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## Romanian Journalism– a Few Aspects

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**Abstract:** We can only discuss about Romanian press, according to some sources, since 1820. However, the growth of Romanian press was so fast that we cannot imagine such a rhythm nowadays. The battles in newspaper pages have often been noisy and long. Some journalists have fought against *parliamentarianism* and others against *universal vote*, since these gave illiterates the power to decide who can lead the country. Another fierce battle that took place in the press was the one that discussed on which side Romania should fight in the First World War. Terrible battles also took place on the pages of newspapers regarding the issue of “affirmation of feminine personality”. The same happened in the case of *honour battle*. Today, the headlines are different, but now, just as in the past decades, Romanian journalists cannot even agree on issues that are of national interest.

**Keywords:** History of the press; nationalism; journalism; duel; bio politics

### Romanians Were Born Journalists

Romanians like the *press*. They like to make it, to read it, to comment on it and, if necessary, to fight it. In the eyes of the Romanian press consumer, journalists are either “masters”, or “punks”. After choosing his “side”, Romanians are very hard to convince that the journalists they prefer are not the holders of absolute truth. At the same time, a journalist can never truly know his relation with the readers (or with the watchers), as A.P. Samson has shown almost four decades ago. The author claims that the reader, having a *curious psychology*, judges a newspaper or an article following criteria that are, most of the times, different from those of a professional. The power of habit, with an important role in this issue, *sometimes acts in favour of the newspaper*, and *other times in favour of the signature*. However, Samson emphasises that the *history of the press indicates a higher probability of the first alternative*. (Teodorașcu, 2014, pp. 54-55) We can find references to this issue in Pamfil Șeicaru. Speaking about his plans for the newspaper he had founded in 1928 (*Curentul*) (*The Current*), he shows that one of his greatest wishes is to make the publication *a perfect mirror of the entire Romanian life*. (Teodorașcu, 2014, p. 177) For Șeicaru what mattered was that the newspaper as a whole, not the signatures in it. According to the same journalist, a newspaper must be capable of living even without its founding journalists. (Teodorașcu, 2014, p. 195) Such examples were the newspapers *Adevărul* (*The Truth*) and *Universul* (*The Universe*) that remained among the preferences of readers even after changing management. (Teodorașcu, 2014, pp. 45-51) We must also mention that the journalistic activity of Pamfil Șeicaru is the clear proof that, sometimes, journalists remain faithful to a journalist even when he leaves their favourite newspaper. (Teodorașcu, 2014, pp. 176-177)

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The success of a press institution may also vanish even if the teams that created it do not change. *Epoca (The Era)* and *Lupta (The Fight)*, for example, made a sensation on the Romanian journalism scene only in a particular political context. After the government changed, the glory years of the two publications finished, since they were fighting the policies of the liberal government. (Teodorașcu, 2017, pp. 566-567). The strong connection between political parties and the press is emphasized too by C. Rădulescu-Motru, who claimed that the press is the trustworthy help of statesmen in their fight with political adversaries. (Teodorașcu, 2017, p. 566). Speeches referring to the activity of the press that were held in the Romanian Parliament were based on the political interests of the speaker. Those that had the leadership of the country in their hands were always dissatisfied with the vituperative vocabulary used by the opposition press, forgetting that newspapers representing their interests did exactly the same when another political organization was in power. It was usual that politicians used the press to get in power and after achieving their objective to discover that newspapers and journalists were the worst obstacles to the development of the country. (Teodorașcu, 2016, p. 127) Nevertheless, readers had so much trust in journalists, especially during the years between the two world wars, that they started sending them to Parliament. (Teodorașcu, 2016, pp. 101-102). One of the main issues of the Romanian press, even during its golden days, was the lack of professional training of many of its members. The prototype of the reporter who, although he did not know how to write, was very admired by the public is very frequent in novels that inspired in the Romanian press. (Teodorașcu, 2016, pp. 131-132)

In this context, famous Bucharest journalists asked Romanian authorities to found schools of press. (Teodorașcu, 2016, pp. 94-98) In 1932, in a paper on *elementary notions of journalism*, Emil Samoilă shows that *journalism is a profession like any other, and those who want to practice it must learn it first*. The same source speaks about the intention of some government officials to create a “*free school*” of *journalism*. In charge with the elaboration of the project for this *journalism school* was Nae Ionescu, director of the newspaper *Cuvântul (The Word)*. (Samoilă, p. 47) The quoted paper is, as even its author shows (Samoilă, p. 51), the first Romanian journalism handbook. Other journalists also made efforts to create a theoretical framework for the journalist profession, and Pamfil Șeicaru is one of them. (Teodorașcu, 2016, p. 88)

### Classical Journalism

In Romania, the first real journalism schools appeared very late. Less than three decades ago. As mentioned above, in our country, journalism handbooks appeared before journalism schools. In the book *Învățământul jurnalistic clujean (Cluj Journalism Education) (1993-2006)*, Ilie Rad speaks about a journalism course held in Cluj, between 1919 and 1925, at the Law and State Sciences Faculty. It is not clear, however, if that course also existed outside official documents:

“The favourable circumstances for such a course were created once the University Daciei Superioare was founded, in October 1919, five months after the university was taken over from Hungarian authorities. Thus, in the *Cluj University Yearbook*, for the years 1919-1920, 1920-1921, 1921-1922, 1922-1923, 1923-1924, 1924-1925, the curricula of the Law and State Sciences Faculty also included a **chair of journalism**. The head of this chair was the associate professor Iorgu Radu (b. 7<sup>th</sup> of December 1886, with a PhD in law at Berlin, specialist in international law, also teaching a course of Romanian civil law). Unfortunately we do not know the themes debated in this course, because in the *University Yearbooks* for the mentioned years, this course is one of the few with not even a brief presentation, as is the case of other disciplines. The well-known nonagenarian professor Tudor

Drăganu, once a student of Iorgu Radu, does not even remember such a discipline.” (Rad, 2006, pp. 14-15).

It is true that, in Romania, there has been a lot of talk about the idea that journalists “are born, not made”. Such a debate was not reserved to Romania, it also happened in the United States of America. Both here and there, the discussions have been intense. Whitelaw Reid is an advocate for American journalism schools created in universities:

“I have been asked to say something of Journalism, and of schemes of special instruction for it. The Chancellor and Faculty have had in view, however, no absurd plan for turning raw boys into trained editors by the easy process of running over some new curriculum. West Point cannot make a soldier; and the University of the City of New York cannot give us assurance of an editor. But West Point can give the training, discipline, special knowledge, without which the born soldier would find his best efforts crippled, and with which men not born to military greatness may still do valuable service. There were thousands of brave men around Toulon, but only Napoleon could handle the artillery. It was the scientific training that gave his warlike genius its opportunity and its tools of victory. West Point does the same for the countless Napoleons whom (according to the popular biographies) Providence has been kind enough to send us; and this university may yet do as much for the embryo Bryants and Greeleys, Weeds and Raymonds, and Ritchies and Hales, who are to transform American journalism into a profession, and emulate the laurels of these earlier leaders, with larger opportunities, on a wider stage, to more beneficent ends.” (Reid, 1913, p. 193).

A preoccupation in this sense, of training young people interested in a career in journalism, has existed for over a century and a half. People from the press who wanted to improve the quality of Romanian journalism published articles in which they presented basic elements of their profession. Situations of this kind determined some researchers to speak about “substance without form” in Romanian journalism. (Munteanu, 2008, p. 7).

In 1862, when Romanian statesmen made huge efforts to create the Romanian modern state, the magazine *Revista română pentru științe, litere și arte* (*Romanian magazine for sciences, letters and arts*) published the article „Ziaristica după școală clasică” (Journalism according to the classic school). The importance of the text is not owed only to the fact that it one of the first of this kind in Romanian press, but also to the way in which the author understood, in the complicated political context of Romania at the time, the role of *national journalism*. As this author states, journalism must take on a role that was at least as important as the role of state institutions. The text contained recommendations not only for a certain type of press. The author mentioned that there are differences that cannot be ignored, for example, the difference between a magazine/an article focusing on history and a magazine/an article focusing on literary criticism. The author also speaks about the *sole political mission of the periodical press*. (Missail, 1862, p. 144) As we have seen above, during the interwar period, a successful newspaper was the newspaper that succeeded in being *a true mirror of Romanian life*. In 1862, the newspaper and the journalist responded to other *performance criteria*. The newspaper was not asked to be the *mirror* of society, but its *guide* to a better future:

“A new era, a new life opened up for Romanians at the beginning of 1862. The *Union* became fulfilled. The small countries between the Carpathians and the Pontus Euxin will be just *one and great Romanian government*. Forced by circumstances and if Romanians will want to live, from now on, as a living, constituted nation, everything will have to change profoundly. In the context of this general change of the country, the periodical press, Romanian journalism, cannot be left behind. A new horizon of work, of political, national, intellectual and moral action opens up before it.

Today, when party, coterie, provincial interests should come after the interest of the nation, before the great Romanian country, they will lose their place in the eyes of the press, emancipated from the provincialism that strangled it, as well as the entire country and Romanian journalism will enter an unity independence for which it strived for a long time. From now on, the Romanian press will raise the voice not in the name of separate Moldova, of isolated Walachia, but in the name of the *entire Romania*, in the name of five million people, in the name of our political interests as well as of literary, economical, commercial, industrial and agricultural interests. Many eyes, the eyes of the European Argus, will be looking from now on at our country and at our press. All its words, all its objectives, all its thoughts, will be evaluated, debated, discussed by the European public. The position of the press thus becomes as important in the eyes of the country as the country's becomes in the eyes of Europe. Europe, legitimately impatient, is waiting to see if Romanians postponed all their great reforms until the Union becomes definitive and if, after the union, things will work better. On the other hand, the country is waiting for advice, encouragement and light from the press in the great reformation era in which it entered." (Missail, 1862, pp. 121-122)

The author also emphasizes that all those who *claim to hold the pen of a journalist in hand* must *think very well about the responsibility that lies upon them* and of everything they will write from that moment onward:

"The Romanian press must occupy their place in the temple of European press. No one denies it this place; hopefully, it will occupy it with dignity! Hopefully it will raise up to that height of ideas, of correct judgment, of prevision, of light, to that height where its sisters are today, so that the soul of public opinion, the engine of the regenerating movement and so that us all, are sure that it will be supported, both inside the country, as well as outside and that it will be lent a helping hand.

But, in order to get there, our press must set some rules, some dogma that are above the daily passions, the fights between parties, the winds of passing circumstances. This is what European press did when, after a temptation of several years, reached the point of self-instituting as the fourth power in the State.

Why would we not take advantage of others' experience when our own interest commands it and when we are in a similar position?" (Missail, 1862, pp. 121-123).

A newspaper that wishes to be liked by its century and its era, the same author shows, must comply with two conditions. The first condition is that the newspaper is *impartial*. The second condition is related to the profession of journalist. *The knowledge, the taste and the sense of justice* are the *qualities* that a journalist must have if he wishes to be successful. When reading the text, it is easily noticed that, in the author's vision, the journalist has an extremely important political role. He has the duty to defend the interests of all Romanians, despite the voices that claimed that for the Romanian state there were no reasons, internal or external, to worry:

"But some will say that the interests of Romanians are completely different from the interests of other peoples in the Orient; that their faith is guaranteed, that Europe took them under its protection; briefly, that our politics, that our mission is a kind of politics and a mission of silence and peace. It may be so for the moment; but for the future, in a moment of general conflagration, who can guarantee us that providence will offer us the miracles it has offered us so far, giving us, with no sacrifice, what others have not been given for rivers of blood?

By saying these things, we do not claim to provoke anyone; we do not refer to revolts, but we ask that our country is brought to that state of security that helps us cope with all the events happening in the Orient.

These considerations about the higher national interest have been revealed by the Romanian press so many times with a passion that honours its youth, so that if we still refer to them here it is so that we can remind those who should be reminded that one must persevere in these beliefs until the boat of the common country reaches the desired haven.” (Missail, 1862, p. 149)

The author concludes with a fragment from the article “Jurnalismul românesc în 1855” (Romanian Journalism in 1855), published by M. Kogălniceanu in *România literară* (Literary Romania). The mentioned article appeared, as shown in its title, four years before the “Small Union” (24<sup>th</sup> of January 1859). In short, Kogălniceanu believed that one happened on the European political stage practically obliged the Romanian national press to be near the country and its statesmen. (Missail, 1862, p. 150)

### **Journalism and the Needs of the Nation**

We also read the text of M. Kogălniceanu (published in *România literară* in the issues 4, 5 and 6 of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, 30<sup>th</sup> of January and the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1855), to be able to see the big picture. We also excerpted a few fragments of this article that we found to be relevant for our research. The first thing Kogălniceanu does in his text is to fix the definition of the *press*. This way, the author emphasizes, ever since the beginning, the on the importance of the press in the entire world:

“Nowadays, the spirit is such a great power and, sometimes, even greater than any other. This spirit manifests through public opinion; and one of the most important works of public opinion is the Press in general, and the periodical press or journalism, in particular.

The press is the echo of the human voice, it is the tribune in which the voice of the crowd spreads in all parts of the world and becomes the property of all humankind.” (Kogălniceanu, 1855, p. 52)

Romanians have known the press, as it is later shown in the text, pretty late, compared to the citizens of Western states. The first newspapers that arrived on Romanian land were written in foreign languages, and access of readers to them was limited:

“The periodical press that, in free countries, is called the fourth power of the state and that, everywhere, even in the parts of the world that are governed in a despotic manner, has ended up being a necessity for governments and peoples too; that all compliment and ask for applause, this press, in the case of Romania, is an innovation whose origin is yesterday. Less than fifty years ago, the Principalities only saw five French journals and two German; and these were only read in the houses of some nobles and, especially, in the cabinets of governors, who had to gather news from all parts of Europe and to share them in Constantinople.

Less than thirty years ago, Romanians did not have a periodical newspaper in their own language.” (Kogălniceanu, 1855, p. 52)

Of all publications, political newspapers play a special part in the life of a state. Romanian political newspapers were fewer and Kogălniceanu criticized the lack of *political faith*:

“Today, Romanians have six political newspapers: two in Moldova, *Gazeta de Moldavia* and *Zimbrul* (*The Bison*); two in Walachia, *Vestitorul românesc* (*The Romanian Announcer*) and *Timpul* (*The Time*); two in Ardeal, *Gazeta de Transilvania* and *Telegraful* (*The Telegraph*) [Romanian]. *Gazeta de Moldavia* and *Vestitorul* are semi-official newspapers; they communicate the news of the court, the measures adopted by the government, issue articles and political discussions are very rarely in their columns and the rest of the pages contain news from foreign countries translated from their newspapers. They reproduce, like in a daguerreotype, all events, all opinions of the day, with no

system, with no political faith. It is not our duty to present their flaws or their qualities, since they are not trying to follow a progress path, not even when it comes to grammar rules.” (Kogălniceanu, 1855, p. 67).

At the end of his text, Kogălniceanu signals the bizarre situation of Romanian journalism, with great journalists, but no *serious* newspapers:

“We’ve always had and we still have publicists. [...] But, so far, we do not have one newspaper that answers the needs of the nation; and, however, in the face of the serious era we are in today, in the middle of the severe circumstances that gather before the foreign press, which always deals with Romanians, but, most often, in an ignorant or hostile manner, our greatest need is to have a serious newspaper, independent, submitted only to the laws of the truth, that proclaims, every day, and that defends the rights of the Principalities, recognized, today, in principle, by all Europe; this press would offer the government a faithful and uninterested support, it would reveal the abuses made without its knowledge and to the damage of the country; it would have the sole purpose of its efforts to form not only our political education but also to cultivate our moral nature, founding noble faiths, developing in our hearts the feeling of beauty and honesty; and being, in all, the defender and the supporter of morality.” (Kogălniceanu, 1855, p. 78)

Other authors saw the press as the tool with which the journalist may model the community in which he lives, as the sculptor models the marble block with the chipper.

### The Press as Biopolitical Tribune

In an article in 1926, the press was called to be a *biopolitical tribune*. The biopolitical creed resulted, as the author of the text showed, from the desire to ensure the country has human capital in optimal conditions, at present as well as in the future:

“More and more promoters of the nation’s hygiene appear each day. The future doctors graduates of the faculty of medicine in Cluj, when they will reach the whirlpool of social life, will realize that the education they gained in terms of eugenics and nation’s hygiene are the bedrock of the social institution of the country, made up in all the aspects of its life on the basis of the bio political programme.” (Voinea, p. 144)

The same source shows that statesmen everywhere were looking to rehabilitate the *human capital*, considered to be the vital element for the *progress of a country and the future of a nation*. Their effort will not succeed without the contribution of the *press*:

“In the service of an idea or of a political programme, the press must always remain the most generous tribune of any humanitarian idea. If the political press presents ideas to the public opinion, ideas that are commented and debated and can be introduced in the laws of the general good, that means that the press, **without consideration of the political colour**, will fulfil its most elementary duty and it will create its most immaculate title of glory vigorously fighting to fulfil the bio political programme, issued from the life needs of the people disrupted by so many social diseases that trouble its evolution and compromise its vitality.” (Voinea, p. 144)

In 1927, a publication appeared dedicated to *biopolitics*. Ever since its first number, the publication *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic (Eugenic and Bio Political Bulletin)*, explained its readers that *bio politics* and *eugenics* are not one and the same thing, the first one including the second. In this sense, we will reproduce the definitions given by I. Moldovan to *eugenics*, first, and, then, to *biopolitics*. Thus, in the

case of the first, the already mentioned author made the following observations:

“Eugenics is recent and defined by its creator, the English researcher *Galton*, as the science dealing with the factors that can modify, for the best or for the worst, race traits – mental or physical – of future generations. The purpose of eugenics is the quality improvement of the race. It is negative when it refers to suppressing or eliminating factors susceptible of influencing future generations for the worst, it is positive when it contributes to those qualities or factors that elevate the quality of future generations. Eugenics deal exclusively with hereditary traits that can be passed by genetic heritage from parents to children and is not interested in other traits influenced by the physical or social environment. The measures of negative eugenics are prevention of damaging future generations through diseases and intoxications (sexual, alcoholism etc.) and the elimination from procreation of imbeciles, criminals or people suffering from hereditary diseases or flaws, and in its positive part it tries to facilitate the procreation of individuals with normal or superior psychical or physical traits.” (Moldovan, 1927, p. 3)

The author specified that the supporters of *eugenics* are not thinking of an *improvement of race through methods specific to animal breeding*. Concerning *biopolitics*, I. Moldovan showed that this did not have to be a *militant party policy*, but the *basis of any policy that aims for the good of the country*: “*Bio politics, the science of government based, first of all, on the biological capacity of citizens and aimed toward their biological prosperity is the fundamental policy, the regulating conscience of individual and social tendencies.*” (Moldovan, 1927, p. 6) *Societatea de mâine (Tomorrow's Society)*,<sup>1</sup> that self-declared as a magazine “for social and economic issues”, also focused on bio politics. (Moldovan, 1924, pp. 69-70; Voinea, 1926, pp. 360-362; Clopoțel, 1926, p. 171)

There have also been times when journalists criticised those leading the country for their lack of interest for the needs of the press.

### The Government and the Press

For example, in an article of 1895, journalists from *Adevărul (The Truth)* asked the Government to subsidize some of the expenses Romanian journalists incurred to perform their professional duties. (Dragoș, 1895, p. 1). Other times, journalists complained that the Court of Juries in Bucharest judged “more press trials than murders.” (\*\*\*, *Ultimele informațiuni*, 1888, p. 3). Sometimes, journalists warned about the attempts of authorities to block access of readers to information published in anti-government newspapers:

“Yesterday, extremely terrible deeds took place in the Capital. Direct agents of the police prefect brutalised newspaper sellers, confiscated their merchandise and destroyed it. [...]

And beware of how many rights are breached through this brutal and cynical act: it is an attack to the freedom of the press, the freedom of thought and individual property!” (\*\*\*, *Confiscarea ziarelor independente*, 1896, p. 2).

Some journalists also complained about the lack of respect that some of their colleagues showed to the profession of journalist. In this sense, we propose an excerpt from a text published in 1888, in the newspaper *Epoca (The Era)*:

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<sup>1</sup> The first issue appeared on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 1924.

“Sometimes, even people that are always looking for reality may be wrong about a certain situation and imagine that progress has been made where old and bad habits are more flourishing than ever.

This is what happened to one of our brothers.

We believed that the old system of journalism and the old way of understanding the mission of the newspaper was outdated and, surprisingly, bad habits, the mean way in which the press was regarded in the past is more rooted than ever – only in some places, must we say.

So, in our country, until recently, due to the small number of readers and to the lack of necessary staff, newspapers could not live outside the tyranny and censorship of the narrow organization of parties. A certain politician, party chief, subsidized and harshly censored a newspaper; another one subsidized and also censored his newspaper. Everybody knows what happened to this kind of press. The newspaper of the boss in power admired and promoted all of his actions, while the newspaper of the one who was not in power criticised everything his rival did.

This way, it was possible that a person in government put a city on fire and slaughtered its entire population and, still, one could be sure that his newspaper would praise him. The same person could do the right thing, have the most generous behaviour, one could be sure that the newspaper of his adversary finds a flaw and criticizes him.

We had subsidized newspapers, official newspapers and we had no independent newspapers, party newspapers that would put the interests of the party and of ideas above the interests of certain members of that party, above the interests of a government. [...]

What was the prestige that such a press could gain and what influence could it have on public opinion, when lies, cowardice and blind submission were bashing in its columns? And also, what confidence could citizens have in those journalists, with a small heart and brain, who, for a matter of commerce or low envy, or petty group interest, attack their adversaries especially when their attitude was more correct and more generous?” (Iancovescu, 1888, p. 1).

According to some Romanian publications, the worst type of press was made by American journalists who, in search of as many readers, published *sensational* stories that they *fabricated themselves*.

“We choose the following details from a private letter that I received from a friend from Romania, immigrant in New-York, even before the great world war.

New-York, 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1931 [...]

Even firsthand journals, and even the less important, in their quest for sensational and for the public – the press is nothing but the reflexion of society– do not hold back from anything, they just want to tease and to satisfy their readers’ curiosity. They simply invent diverse facts, without the slightest scruple.

Imaginary crimes, burglaries, thefts with adventure, all kinds of mishaps, they dress them all up in mystery, they mix them and colour them with the most ludicrous details.

Even more: they go all the way to set up pseudocrimes, with victims’ and assassins, just to include some photos. All these for payment agreed between parties: between the newspaper and the characters that will play a part in the «business». They take interviews from lawyers, from doctors and other famous people, everything in relation to a «business» that did not even happen.

In matters of adultery and divorce, things get even worse. Two persons are hired, of opposite sex, pretending to be husband and wife. A third one is hired, who is caught in the act of pseudo-adultery.



The intervention of authorities is called for, reports are filed, with all processions involved in this kind of affair, investigations are made, confrontations, confessions; the photos of the heroes are published, autographs, letters, debates – and the whole affair is built on sand.

Such a set-up affair only costs 400-500 dollars, amount that helps the newspaper, by extending the «business», to increase its circulation, the public snatches the newspapers from the hands of sellers and...Everything goes smooth.

This is how American gentlemen conceive the entertainment of the public, with all kinds of fairy tales.

When it comes to suicides and accidents, there is absolutely no limit. There is competition between newspapers, whichever brings something more sensational.” (Ionetti, 1931, p. 7)

When it comes to the revenues of American journalists, the already mentioned source shows, *verbose* reporters with “fantasy rich in invention” are those that win the most. (Ionetti, 1931, p. 7)

### Short Romanian Guide on “How to Create a Modern Newspaper”

In his study *Pregătirea profesională a ziaristului (The Journalist's Professional Training)*, Mircea Vulcănescu speaks about the internal organization of a newspaper.<sup>1</sup> The mentioned text is one of the few of this kind. However, we will refer to another article that discusses the structure of a newspaper. Under the signature N.G., *Almanahul ziarului „Curentul” pe anul bisect 1940 (Almanac of the newspaper “The Current” leap year 1940)* published the article “How to Create a Modern Newspaper”. The author of this article tries to *sketch* the activities of people *labouring* so that the reader may hold in his hands, every morning, his favourite newspaper. The newspaper is, as shown in this mentioned text, *the cheapest commercial item*, as it can be bought with just *one, two or three lei*. Despite this small price, the value of the newspaper is significant. Nobody, says the author of the text, can dispense of a newspaper. The only wish of the reader is to find out everything. Only the reader knows the criteria upon which he chooses his favourite newspaper. The life of a newspaper is short, it only lasts *24 hours*: “It is born at sunrise, when the rooster sings, and its life ends when the night sets in.”<sup>2</sup> Afterwards, the author speaks about those who make the existence of a newspaper possible. The first ones he refers to are the *manager*, *the editors* and the *reporters*.

*The manager* is, as shown in the text, the one who is responsible for the existence of the newspaper:

“More than in any other institution, the manager of a newspaper must come into contact with absolutely all his employees. He is the master and the slave of all.

He unleashes and tempers enthusiasm; he decides and he checks attitudes; he coordinates and supervises the news. He is the heart of the newspaper. And the newspaper is his child.”<sup>3</sup>

*The editors*, people “dedicated to journalism through the infinite possibilities of expression of their ideas”, are those who “develop raw information or the subjects that current life offers them, through a correct and logical comment, revealing to the reader some sides of the topic that may have escaped them, or that may have been ignored”. To be able to fulfil his mission, “the editor must be especially

<sup>1</sup> See Fănel (Teodorașcu, *Pamfil Șeicaru...*, pp. 84-85).

<sup>2</sup> N.G., „Cum se lucrează un ziar modern”, in *Almanahul ziarului „Curentul” pe anul bisect 1940*, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 80.

trained in the field he has chosen. For an economical editor will never be able to write a good article on literature and vice versa.”<sup>1</sup>

*Reporters are vocation journalists. They are the working bees of this huge bee hive: the newspaper.* Reporters “pick information either directly through the diverse environment of reality or through the means of different institutions”<sup>2</sup>. Because their work is especially important in the mechanism that makes the newspaper appear, with no delay, everyday, reporters are not allowed to rest:

“No absence is excused. In a permanent quest for news they are also in constant competition with each other. Because the newspaper gains importance for the reader especially through prompt information each day. No reporter is allowed to ignore a certain fact happening in his field. His information sources are innumerable. But the reward the published story gives him is unimaginable.

Following everyday life, he lives a permanent adventure.”<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the role and the place of the report in Romanian press, all things said along the years have been both positive, (Samson, 1979, p. 88) as well as negative<sup>4</sup>. The category of *reporters* also includes *correspondents*, who, being “placed in all cities or centres of social activity”<sup>5</sup>, give the newspaper information through *telephone, telegrams or letters*.

The text also mentions press agencies. These “are independent from the newspaper, most of the times, or they function within the newspaper, but seldom. Their structure is pretty much the same as that of a newspaper, of course without all its gear. They are based on the activity of reporters and correspondents spread all over the world. The news thus gathered and verified are sent, as shorter or longer telegrams, to newspapers they have agreements with. Only agencies are responsible for the veracity of the news. The newspaper does not bear the same kind of responsibility as in the case of news published through their own reporters, unless that particular agency functions within the newspaper. This is the reason why, any telegram from abroad must permanently have its source indicated (Rador, Havas, Stefani etc.)”<sup>6</sup>

The author of the text makes some mentions about *collaborators* too, to which he says that the *newspaper owes a significant part of its existence*:

“There are collaborators who, invited by the newspaper management, contribute with their talent and personality to a good presentation of the newspaper and others who practice journalism out of dilettantism.

We cannot include in another category the anonymous informers, that roam every day through the newsrooms with one sheet of manuscript containing some sort of notification or communication of general or partial interest.”<sup>7</sup>

Before being published, the manuscripts of editors, reporters, correspondents and, when necessary, of collaborators must pass through the *newsroom secretary*:

“It is with him that the true shaping of the newspaper begins. He must coordinate and classify all the information, newsroom, reporters’ material. He indicates the characters that the material will be

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> See (Teodoraşcu, *Pamfil Şeicaru...*, pp. 85-86).

<sup>5</sup> N.G., *op.cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

printed in, just as he decides on the titles of articles and stories and the pages that he supervises. Being at the heart of the newspaper, the newsroom secretary must take care of presenting it in the best conditions.”<sup>1</sup>

*The newsroom secretary* is the one who harmonises the activity of the *newsroom* with that of the *printing house*. He is assisted in all his attributions by the *corrector*, who “has the task of reviewing the matter [that was] typed in the printing house, so that it corresponds to the manuscript.”<sup>2</sup> The *corrector* “must correct the mistake that may have escaped the eyes of the secretary.”<sup>3</sup> The *professional training* of the *corrector* “is made through a long experience and through a constant update of the knowledge in all fields.”<sup>4</sup>

Under the supervision of the newsroom secretary, the workers in the printing house layout the *material* in pages (the typed manuscript):

“This is pretentious: on one hand because the typing norms impose certain constraints and, then, because the harmonious arrangement of the matters on the page must be respected, for an artistic and pleasing aspect.

Once concluded, that is prepared for the finishing of the newspaper, the pages go to the calender or the press, where the lead letters arranged on the page are printed on a piece of cardboard called mould. This cardboard[is] laid in another lead pouring machine, [which] transforms the page that left the calender in another semi circular page, adequate for the size and shape of the cylinders of the rotating machine.

Finally, once the pages are in the rotating machine, the newspaper changes form, and it becomes the form that the reader will hold.

The rotating machine, this huge monster loaded with the most ingenious mechanisms, produces each hour 50-60-100 thousand copies...”<sup>5</sup>

*The work for the finishing of the newspaper* does not end here. From the *rotating machine*, the newspaper is taken to *expedition*, that means the *department* “where it is labelled with the address of the storages all over the country, of subscribers or it is distributed to sellers or given to the railway or air company.”<sup>6</sup> The text shows that, only at this point, we can say that there is nothing left to do.

However, the author does not conclude his article before referring to the *administration*:

“But, one must not forget that, in parallel with the activity of all these departments that we presented above, the other employees of the institution editing the newspaper take care of all the works that involve its proper distribution. The administration is the one who truly knows the pulse, the tastes, and the preferences of the reader. Because this is where the entire activity is evaluated from dusk till dawn!

And all this immense machine must be fed out of the 1, 2 or 3 lei of yours, reader!...”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

We notice that the author of the article we discussed forgot about advertising. The situation is at least bizarre, since it was known by all journalists that “the amounts gathered from selling the newspapers only solved part of expenses of the newsroom, the administration and.” (Teodorașcu, 2014, p. 216)

The newspaper *Universul (The Universe)* was living proof that advertising could turn a regular newspaper into a very rich one. (Teodorașcu, 2014, p. 216) In fact, the management of *Universul* showed its appreciation for the work of advertising agents by throwing banquets for them. (Teodorașcu, 2015, pp. 294-295).

This is how *Universul* presented its advertising services in *Calendarul ziarului „Universul” pe anul 1928 (Calendar of the newspaper Universe for the year 1928)*:

“The advertising and publicity appearing every day in the newspaper *Universul* as announcements, information etc. and that are read, along with the newspaper, in the entire country and abroad, bring a lot of benefits to commerce, industry, art, science and, in general, to social life by facilitating the connections between the producer and the consumer, offering the public the best information method.

It is known that advertising is most effective, when it is as spread as possible.

The fact of being unknown does not always inspire mistrust, but, always, a well known person has an advantage over those that are not known.

Besides that, the age we live in is the age in which advertising is known everywhere as a measure necessary for having commercial reputation without which sellers cannot claim the confidence of buyers.

Advertising is, in fact, the means to continuously and limitlessly develop the selling of current objects when these objects are known and used for years.

There is no product whose sale does not increase due to advertising, which is the promoter of success because, by selling products of real value, perfectly fit with the ads, products intensify their sale. [...]

The seller who constantly describes his merchandise through advertising ends up by imposing his product, - Even more, the public feels at home in a shop whose story he knows in detail, as well as the prices and the selling method.

So, advertise in *Universul*, the most spread newspaper.”<sup>1</sup>

According to C. Rădulescu Motru, advertising (publicity)<sup>2</sup> may be of two types: *dishonest* and *fair*:

“The art of advertising is so developed and, most of all, so effective, that almost nobody knows its modest origin. If we are to believe what Americans say, it is the lever of civilisation and of progress; for nothing moves in the world without advertising. The heart of commerce is in advertising; and all other social activities derive, as it is well known, from the heart of commerce. An American says that advertising was the sublime music of modern times. If we are to believe the Americans again, we should expect an era when the art of convincing through advertising will surpass the art of convincing through logical arguments. In such an era, the old and classical Logic will appear as a simple mental health accident in the long struggle of madness of sick humankind.

But with such affirmations, Americans, in fact, advertise advertising.” (Rădulescu-Motru, pp. 39-40)

According to Rădulescu-Motru, the only *honest advertising* is *commercial advertising*:

<sup>1</sup> Text taken from an advertising caption in *Calendarul ziarului „Universul” - anul 1928*. Bucharest, *Universul*.

<sup>2</sup> The author uses both terms, publicity and advertising, giving them the same meaning.

“Among all those who advertise, only sellers seem to have remained honest, for they limit themselves to presenting their objects of commerce, without fighting with the competition. They say there once was, in the case of sellers too, an era of fighting, but it has ended. [...] There are newspapers in which the only pages printed with honest intentions are the pages reserved for commercial announcements...” (Rădulescu-Motru, p. 46)

The success of *dishonest advertising* is in straight connection with the level of knowledge that the advertiser has regarding the *mentality of the public it addresses*. In the case of the public with *an inferior mentality*, *inferior advertising* is called for. Advertising must be improved in the case of the *public with superior mentality*. Thus, the same author shows, the mentality of the population of a country may be determined only by following *advertising that is successful* in that country: “The genre of successful advertising is a sure clue, more sure than any statistic.” (Rădulescu-Motru, p. 41)

In the quoted text, the author uses, in support of his claims, the story of Gustave Le Bon (Le Bon, pp. 120-122) about the seller dressed on golden and diamond clothes, selling people powder sugar at the price of *magical powder*. (Rădulescu-Motru, pp. 42-44)

## Final Words

For some journalists, the newspaper page is like a battlefield (Teodorașcu, pp. 26-27), where they entered to destroy their enemies who, in turn, were dominated by the same warlike thoughts. For journalists of the type, the happiness of success vanishes in one second and the suffering caused by potential failure may persist for a long time. Such a journalist believes that he is never wrong and he always claims that the position of his adversaries is wrong. Many times, journalists defended the ideas they believed in with their fists too. (Teodorașcu, pp. 191-195) There were cases in which the fights of ideas turned into real fights brought upon the rivals heavy punishments.<sup>1</sup> There were also cases in which, although they wanted to inspire chivalry, they made a fool of themselves in the eyes of the reader. Here we refer to those *site outings* in which fights did not even get a scratch.<sup>2</sup>

Compared to what happened in Western countries, press appeared late in Romania. In England, the first newspaper (*English Mercuri*) appeared in 1588. (Samoilă, p. 14) France, at its own turn, published, in 1631, “the first regular periodical newspaper”<sup>3</sup> (*Gazette*, which, later, will be called *Gazette de France*). (Samoilă, p. 9) Germany is the country that published, in 1660, the first daily newspaper (*Leipziger Zeitung*). (Samoilă, p. 13) In Germany too, in 1690, Tobias Peucer defended the first PhD thesis in journalism. (Peucer, 2008). As Ioan Bianu showed, we can only speak about press in Romania in 1820. (Bianu, p. VII) However, at the beginning of the third decade of the past century, Emil Samoilă brought to the attention of the public the following fact: “A statistic of the institution «Adevărul» shows that 14.000 persons in the country and abroad contribute through their intellectual or manual work to elaborating, printing, shipping and distribution of the newspaper *Adevărul* and *Dimineața*.” (Samoilă, p. 30) In other words, the development of Romanian press took place in a rhythm that is unimaginable nowadays. The face of Romanian press changed during the communist period, as Peter Gross shows. The “mobilization and indoctrination” messages characterised the press of those times. According to the same source, Romanian press remained highly politicized after the

<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Terrorism in Galati - The Press and the Lie (Understood as Political Tactic). In (Boldea, 2017, p. 578).

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, The Duel in the Formerly Romanian Press – from Thrilling to Trivial. In (Boldea, 2016, pp. 269-279).

<sup>3</sup> Ioan Bianu, *Introducere/Introduction* of Nerva Hodoș; Ionescu, Al. Sadi (1913). *Publicațiunile periodice românești/Romanian periodicals*, Bucharest: Librăriile Socec & Comp. & C. Sfetea.

events of December 1989, when the soviet inspired political regime was replaced by one that claimed to be democratic. (Teodorașcu, p. 127)

Some journalists have fought against *parliamentarianism* (Teodorașcu, p. 111), and others against *universal vote*, since these gave illiterates the power to decide who can lead the country. Another fierce battle that took place in the press was the one that discussed on which side Romania should fight in the First World War. (Teodorașcu, pp. 25-40) In this sense, some journalists have even taken on the role of forming the *courage* of Romanian military. (Teodorașcu, 2017, pp. 75-82)

Terrible battles also took place on the pages of newspapers regarding the issue of “affirmation of feminine personality”<sup>1</sup>. The same happened in the case of *honour battle*. According to some publications, “duel was for many Romanian *honourable* men a method of obtaining *free advertising*”<sup>2</sup>. Some journalists criticised their colleagues for being too preoccupied by the *information function* of the press and for ignoring its *education function*.<sup>3</sup> Regarding the *cinema* too we can say that Romanian journalists did not have a common opinion. If some were careful to emphasize its importance each time they had the opportunity, others claimed that “the cinema is a degrading element of Romanian society”<sup>4</sup>. Not even when “feminine beauty” was discussed, journalists did not manage to see things through the same lenses.<sup>5</sup> Today, the headlines are different, but now, just as in the past decades, Romanian journalists cannot even agree on issues that are of national interest. Each journalist, past or present, has the tendency to give the truth the shade in which he believes.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, *The Issue of Affirming the Feminine Personality Commented in the Newspapers of Past Eras*. In (Pușcă, Sandache, Teodorașcu (Coordonatori), 2016, pp. 101-112).

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, *Bread Crumbs Instead of Lead Bullets – The Duel in the Journal Furnica/The Ant. Proceedings. European Integration - Realities and Perspectives*, Galați, Danubius University, 2017, p. 432.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, *Terrorism in Galati. The Press and the Lie (Understood as Political Tactic)...*, p. 562.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, *The Satanic Cult of Nude - About the Cinematography in Some of the Inter-war Publications in Romania. Acta Universitatis Danubius. Communicatio*. Galați: Danubius University, (XI) nr. 2/ 2017, p. 135.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, “When the “Weaker Sex” become “Beautysymbol” – The Feminine Beauty in the Romanian Interwar Press”, în *Proceedings. European Integration - Realities and Perspectives*, Galați, Danubius University, 2018, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Idem*, “Murder in Icon Street – Journalism and Shades of Truth. *Saeculum*, anul XVI (XVIII), nr. 2 (44), 2017, pp. 112-120.

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