

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF JOURNALISTIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA (1966-1991)

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Abstract

In the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova (SSRM) journalistic higher education appeared in Chişinău in the '1960s at the Faculty of Philology from the State University, being conceived both as a vocational and ideological training process. Despite this fact, the journalistic higher education during the Soviet period played a significant role in the subsequent protection of the concept of university training based on new and democratic principles. Between 1966-1991, many important goals were achieved such as: the conceptualisation of the journalistic teaching process; the establishment of the teaching staff and the intellectualization of the personnel policy in this field; the creation of the journalistic national book collection etc. These aspects laid the foundation for the journalistic contemporary university teaching in the Republic of Moldova, contributing to the creation of its identity and national profile.

Keywords: *journalistic higher education, teaching process, curriculum, teaching book, teaching staff, journalistic research, development stages.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The creation process of higher education in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova, including that from the field of journalism, started during the Soviet regime due to purely ideological reasons. Despite the fact that economic and social arguments were presented, such as the need to cover the lack of professionals, useful in the reestablishment of an economy destroyed by World War II, the actions of building some fields of study/faculties resulted from the policies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to sovietise the adult population from the territory by changing its mentality and to train individuals according to the new, pro-Soviet views.

Researcher Liliana Rotaru, in the study *Soviet policies in the field of higher education in the Soviet*

Socialist Republic of Moldova, states that "the actions of reestablishment, re-evacuation and creation of different types of teaching institutions, levels and forms of organisation, that of training the rural and urban youth and of training teachers, in general, and of school teachers for the SSRM, especially" (ROTARU, 2019) were initiated for "the socialist transformation of the economy and of the culture of the public, meaning for the creation of a nationalised economy and the setting-up of the dominance of the party-state in SSRM" (ROTARU, 2019).

In order to fortify their positions and expand their influence in the territory, the Soviet regime needed a certain social support, on which it can base itself in the process of implementing the policy of the party and of achieving its strategic goals. That respective social support was to be created by combining the efforts and by supporting a number of state structures and institutions, the superior school included, the main mission in training/retraining the natives, in the sense of creating "the Soviet people" – with "a common socialist country and a unique economic basis, a unique social and class structure, a Marxist-Leninist conception, with a common purpose – the formation of communism, the same spiritual and psychological character traits" (CAŞU, 2000).

Soviet higher education was developed both as a professional and ideological training process which was to catalyse the formation of "homo Sovieticus". "The Soviet power identified exactly in the superior school one of the mechanisms of forming this new individual: the mission of the higher education institutions was to prepare Soviet specialists with higher education who

assimilated the Marxist-Leninist theory and who were strongly connected to the people, so that they could play a significant and responsible role in our people's struggle for the formation of the communist society" (ROTARU, 2019).

Therefore, the creation of journalistic higher education in SSRM was not an exception and it was oriented mainly towards the formation of ideologies – opinion leaders who had to promote the policies of the Communist Party, to mass disseminate the party's ideas and to organise the masses in order to bring the strategic goals of the Soviet regime to life.

The journalist higher education appeared in the '1960s, being capitalised exclusively at the Faculty of Philology from the State University in Chişinău. From an institutional perspective, the development of this type of higher education can be divided into three essential stages, as following:

- 1966-1969 – the training stage based on field of study, at the Faculty of Philology;
- 1969-1980 – the training stage based on field of study, at the same faculty;
- 1980 – 1991 – the training stage at the Faculty particular to the field of study.

The decision to start in 1966, at the Faculty of Philology from the Moldova State University, a new field of study, directed towards the professional training of future journalists was determined by the situation of those times. Although the arguments were due to the deficit of professional-journalists and the increased number of autochthonous publications in the '1950s and '1960s, the logic for starting journalistic higher education stems from perspective strategic reasons, with long-term actions, oriented towards the formation of a new collective Soviet perspective. In 1966, in the first year of study at the Journalism field of study, there was a number of 25 enrolled students and, from the students enrolled in the second year an academic group was formed that was to be trained according to the journalistic field.

The teacher university training for mass-media on the basis of field of study existed up to 1969, when at the same faculty, a journalism field of study was created. In the same year, the Journalism department was created, which ensured the teaching of specialised subjects.

Valentin Clobuţkii was the first head of department. As a result, the format of the journalistic university teaching was revised, being conceptualised on the basis of speciality. Despite this fact, journalistic training during that time did not have an autonomous concept or a personal identity, but it was strongly influenced by the philology field of study, both from a functional perspective and from a methodological aspect. The first graduates were awarded a triple qualification: philologist, teacher of Moldovan language and literature and journalist.

Basic journalistic university teaching has existed in SSRM for 13 years. At the end of the '1970s, there were teachers from three departments teaching the future journalists: from the Department of the Theory and practice of the Soviet press; from the Department of the History of press, TV and radio and from the Department for editorial activity.

The first Faculty of Journalism in SSRM was founded on March 24, 1980, a year in which there was a qualitative change from field of study to Faculty. The first dean of the Faculty of Journalism was Gheorghe Gorincioi and he remembered: "At the beginning of February, 1980, I was invited to the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party in Moldova (CPM), where I spoke to Ivan Calin, secretary of the Central Committee and with Mihail Platon, head of the Science and Teaching section from the Central Committee. After some time, I was invited to a talk with Vasile Cherdivarenco, Ministry of Higher Education. During these meetings I understood that I might be assigned as the dean of the future Faculty of Journalism. From these talks it become clear that the prerogative of assigning the dean of the faculty did not belong to the management of the university, but to the Central Committee of the Communist Party from Moldova and to the Ministry of Education".

During that period, in all higher education institutions from SSRM appointment or dismissal from management positions was made with the agreement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and of the Ministry of Education. Candidates were assessed very rigorously, especially in terms of their loyalty towards the Communist Party, while their human, organisational and professional skills

represented only some supplementary information. An important criterion was the political belonging of the candidates: the management positions were attributed only to party members. This staff policy was also applied to the Faculty of Journalism from the State University in Chişinău. "The teachers were managed by well-known scientists not only in Moldova, but also in the entire Soviet Union. Therefore, the department for the Theory and Practice of Press was led by prof. Andrei Okorokov, PhD in history, former correspondent for the "Pravda" newspaper in the People's Republic of China. Head of the History of Press department was prof. Valentin Clobuţkii, PhD. in history, former head of section at the republican newspaper "Sovietskaya Moldavia" and correspondent of the Moscow newspaper "Literaturnaya gazeta". The third department of Editorial Activity was led by the well-known linguist Ion Mocreac, PhD. in philology and former dean of the Faculty of Philology, from the Moldova State University, during 1966-1975".

The information regarding the creation of the Faculty of Journalism at Moldova State University appeared in the "Pravda" union newspaper, the press organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The interest of the union newspaper for this regional event proved the importance that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union awarded to the humanistic university teaching, in general, and to journalistic teaching, in particular. More than any other type of higher education, the one from the field of humanistic sciences was profoundly ideologized, since it had to train specialists who, in their turn, had to train the critical mass of people who were to unconditionally support the decisions of the Communist Party, to achieve the goals set in various plenary meetings and congresses, to support and to actively participate in all the activities organised by it. Researcher Igor Caşu stated that: "the Soviet regime needed some social support, that was to be created through "the education and re-education of the population (...) in the sense of training "the new individual" and to integrate him in the supra-ethnic identity - "the Soviet people" (CAŞU, 2000). According to the educational policies of the times, the Faculty of Journalism had the historical mission

of preparing "professional teachers", capable of correctly and plenary broadcast Soviet activities and the decisions of the Communist Party and to make propaganda for the Soviet way of life. Namely, their mission was the following:

- to promote official ideologies;
- to broadcast and implement the instructions given by the power;
- to organise and mobilise the masses with the purpose of determining them to exert the decisions of the power;
- to educate the masses according to the new communist principles;
- to celebrate the cult of the supreme leader (STEPANOV, 2012).

At the advice of the hierarchical superior instances, all the management forums of the country, including those of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, supported and directly contributed to the founding of the new Faculty. The Faculty of Journalism was also supported by the managers of the most important media institutions in the Republic of Moldova - Mihail Eremia, editor in chief of the "Moldova Socialistă" newspaper, Stepan Lozan, president of the State Committee for Television and Radiobroadcast, Mihail Guzun, editor in chief of the "Tinerimea Moldovei Valentin Patraş" newspaper, Vitalie Atamanenco, secretary responsible for the Journalists' Union in Moldova and editor in chief of the "Viaţa satului" newspaper, Gheorghe Marin, vice-president of the State Committee for Publishing Houses, Printing and Book Commerce, Vasile Lanciu, manager of the Publishing House of the Central Committee, etc.

The journalistic university studies in SSRM took place in two languages: Moldovan and Russian. Unlike the other fields, where the number of groups who studied in Russian was usually higher than of those that studied in Romanian, at the Journalism field of study the number of students who studied in Romanian was either equal or greater than that of the students who studied in Russia.

The number of students annually enrolled at the Faculty of Journalism in Chişinău was approximately the same because "admission for higher education in SSRM was strictly directed by the Ministry of Public Education. The number of students that were to be enrolled was

established yearly for each field of study" (DOLGHI, 2015). From the moment of its foundation, the Faculty of Journalism enrolled 50 students every year: 25 students who learned in Romanian and 25 students who learned in Russian. The situation changed starting with 1987, when the number of students increased by 50%, amounting to 75 people. Among them, 50 studied in Romanian and 25 in Russian.

Therefore, the dynamics of the contingent of students enrolled at the journalistic field of study was determined both by the necessity of teachers for the press institutions of the country and by the "propaganda policies of the Soviet state regarding the Marxist-Leninist ideologies and by the political realities of the period" (DOLGHI, 2015).

Therefore, despite the fact that it was profoundly ideologized, the higher education teaching in the field of journalism from the Republic of Moldova played an essential role in the subsequent projection of the concept of university training based on new and democratic principles, which appeared at the beginning of the '1990s. Therefore, between 1966-1991 a number of objectives were achieved, which laid the foundation for the contemporary journalistic higher education, among which one can enumerate: the conceptualisation of the teaching activity at the Journalism field of study; the formation of the teaching staff which ensured the training of future journalists; the formation of the journalistic book collection; the beginning of the autochthonous journalistic research etc. Due to the major significance attributed to the development of the journalistic contemporary higher education, we shall now describe these activities in more details.

2. THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE TEACHING PROCESS AT THE JOURNALISTIC FIELD OF STUDY

The conceptualisation of the teaching process at the journalistic field of study took place thanks to the activities of defining the curriculum, the study subjects and the methods and principles of teaching the subjects. The curriculum used by the first journalism graduates was established based on the one from the Philology field of

study. As a result, the two curricula were almost similar so that the future journalists learnt the same things as the future philologists, up to 80%. Time was required in order to identify the optimal proportion between the journalistic subjects and those of general knowledge, in order to establish a specific pattern of journalistic training that would destroy certain stereotypes, such as the fact that journalism is only a compartment or, in the best case scenario, a field of study belonging to the Faculty of Philology. This separation was possible to achieve only after the Journalism field of study got separated from the Philology field of study, because the Faculty of Journalism was created.

At that moment, at the beginning of the '1980s, the concept of journalistic university teaching was finalised as a teaching phenomenon with proper identity. Out of ineptness or not, the yearly curriculum for the Journalism field of study continued to contain many subjects from the philology field, such as: Russian literature, universal literature and Romanian literature, subjects that were taught for 10 semesters in a row, meaning during all 5 years of study; stylistics was studied only two semesters, meaning one academic year; the theory of literature, the theory and practice of translation was studied only one semester. Therefore, one can say that the academic path of a student in the Journalistic field of study included at least 42 subjects that belonged to the philological field.

We must admit that the possibilities of the teachers to interfere with the curricula were very limited and that, during that time, the general concept for each type of teaching was developed by Moscow and subsequently implemented in all the regions of the Soviet Union. The teaching processes from different institutions, faculties and fields of study, although they had the same ideological concept, varied slightly from a structural-functional perspective. The differences were however insignificant and they came from the particularities and properties of the present professional field. In our case, the existing state of things in the journalistic field in SSRM was important: the system of mass information means; the number of press institutions, agencies, publishing houses, radio and television

channels, the structure of the informational market, the information potential etc.

The journalistic higher education teaching in SSRM included three fields: (1) *the written press*, (2) *radio and television*, (3) *the editorial activity* (the latter stemmed from the view about the mass media system, according to which the book (publishing house) was considered one of its constitutive elements, together with newspapers, magazines, news agencies, radio and TV stations).

3. THE FORMATION OF THE TEACHING STAFF WHICH ENSURED TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE JOURNALISTS

The dedicated teaching staff included both the scientific-teaching staff and journalist-practitioners. The deficit of high quality scientific-teaching staff for the journalism field of study represented the main problem at first and it was solved with the help of PhDs and PhD candidates mainly from the fields of philology and history. The teaching staff for the journalism field of study was comprised of:

- teachers with a PhD in history such as: Valentin Clobuțrii, Stanislav Orlov, Tatiana Ivanova, Efim Romanciuc;
- teachers with a PhD in philology such as: Ion Mocreac, Dumitru Coval, Vasile Pojoga, Irina Zatușevskaya, Ana Monastârskaya;
- teachers with a PhD in other fields such as: Boris Vizitiu, Boris Evladov, etc.

The teaching staff of the faculties with a humanistic profile in SSRM started to get completed with local teachers in the '1960s, following the graduation of the first series of students taught in the humanistic profile and who were trained under the requirements of the totalitarian regime, in strict correspondence with the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Therefore, in the seventh decade of the last century, there already existed a layer of autochthonous intellectuality of humanistic nature, formed among the locals and which ensured university training in this field. Despite all this, the Soviet regime continued to send, in all its territories, teachers taught at Russian higher education institutions, especially from Moscow and Leningrad (Sankt-Petersburg). "Triggered by the imperative of the Soviet state

to create a Soviet intellectual in Moldova, that spoke Russian, the Ministry of Higher Education from Russia regularly sent the teaching-scientific staff from higher education and research institutions, sometimes the representatives of the state and party organs, in order to complete the academic staffs of the superior schools from SSRM" (ROTARU, 2017).

Fortunately, this staff policy did not negatively influence the journalistic teaching from SSRM, since, in the '1970s, at the moment of its creation, in this region there were enough highly qualified autochthonous human resources, capable of ensuring the teaching process. The annexation of teachers from other scientific centres in order to ensure journalistic university training was done mostly through nominal transfers. The scientific-teaching staff was annexed not necessarily to teach, but to manage the teaching process and most of them were firstly appointed and later on chosen for different management positions. An eloquent example for this is that of prof. Serghei Okorokov, PhD in history, who, before being transferred to Chișinău, worked in Moscow as the head of the Journalistic Department within the Higher Party School belonging to the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

As it was already specified, the teaching staff which ensured the training of future journalists included both specialists with teaching-scientific degrees, which usually taught the theoretical and ideological subjects and the representatives of the journalistic guild, which ensured the teaching of the specialized fields of study. However, besides the teachers an important number of journalists-practitioners was included in the teaching process, among which: Boris Evladov, correspondent for the "Pravda" union newspaper; Efim Romanciuc, director of the "Lumina" Publishing House; Filip Crulițchi, vice-president of the State Committee for Television and Radiobroadcasting; Tatiana Ivanova, director of the "Timpul" Publishing House; Mihail Guzun, editor in chief of the "Tinerimea Moldovei" republican newspaper; Valentin Clobuțchii, editor in chief of the "Sovietskaya Moldavia" republican newspaper, etc. It is worth mentioning the fact that the practice in order to get accepted into the teaching

process of journalist-practitioners also preserved its novelty in the contemporary journalistic higher education, labour market exponents still being co-opted to hold laboratory classes, during which students train their creative and professional skills (GUZUN, n.d.).

4. THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL JOURNALISTIC TEACHING BOOK COLLECTION

The teaching book collection included manuals, analytical programmes and lessons – absolutely necessary works for the proper development of the study process. During this time, journalistic teaching papers were developed by autochthonous teachers and, more importantly, most of the works appeared in Romanian. At the beginning all manuals were in Russian since they were edited in Moscow and signed by Russian researchers. Starting with the beginning of the journalistic higher education and up to 1991, a number of 32 methodical papers appeared at the Moldova State University from Chişinău, all signed by autochthonous teachers.

Among the journalistic methodical papers, one can enumerate those from 1978: a manual for the subject *The history of the press from Bessarabia*, a paper with teaching materials for the subject *The theory and practice of translation* and an analytical programme for the same subject (DUMENIUC & POJOGA, 1978; POJOGA, 1978). Following a period of three years in which no paper was published, the process of developing methodological guides was restarted in the following six years. Between 1982-1988 7 papers were edited, meaning one paper per year. The development and publishing rhythm of teaching materials intensified itself at the end of the '1980s, a fact which was due to the institutional reform known as *glasnost*, initiated by M. Gorbaciov, the leader of the Soviet Union from those days. "Through "glasnost", translated as "transparency", they tried to gradually moralise the society since it started to rediscover the freedom of thought, speech and religion, the partial lifting of the censorship of press and the free denunciation of various abuses" (POPA, n.d.).

As a result of this reform important changes took place and various fields were restructured, including that of education, which has undergone a series of changes, both of a conceptual and structural-functional nature. In the journalistic higher education, the curriculum was changed through the replacement of some old subjects with new ones: the training format was reconceptualised with the introduction of some training laboratories for the development of creative abilities; the number of theoretical subjects was reduced in comparison to the number applicative subjects. All these changes brought new tasks for the teachers, including that of ensuring a teaching support for the subjects recently introduced in the curriculum. The teachers from the Journalism faculty tried to deal with this challenge by intensifying the development rhythm of the teaching manuals and therefore a number of papers was published as following: in 1989 – 5 in 1990 – 11 and in 1991 – 8.

The majority of the teaching manuals which appeared in SSRM during 1974-1991 presents the following characteristics:

- they possessed a profoundly ideologized content;
- they had a theoretical nature since the curricula did not include the laboratories as a professional training form, the formative component focusing only on seminars and lectures;
- their volume was reduced, up to 3 papers per author;
- they were edited in small numbers of around 50 copies each.

Despite all this, the majority of the teaching manuals published in SSRM, during 1974-1991 had a significant contribution to the conceptual development of the journalistic higher education and they represented very important works for the graduates of the Faculty of Journalism from the State University in Chişinău.

5. THE INITIATION OF THE AUTOCHTHONOUS JOURNALISTIC RESEARCH

In SSRM, the scientific research of the means of mass information was concentrated at the State

University in Chişinău. At first, research took place within the Journalism Department from the Faculty of Philology and later on, starting with 1980, within the Faculty of Journalism. Research focused on three fundamental fields: The theory and practice of the press, The history of the press and The editorial activity. The first research dimension focused on the investigation of the potential, impact and effects of the press in the society, on media phenomena and processes and on journalistic preproduction, production and postproduction. The second research dimension focused on the investigation of the appearance contexts, development frames and the development aspects and conditions of the press, radio, television, news agencies and publishing houses. The third research dimension, despite the fact that it focused on the language of the press whose main research topic it represented, also had connotations and clearly philological research interests.

The first scientific works, dedicated exclusively to journalism, appeared in SSRM at the middle or the '1970s, more precisely in 1974. Up to that moment the means of mass information were either analysed only tangentially or they were analysed either in a philological or historical context. Therefore, between 1974-1991, 170 papers entered the scientific circuit of SSRM, among which: monographies, personal reports on PhD theses, articles in scientific journals, scientific articles published in newspapers.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In SSRM, the journalistic higher education, as well as all the other types of higher education from the humanistic field, was exposed to drastic censorship, being trapped in the general movement of forming the new socialist type individual. Basically, the teaching process had a static format and therefore the journalistic higher education remained almost intact until the

beginning of the '1990s, when the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova became independent from the Soviet Union and it turned into the Republic of Moldova. However, the influence of that period in the development of the journalistic national higher education, in particular, and of the contemporary media sector in Moldova, in general, cannot be neglected, since, during this time, the bases for the journalistic contemporary higher education were laid in the Republic of Moldova and this led to the projection of its identity and national profile.

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