic abilities”. There were 52 applicants recommended by central and local press organs. Only 28 obtained the minimum average grade of 6, and after the literature and scientific socialism tests, only 22 had an average above 6. Among the admitted students there were 11 workers and technicians, 2 journalists, 1 UCY activist (former worker), 1 primary school teacher, 1 cultural activist (librarian), 1 civil servant, and 5 officers of the Ministry of National Defence; 19 RCP, 3 UCY members; 17 men, 5 women. Although the Secretariat of the RCP’s Central Committee authorized 30–40 places, only 22 were occupied. Therefore, between 5 and 10 September another entrance exam was organized. After the autumn competition, the results were 37 admitted students, out of whom 22 workers and technicians, 5 press workers, 2 UCY activists, 1 primary school teacher, 1 librarian, 1 civil servant, and 5 officers of the Ministry of National Defence. 31 were RCP, 6 UCY members; 30 were men, 7 women; 5 were Hungarian, 2 Germans.

From the RTV 3 were admitted to regular courses, 6 to correspondence courses, and 5 to the postgraduate course. The admission process to the postgraduate course consisted of the filling out of a questionnaire and an interview.

Here are some of the professors, who participated in the assessment of the applicants, most of them members of the Faculty of Journalism. In the journalistic abilities test: George Ionescu, Mircea Manea, Ion Șinca, Iosef Illes, E. Ionescu, Victor Frunză, D. Popa, Dezideriu Szilagyî. In the literature exam: Victor Vișinescu, I. Țârlea, Ion Haineș, Elena Zarăscu. In the scientific socialism (oral) exam: George Ionescu, Ion Oros, Ion Gălețanu, Mircea Manea, Magraon Vasilica, Dezideriu Szilagyî, Ion Șinca, Carmen Diaconescu, Iosif Illes. To the postgraduate course the admission was ensured by Nestor Ignat (head of committee), C. Niri, Victor Vișinescu, M. Mîciu, M. Băbuț, Mircea Ichim, T. Negulescu, Mircea Manea.

For the correspondence courses (four years long, as compared to the three years long regular ones) 40–50 places were authorized, but only 35 obtained an average above 5. Among them there were 11 workers and technicians, 10 press workers, 7 secondary school teachers, and 7 civil servants; there were 5 Hungarians and only 3 women. 17 worked in local press, 10 in newspaper editorial offices and at central magazines, 6 at the RTV, and 2 at Agerpres (Romanian Press Agency).

The Rector of the Academy was Leonte Răutu. Some of the professors at the Faculty of Journalism were: Ion Ianoși (aesthetics), Gheorghe Bulgăr (the language and style of press), Simona Popescu and E. Barbu (foreign languages), Ioan Oros and Ioniță Ștefan (scientific socialism), Ion Mărginean and R. Boda (sociology), Alexandru Oprea, Iuliu Țârlea and Ion Haineș (Romanian literature), Teodor Hristea and Victor Vișinescu (language and style), Virgil Măgureanu (political doctrines and political systems), M. Tudose (pedagogical practice), Nestor Ignat and Mihai Cernat (journalistic writing – social politics section). Rodica Șerbănescu and Constantin Amariței taught contemporary world press, Constantin Amariței and Mircea Manea journalistic creation (economics section), George Ionescu and Victoria Iliescu journalistic writing (external section), Ileana Ionescu, Victoria Bucur and Alexandru Starck RTV journalism, Ioan Petrescu and Rodica Șerbănescu typewriting, Maria Apostol and Georgiu Grigore the history of philosophical and social political thinking in Romania.

The list of scientific coordinators reveals that Ion Cîrje, Ion Bucheru, Ion Spălățelu, Dorel Dorian, Florin Rădulescu-Botică, Constantin Antip, A. Militz,

Alexandru Brad, Ion Găleteanu, George Ionescu, Marin Stoian, Radu Olaru, Ecaterina Oproiu, Ernst Breitenstein, Octavian Paler, Neagu Udroi, I. Dodea, and others also lectured here.¹

1976. The promoting of the Faculty of Journalism, as well as the search for potential candidates began on February 19. Preselections took place consisting of written and oral tests, carried out by experienced journalists in different editorial offices. Until the end of the campaign approximately 1200 young people had been tested in Bucharest, from among whom only 110 were selected (the editorial offices of central newspapers recruited 49 young people, RTV 20, etc.).²

In July, applicants had to pass an eliminatory exam of “journalistic abilities”, then the test of literature and socialism. 92 candidates received the necessary approbation to enter the competition, 89 entered, out of which 41 were admitted (34 workers and technicians, 2 UCY activists, 2 officers of the Ministry of National Defence, 2 civil workers, and 1 commercial worker; 33 RCP and 8 UCY members; 30 men and 11 women; 3 Hungarians and 3 Germans).

The second entrance exam for the regular courses took place between 1 and 3 October 1976. The results were announced on October 4, and on October 11 the courses started (34 applicants participated in the competition, out of whom 21 were chosen).

The recapitulative document (page 53) shows that for the correspondence courses 39 persons were recommended, 33 entered the competition, and 27 were admitted (12 workers and technicians, 8 press workers, 4 secondary school teachers, 2 civil servants, 1 officer of the Ministry of National Defence; 2 were Hungarians and 1 German; 11 worked in the RTV, 10 in central editorial offices, 5 in local editorial offices, and 1 in military press).³

To the postgraduate course in 1976 applicants were admitted on the basis of an oral exam (“regarding issues of political, professional, and general education”). 41 applicants took the examination (39 Romanians and 4 Hungarians; 30 men and 13 women; 4 workers, 1 lawyer, 2 engineers, 28 secondary school teachers, and 8 journalists) with ages between 25 and 50 years. 33 applicants had already been working as editors, 9 as readers in editorial offices, and 1 person as head of a newspaper department; 16 persons were from the local, 6 from the central press, 6 from the RTV, 5 from the Committee for Press and Printing, and 10 from the Editorial Centre. All were RCP members, and all 41 were admitted.⁴

On October 1, 1976, when the new premises of the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy was inaugurated in Bucharest (the present day Leu Student Complex), Nicolae Ceaușescu delivered a speech which stated that those who attended the courses of this institution had “to represent a detachment of militant communists animated by revolutionary passion, fighting for the new, for the realization of party and state policy”, and “the teaching staff of the Faculty of Journalism [had] to participate effectively in the editing of some magazines, county newspapers, helping to make these examples for the communist press”, in other words, journalism professors had to work effectively in press

¹ The dossier Documents of Students, 1975–1979.

² Students dossier, year 1976, page 2 – Note regarding the preselection of Bucharest applicants for the entrance examination of the Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy’s Faculty of Journalism – session July 1976.

³ Faculty of Journalism Dossier. Documents of Students, 1976–1980.

⁴ The Postgraduate Course dossier, 1976–1977.

“up to 40 percent”, activity which would have represented the “practical part” as compared to the students’ 30 percent.¹ Beginning with this year, the Faculty began to edit some school journals named *Reporter*, *Şantier*, *Meridiane*, and others.

During the following years no major reforms were made in the curriculum, the education system remaining mainly the same. Modifications were made especially with regard to the admission process.

We have mentioned above that in 1986 the Faculty of Journalism was transformed into a section of the *Institute for Training Cadres in Social-Political Leadership Issues*, within the framework of the Academy of Social-Political Studies (formerly Ştefan Gheorghiu), this being an illegal decision, since it infringed the dispositions of the governmental decision by which it had been founded. The institute was led at that time by the professors: economist Florin Balaure – Dean, philosopher Petru Pânzaru – Assistant Dean, who coordinated the activity of the Journalism Section, and economist Constantin Amariţei, Head of the Press Department. Beginning with 1987 the Section was led by Dumitru Titus Popa, who had a BA in law and was a journalist at *Scântea* daily paper.

In **1986** the admission process consisted of four exams – three written tests: political economy, scientific socialism, and the theory and practice of party life, plus an oral one, also named the theory and practice of party life. The examination took place between 16 and 23 April.²

The educational plan in September 1986 looked like this: **1st Year** – theory and practice of RCP life; dialectical and historical materialism; history of Romania; political economy (socialism); theory and practice of press; the history of philosophical and social political thinking in Romania; moments of the history of universal culture; logics (adapted to press); Romanian language and literature (adapted to press); economic and political geography of the world; foreign language; practice. **2nd Year** – theory and practice of party life; dialectical and historical materialism; political economy (capitalism, world economy, doctrines); the international communist, workers’, and democratic movement; sociology; economy, organizing and leading industrial and agricultural units; constructions, internal and external trade, services, and tourism; economic planning and prognosis; statistics, finances, credit, and monetary circulation; foreign language; the theory and practice of press; Romanian language and literature; practice. **3rd Year** – the theory and practice of party life; scientific socialism; contemporary political doctrines; dialectical and historical materialism; clashes of ideas in contemporary philosophical thought; the science of leadership; journalistic ideology and craft; aesthetics; sociology of mass media; foreign language; the economic-financial mechanism: external trade and international economic cooperation; practice in editorial offices. **4th Year** – journalistic ideology and craft; practice at daily newspapers; contemporary international relations; external policy of the Socialist Republic of Romania; state law and administration; elements of journalistic law; the socialist democracy and workers’ self-government; economic analysis; foreign language.

It must be remembered that each year a significant number of hours were dedicated to the practice in editorial offices.

¹ *Scântea*, no. 10,612, October 2, 1976, 1–2.

² Register of students. Journalism section. Regular course. Class of 1984–1988.

In the 1980s the entrance examination was organized in May each year, after the applicants had been selected by the county organizations of the Romanian Communist Party, having been recommended by the (village, town, municipal, and county) organizations of the Union of Communist Youth, by trade unions, and newspaper editorial offices. Approximately a month before the examination, two professors of the Academy of Social-Political Studies were sent to each county to examine the applicants' dossiers and to interview them. If they made a good impression on the committee, namely that they demonstrated familiarity with the issues of press, they received an enrolment note to the entrance examination. The tests of the entrance exam, in the institution's final years, had no connection with the orientation of the faculty, since candidates were examined on the basis of a bibliography only a part of which was studied in secondary school: *the theory and practice of party life*, written test (familiarity with important party documents, the structure, organization, and functioning of the party, election procedures, etc. was requested). An oral exam followed in the same discipline, then a written exam in *political economy*, *economic policy*, and one in *scientific socialism*. According to the average mark they obtained, the applicants were admitted to one of the 20 places at the regular course (there were another 20 places for distance education).

The applicants were selected from among the activists of the Union of Communist Youth – in 1987, for example 1 translator, 1 locksmith, 1 hairdresser, 1 bookbinder, 1 electrician, 1 forest worker, and 14 activists (secretaries for propaganda and cultural issues, county instructors, managers of community centres, etc.). We find a similar distribution in the case of the last entrance exam organized in May 1989. Nonetheless, it is also true that sometimes poets, prose writers, journalists with only secondary education, officers, non-commissioned officers, members of literary circles, outside contributors of newspapers and cultural magazines also became students of the “Journalism Section”. Here graduated Dinu Săraru, Mircea Dinescu and many other personalities who distinguished themselves in different fields. Here studied for various periods (sometimes for two months, in refresher courses) almost every journalist. The lists containing their names, the marks they obtained, the title of their dissertations, the recommendations of party or UCY organizations, etc. are in the dossiers we consulted, as well as in the registers of students.

The last bell...

We are going to present a fragment of the last educational programme for the class of 1989–1990 (class of 1989–1993) of the Journalism Section, **1st year** – Institute for Training Cadres in Social-Political Leadership Issues, Academy of Social-Political Studies in Relation to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party.

I. Foreign language – 153 hours

History of Romania – 153 hours

II. History of civilizations – 136 hours

The international communist, workers', and democratic movement – 136 hours

The political economy of socialism – 136 hours.

III. Writing technique – 119 hours

IV. The branches of economy (industry, constructions, transport, trade, tourism) – 85 hours

Theory and practice of the Romanian Communist Party's life – 85 hours.

V. Logic – 51 hours

Techniques of press (typewriting) – 51 hours

Dialectical and historical materialism – 51 hours

Vi. Practice – 30 days during the summer plus 6 days during the academic year in editorial offices of the central press. The 6 days of practice during the academic year correspond to the course the theory and practice of the Romanian Communist Party's life.

One may observe that special attention was given to the acquisition of writing skills, with the days of practice the hours dedicated to this subject rising to 167.

Approximately 80 percent of the works recommended in different bibliographies consisted of Nicolae Ceaușescu's speeches, reports, etc. The bibliography in writing technique had no monograph belonging strictly to this field, students being most often directed to writings on stylistics (Gh. Bulgăr), linguistics (Al. Graur), vocabulary (V. Șerban and I. Evseev), argumentation (E. Năstășel and I. Ursu), lexical exercises (Mihai Andrei and Iulian Ghiță), but also to books signed by Ion Biberi, V. Iancu, Pierre Fontanier, Andre Leroi-Courhan, Jaques Claret, Karel Capek, W. Empson, and others. None of the professors teaching this discipline appears in the bibliography of the course.

In the 2nd year of study the distribution of disciplines was the following:

I. Foreign language – 153 hours

Historical materialism. The revolutionary conception of the Romanian Communist Party on the world and life – 153 hours

Political economy (capitalism, world economy, contemporary economic doctrines) – 153 hours.

II. Writing technique – 136 hours

Theory and practice of the Romanian Communist Party's life – 136 hours

III. The branches of economy (industry, constructions, transport, trade, services, tourism)
– 102 hours

IV. History of civilizations – 68 hours

The history of philosophical and social-political thinking in Romania – 68 hours

V. Techniques of press (typewriting) – 34 hours

VI. Practice in editorial offices – 30 days.

Approximately 80% of the bibliography contains Nicolae Ceaușescu's speeches, but also fragments from Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. More rarely, references to texts by A. Gramsci, C. Borgeanu, György Lukács, D. Ghișe, Al. Tănase, Mircea Eliade, George Călinescu, A. Oțetea and others. In writing technique the bibliographic references were the same as in the first year. This most important course had both applicative and explicative lessons, the department specialized on this subject also editing a workbook.

The institution's character was rather unstable – the initial period of radical communism was followed by another, when the university curricula were more adequate to the Faculty's speciality, while in the last years the system of over-ideologized educational plans returned. The educational offer of the Faculty of Journalism must be

judged against its context – neither did the curricula of other faculties fare better, since everything bore the mark of the official ideology.

I shall illustrate the scientific level of lectures with some quotations from: *Journalistic Ideology and Skill*. The textbook was printed for 3rd–5th year students, regular and correspondence course, Academy of Social-Political Studies, Institute for Training Cadres in Social-Political Leadership Issues, Journalism Section, Bucharest, 1988. No author is mentioned on the book (it is unsigned), and it contains an argumentative crescendo, measured out so that it may make the students agree with the point of view argued for. Here are some selected passages given in the order they appear in the text:

“The journalist must be a politically, ideologically, and professionally qualified man, able to perceive, select, interpret, and communicate the living tumult of reality, to observe the new elements of political and social life, of human thought and attitude, immediate and long run tendencies, political, social, and spiritual causes and effects, and their real, profound sense for man and society...” (p. 1). The textbook abounds in evaluations such as “the journalist is a real mediator between the facts of reality and human interest” or “the journalist can be considered a real decipherer in social communication, a man able to discover and to affirm the truth of actions, events right at the moment when they take place” (p. 4). In the training process “the discovery and elimination of journalistic simplism” is attempted, simplism occurring due to 1. opacity, “the inability to see and present reality, and to understand its political, ideological, literary value”, and 2. “penury of ideas”, the consequence of “deficient thinking, the lack of the elementary ability to penetrate ideas, to point out the significance, the complex sense of the life fact” (p. 4). Many of the anonymous author’s statements defy logic – “militantism with tendency must be distinguished and guarded from tendentiousness (...) militantism with tendency is synonymous with a progressive, constructive human attitude”.

Textbooks signed by their authors were also reproduced – for example, *The RCP’s View on the Character and Function of Press. The Tasks of Our Press in the Present Stage* by Nicolae Dragoș, Dumitru Târcob, and Alexandru Brad. The authors cited in the bibliography Nicolae Ceaușescu four times, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels once, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin once, Dumitru Popescu three times, then Constantin Antip, Octavian Butoi, Ion Cumpănașu, H. Dona, Eugen Florescu, Nestor Ignat, Petru Pânzaru, Neagu Udriou, Marshall McLuhan, as well as four official documents issued by the RCP. The textbook was published in 1983.

The end of the regime, a new stage in journalistic education

In December 1989, until the Ceaușescu couple was arrested, the Faculty (Section) was abandoned by its students. Some of them – George Cojocariu, Mihai Chira, Ovidiu Iordache, and others – later made some initiatory steps for the continuation of journalistic studies, evidently, in a new institutional structure. The first gesture was the transmission of a communiqué to this effect by the Romanian Television. Discussions followed with Paul Cornea, State Secretary in the Ministry of Education, and with Gheorghe Manole, who coordinated upper education from the part of the National Salvation Front. This group was joined by professors Dumitru Popa, Ion Haineș, and Dan Huliera. In the end the agreement was reached to draw up the documents necessary to re-establish the Faculty of Journalism. On January 19, 1990, the

Romanian Government's Decision No. 220 decreed the dissolution of the Academy of Social-Political Studies (the name of the former Ștefan Gheorghiu Academy) and the founding at the University of Bucharest of the "Faculty of Journalism – with four year long studies – in order to create the cadres necessary to social formation by the means of mass communication, as well as the personnel who will work in the press, television, radio, and which will take over the entire material basis of the former faculty of journalism" (article 3). The decision decreed that "For the present students in the period January 20–31, 1990 there will be a new entrance exam before a commission consisting of the representatives of the press, culture, and the Ministry of Education. The students who will pass this entrance exam will take their winter exams in the period February 1–28, 1990, according to the year of study they are in. The students who will demonstrate the minimal knowledge necessary to a student in journalism will be allowed to enrol."

With only a few exceptions, the students declared admitted were enrolled to the new Faculty of Journalism.

Appendix I

Possible subjects for the diploma works

of the students enrolled in the regular (class 1985–1989) and correspondence (class 1984–1989) courses, Academy of Social-Political Studies, Institute for Training Cadres in Social-Political Leadership Issues, February 1988.

Subjects proposed by the Department of Theory and Practice of Press:

Journalistic initiatives, experiences, and actions regarding the self-assertion of the party as a leading political force, the vital centre of our entire society.

Making people aware through press of the threefold quality of working people – owners, producers, and beneficiaries.

New requirements and exigencies in discussing the cultural-artistic phenomenon in the spirit of the National Party Conference tasks.

Press – as a promoter of the principles, norms, and values of the communist way and style of life.

The combat of press against retrograde, mystical ideas and conceptions, nationalistic, chauvinistic, racist manifestations.

Press as a platform of revolutionary workers' democracy.

The ideological message of socialist press. Journalistic genres and modalities for transmitting the message.

New modalities to discuss internal party life in the press.

Requirements and criteria for evaluating the efficiency of the political, journalistic message.

Originality and creativity in press activity. New forms in the discussion of the actual issues of revolutionary socialist awareness.

The promotion of discussions, of dialogue regarding ideas in the ideological columns of our press – specific modality for increasing the political awareness.

Social-civic problems in written and audio-visual press: importance, thematic orientations, efficient modalities of the journalistic discussion.

Increasing the communicative power of the journalistic text.

The evolution of the democracy idea in democratic, communist, and workers' press in Romania.

The role of press in affirming the aspirations for national and social unity and liberty (the 1900–1944 period).

The new international order between urgencies and possibilities. Propositions and initiatives by Romania, by President Nicolae Ceaușescu regarding demilitarization and peace, the instauration of a new international order.

Appendix II

Subjects for reports, notes, inquiries, articles, interviews, and other journalistic materials related to the subjects of the Foreign Trade Course (1989).

Note: Three subjects will be assigned to each student in order to be realized and discussed during the semester when the foreign trade course is held in 3rd year, journalism.

“1. The most important directions in developing the country's foreign trade relations in the years of the five-year plan for 1986–1990 established in the documents of the 13th Congress of the RCP.

2. Problems of collaboration with the socialist countries, members of the Comecon in the light of recent party documents (on examples of units with a part of the export based on the clearing relations between socialist countries).

3. Economic relations with developing countries. Problems and perspectives (On the example of cooperation or the export of certain products to the market of these countries, with documentation at Romagimex and other productive units with export to developing countries).

4. The impact of the common Market's commercial regulations on the Romanian export to the markets of the EEC (European Economic Community) and the measures to counterbalance the effects (documentation at the level of producer and exporter FCTB and CONFEX).

5. Current tasks and ways to restructure the production for export, in accord with the objectives established by the 13th Congress of the RCP (on examples of economic units with export tasks).

6. The modernization of Romanian products intended for export – the condition of increasing competitiveness on the external market.

7. The reasonable regulation of imports, ways for substituting these for our own products, current tasks with regard to the decrease of the country's monetary efforts.

8. Introducing new products to be a substitute for import – the main preoccupation of the producers for export.

9. Import as compensation – a way to diminish the monetary efforts and to secure the necessary resources for the national economy...”

Appendix III

The booklet promoting the Faculty of Journalism (1984)

“The faculty prepares cadres with upper studies necessary in press, radio-television, and editorial offices. The length of studies: 4 years in the regular course and 5 years in the

correspondence course. Young people with journalistic abilities who have already worked for at least two years in industrial enterprises, communal mass organizations, or education are admitted on a competitive basis. The correspondence courses are dedicated exclusively to persons without upper education working in press, editorial offices, radio television.

The curriculum ensures an organic combination between *training in the domain of social sciences* by means of the disciplines: dialectical and historical materialism, political economy, scientific socialism, the science of leading the socialist society, sociology, ethics, etc.; *general education* by means of the disciplines: Romanian literature, world literature, history of culture and civilization, aesthetics, foreign languages; and *specialized training* by means of the disciplines: the theory of journalistic genres, writing newspapers and radio and television programmes, the history of Romanian press, contemporary international press, elements of press theory, polygraphic techniques, radio and television technology, stenography, etc. Special attention is given to students' practice which amounts to approximately 50 percent of all classes.

The programme's structure also offers students the possibility to begin specialization according to their abilities and options, as well as the necessities of the beneficiary editorial offices:

- a. *on press types*: written press, radio and television, agency;
- b. *on the main editorial areas*: the economic section, the politico-social section, the foreign policy section;
- c. *on activities characteristic to press work*: secretarial activity in editorial offices, photo report, cameraman work.

After graduation students obtain a BA diploma in journalism.

Within the faculty function:

1. *The section for training journalists from developing countries*. The length of studies is 3 years. The students who hold a scholarship offered by the Romanian Socialist Republic can specialize on written press, radio and television, or press agency. The language of the courses can be Romanian, French, or English depending on the students' choice.
2. *Postgraduate course*, 1 year long, which is intended for the further training of cadres with university studies working in press, radio-television, Agerpres, and editorial offices.
3. *Training and further education course for translators-interpreters*. 8 month long regular course, the student being withdrawn from production and 4–6 months long course the student not being withdrawn from production (for translators having a better knowledge of foreign languages).
4. *The methodological centre for perfecting the journalists' political-professional training*, which has as its main tasks:
 - the further training of leading cadres in press, radio television, and editorial offices;
 - to offer methodological and didactic assistance under the form of plans and programmes for organized education in editorial offices, or for journalists' individual study."

Translated by Ágnes Korondi