

THE CENSORSHIP AVATARS IN POST-WAR ROMANIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Censorship, as a means of social control, emerged as soon as human communities began to accumulate information essential to the cohabitation of the group and its future. One way or another, censorship has accompanied the history of the world in all its important stages. In primitive tribes, the magus or wizard was the only possessor of certain secret knowledge inaccessible to ordinary members. Even in the Greek antiquity, in a society that invented democracy and promoted the fundamental rights of citizens, the state intervened whenever a person, an idea, a movement, or a flow of opinions came to endanger the safety of the state as a whole, the legal system or public opinion. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the whole of Europe was to be caught up in a real frenzy of censorship, as Europe came out divided. In Romania, with the establishment of the pro-Soviet regime, and under the leadership and direct control on behalf of the Russian commissioners especially sent in, a terrible terror on the books began. The democracy dominated by the historical Romanian parties were not compatible with the communist ideology to be implemented in all spiritual structures. Furthermore, Bessarabia and Bucovina had been abducted and consequently all the writings related to the life of these provinces had to be removed or revised. Lists of libraries in the country that had the right to hold fund D (“documentary”, accessible only to specialists, but with approval) and S (“special”, almost inaccessible) were compiled. Scientific papers suffered the same treatment. Scientific and technical publications were removed from these funds and made available to the public only in 1964. Communication ensures people’s cooperation, their solidarity, and helps our species progress for a better, safer life, in which the freedom of access to different sources of information should be provided.

Keywords: *censorship, communication, Communist Romania, secret book funds, second World War.*

Censorship, as a means of social control, emerged as soon as human communities began to accumulate precious information essential to the cohabitation of the group and its future. It is known that in the primitive tribes the magus, the priest, the quack, the wizard, or whatever he was called, was the only possessor of some absolutely secret knowledge, which he shared only with the

next initiated, the one who was to take his place in the spiritual coordination of the community. The tribe’s ordinary members did not have the right to know these secrets, because otherwise nothing in the priest’s mystery and magical powers could any longer have the value preserved from generation to generation. It can be said that this form of moving off of the ordinary man from a certain information area was the first form of censorship manifestation.

One way or another, the censorship has accompanied the history of the world in all its important stages, and even now we can not be very sure that it might have been eradicated, since strictly specialized institutions and organisms (the NASA, the Vatican, the ufological organizations, etc.) thoroughly keep secrets which made public, would have a great impact on public opinion. If each historical age has known its special form of censorship, the example of the Middle Ages remains the most telling for the most aggressive and damaging forms ever known. Even the post-war forms of communist censorship in the eastern and central European countries controlled by the Soviet Union, in which, as we shall see, Romania was in a particular situation, will appear milder or more discreet than the inquisitorial ones of the dark middle of the Middle Ages and especially of the Western Church, a domineering force of all Western medieval spirituality. The evolution of censorship over time has made it obvious that it has been promoted as an important means of promoting power. By limiting access to information that contravened the state power, it gradually and surely managed to remove as much as possible any opposition, and then, through the means of persuasion, of

well-sustained propaganda, to succeed in installing the ideas of the new political regime.

And, as the book is the classic unit for storing information or a way of perceiving the world, it has always suffered the most. From the bringing to the Index (the isolation from the public circuit) to burning it in meticulously organized public processions and wilfully spectacular, the book that did not suit the convenience of the authorities, whatever that book was, it would become the public enemy no. 1 of the social order and of the direct control of the masses. Even when the Library of Alexandria burned down, it turning into ashes as many as 400,000 documents of great value and significance, and even assuming that the reasons were other than an ancient form of censorship, the fact itself, the reality that such writings which we do not know even now what they actually contained (some said that the history of mankind would have developed differently if the famous collection had not been burned) disappeared forever, it was a kind of frustration of the whole mankind over a valuable informational document (GHEORGHIȘOR, 2014).

Even in the Greek antiquity, in a society that invented democracy and promoted the fundamental rights of citizens, the state intervened whenever a man, an idea, a movement, or a flow of opinions came to endanger in one way or another the safety of the state as a whole, the system of laws or the public opinion. The most eloquent in this respect is the case of the great philosopher Socrates, the promoter of visionary ideas and a new, progressive mentality that could have and even had a great influence on the citizens and especially on the young people. Knowing very well the reputation of the thinker in his era, as well as his extraordinary power of persuasion, the representatives of the state order felt obliged to intervene and put an end to the influence of such ideas, which, they said, were able to corrupt the new generations and turn them towards a different path than the one promoted by the regime. As Socrates had not written any books, the censorship was to intervene on the philosopher himself, and he was sentenced to death and had to drink the hemlock cup, the official poison of the system at that time.

In the Middle Ages, the darkest era in the whole history of mankind, as I said, the Western Church posed as a severe ideological supervisor over the writings in all fields, both scientific and religious, literal or political, philosophical, not only to serve the interest of the state, but also to defend the religious belief itself, for at that time any idea that would have contradicted in one way or another the Bible or the official dogmas, the Catholic system as a whole, had to be traced back to the incipient stages and subjected to the inquisitorial judgment, through the famous tribunals meant to frighten any nonconformist initiatives. The burning at the stake was the most terrible punishment, and the famous humanist and renaissance philosopher Giordano Bruno (1458-1600) was one of the victims of this barbaric punishment, being condemned for blasphemy, immoral behavior and heresy and executed in Rome in the city of Peter. All his books were to be indexed (Index Librorum Prohibitorium), so one of the great thinkers of the world who nowadays would certainly have received the Nobel Prize, as well as all the honors of the contemporaries, was burned at the stake like common witches. Alongside Bruno, in time, great philosophers, scholars and writers such as Boccaccio, Dante, Descartes, Diderot, Hugo, Kant, La Fontaine, Lamartine, Montesquieu, Pascal, Rabelais, Spinoza, Swift, and Voltaire, were to be subject to church judgement.

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the whole of Europe was to be caught up in a real frenzy of censorship. Europe came out divided, the East and the West face face-to-face in a severe confrontation of ideological, economic, military, propaganda, and, under these circumstances, a real control over the new book production was essential, but especially the volumes that had come out of the war with other meanings than those valid for decades before. In the West and especially in Germany, the Eastern one especially, but the Western one too, there was the problem of cleaning the public library system and the deposits of the books that made up Hitler's entire literature, Hitler's party ideology, first of all the work of this last one. It was impossible for the 1940s and 50s to circulate publicly "Mein Kampf," Adolf Hitler's masterpiece. Along with the Führer's books, all

the Nazi propaganda-and a lot of books with adjacent themes had been printed-where a central place was the disregard and condemnation of the Jews on the one hand, and the praise of the Upper Aryan Germanic race on the other hand had to be pulled out of the circuit (COSTEA et al., 1995).

Neither the other Western countries escaped the new requirements of censorship, especially since the cold war had just settled down, and in an unexpected tough confrontation that was standing out, the idea seemed to be very important, and its support, the book, was the most effective means of propagating their own ideologies. On the other hand, in the UK, for example, there is a strict control over what is being published in its colonies, Australia, Canada, India, Africa, where the independence movements have developed. A special situation we will encounter across the ocean in the United States, where, although formally censorship on publications and films does not exist, authors and books of great success would be subject to almost aberrant control. That's how there was forbidden or censored "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain, "Malcom X Autobiography," by Malcom X and Alex Haley, "Much Loved," by Tom Morrison, "Lend Me Your Heart to My Wounded Knee" by Dee Brown, "The Call of Ancestors," by Jack London, "The Catcher in the Rye", by JD Salinger, "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald and many others. It is interesting to know that the reasons for banning these books are most of the time ridiculous, and we in Europe are hardly going to understand them because they are especially relevant to the specific moral laws and precepts in the US. Here are some: the use of offensive words such as "negro", the detailed description of crimes, almost as in a manual about killing, violence, the issue of American expansion in the territory of the Amerindiens, the obscene, blasphemous character or the portrayal of a decadent life of the American elite.

Returning to Europe, from Moscow, the breath of a strict censorship, which had to defend and promote the communist ideology, spread to all the newly-arrived countries in the Communist camp, producing profound revisions on all the existing documentary funds, which obviously

came from the culture of "the bourgeois-landlord" of the fertile interwar period. At the same time, successive waves of translations from the Soviet literature began to suffocate domestic book productions, and those subjected to severe ideological control. Everyone in the new ideological empire, the Romanians, the Poles the Czechoslovaks, the Bulgarians, the Hungarians, the Yugoslavs, and Mongols alike, etc. he had to think through the uplifting ideas of Moscow and to know closely the brilliant wisdom of the great dad Stalin ...

In Romania, immediately after the establishment of the pro-Soviet regime, and under the leadership and direct control on behalf of the Russian commissioners especially sent in, a terrible terror on the books began. Let us not forget that everything that the state, university and private libraries contained in the 1940s and 50s, apart from the older prints, from the 18th and the previous centuries, up to the origins of the Romanian writing, came from the interwar Romanian intelligentsia ("bourgeois-landowner"), who had produced at that time a rich documentary, literary, historical, scientific, political, philosophical, sociological etc., material, bearer of ideologies that could not even by far suit to the proletculturalism, on the one hand, and the vigilant eyes of the Soviet Commissioners, on the other. The democracy dominated by the historical Romanian parties could not be compatible with the communist ideology to be implemented in all spiritual structures, including the mental, of the population, and especially of the new contingents of intellectuals called to take the place of personalities such as Nicolae Iorga, Octavian Goga, Nae Ionescu, Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Mircea Vulcanescu, etc. It is still to be added that after the war several Romanian territories, Bessarabia and Bucovina, had been abducted, first of all, and consequently all the writings related to the life of these provinces had to be removed or revised (COROBICA, 2014b).

The big blow was to be given to literature, extremely important in the construction of any propaganda, because the fiction book circulated intensively in the society, and, moreover, all Romanian school curricula were always based

on classical and contemporary Romanian writers, among which even Eminescu and Creangă had to be "revised", because the lyrics "From the Nistru to Tisa / Any Romanian complained" could not be circulated, nor could Ivan Turbinca, a living caricature of the ordinary Russian, march with the cigar in his mouth in front of the Soviet commissioners (TEODOR, 2012).



Let us go, for a most convincing example, to the rooms and book stacks of the "V.A. Urechia Library" in Galati, one of the largest and most important units in the country. We also find here, besides other documents in collections that received the verdict "Forbidden", Ion Agârbiceanu, with "Ceasuri de seară", Cartea Românească Publishing House, Bucharest, 1925, Second Class 12.808; Constantin Bacalbașa "Bucuria de altădată", vol. 4: 1910-1914, Universul Publishing House, Bucharest, 1936, 3rd volume 1.652 (4); Nichifor Crainic, "Darurile pământului", Cartea Românească Publishing House, (1929?), 2nd Class 14.620; Ovid Densusianu, "Graiul nostru: Texte din toate părțile locuite de români", Vol. 1-3, Socec Graphic Workshops, 1906, 2nd Floor 4.230;

Mihai Eminescu, "Opera politică", Vol. 1-2, Cugetarea, Bucharest, 1941, 2nd volume 806 (1-2); Octavian Goga, "Coșbuc. Discurs de primire rostit la ședința solemnă la 30 maiu 1923, sub președinția Maiestății Sale Regale", "3rd Volume 5,640; Radu Gyr, "Poeme de războiu", Gorja Publishing House, 1942, Quota IV 1.230; Nicolae Iorga, "Desvoltarea imperialismului contemporan: Lecții la Universitatea din București", Vol. 1-2, Bucharest, "The Universul" Printing House, 1940, First Class 5,510 (1-2); Iuliu Maniu, "Problema minorităților", Bucharest, National Culture, 1924, Volume III 752; Mihail Manoilescu, "Cum putem reînvia leul de aur?", National Culture, Bucharest, 1923, 3rd Grade 752; Alexandru Marcu, "Itinerar adriatic", Romanian Writing, Craiova, 1937, Second Class 13.034; Stelian Popescu, "O călătorie în Suedia", Universul, Bucharest, 1924, 2nd volume 2.493; Ion Sân-Giorgiu, "A doua primăvară. Sonete", The newspaper "Universul", Bucharest, 1940, 2nd volume 12.881; Romulus Seisanu, "Dobrogea, gurile Dunării și Insula Șarpelui", The newspaper "Universul", Bucharest, 1928, 3rd volume 7.295; Vasile Alexandrescu Urechia, "Cestiunea Basarabiei", Tipografia C.P. Conduratu & I.S. Rădilescu, 1871, 3rd volume 5.781; Alexandru Vaida-Voievod, "Revoluția lui Horea: Conferință ținută la radio în seara zilei de 01 Noiembrie 1934", Academic Press, Bucharest, 3rd Edition 3.579.

They did not escape the vigilance of the censors or the foreign authors, among them: Winston Churchill, "My Life", 2nd edition, "Dawn of the Day" Graphic Arts Institute, Bucharest, (19--?), II.; Adolf Hitler, "The Führer's Speech Delivered on January 30, 1942 in Berlin's Sportpalast at the ninth anniversary of the coming of power to German national socialism", 1942, 2nd volume 14.930; Alfred Rosenberg, "Gestalt der Idee, Band 2", Munich, Zentraverlag der N.S.D.A.P., 1943, Volume II 17.518 (2); Werner Sombart, "German Socialism", Socec, Bucharest, 1943, 3rd Volume 3.345.

Of course, Mihai Eminescu's political work could not be exposed to the general public, because his articles, published for years in the newspaper "Timpul" in Bucharest, written from conservative positions and giving a strong nationalist and patriotic breath, did not match at all with the requirements of the new ideology

designed to manipulate the people towards the central ideas of communism and to a revolutionary, profoundly proletarian thinking conforming to the requirements of the authoritarian regime. But Eminescu was also censored in the poetic work, being pulled out of the circuit those poems that could have been interpreted as attacking the Russians or issuing ideas incompatible with the new dominant ideology. The poem "Doina" has long been hidden, although many of the possible readers knew the lyrics even from school, they resumed their education before 1944. It was only late, very late in the 1980s that "Doina" was brought back to the Romanians through an interesting method: the poem was publicly presented in front of the cameras, in fact in front of a whole people, through the somewhat tolerated boldness of the poet Adrian Paunescu. Officially, the communist regime has never rehabilitated the poem, but as soon as Adrian Paunescu brought it to light, "Doina" circulated after that in any school or any unofficial show.

Interestingly, there is also Vasile Alexandrescu Urechia, the founder of this prestigious institution, on the list of censored authors at the County Library in Galati, which speaks of the absurdity of these acts of a prohibitive nature, because in essence this meant, in a way, to be forbidden in your own house, for Urechia's real spiritual house here is in the building of the former European Commission of the Danube where the over 900,000 documents that were born through the donation from his personal library at the end of the nineteenth century, made so generously to Galați and its population (COROBICA, 2014a).

Throughout the country, immediately after the peace treaty the public libraries and the document storages of any kind began to undergo a severe selection, followed by removing books, brochures, albums, etc. from the circuit. which, according to the conventions with the United Nations and, more recently, with the Soviet Union, were no longer compatible with the new realities. Let us not forget that in the years of the war and even before, Romania, as an ally of the Nazi Germany, had developed a strong legionary movement, involved in the social-political life of the country up to the highest levels, and it also involved a rich propaganda literature which

then, after the defeat of Berlin, could no longer be tolerated. That is why in Romania, in 1945, the forbidding funds or secret funds appeared, which meant the withdrawal from circulation of those documents which, according to ideological language, "had a fascist-hitlerist character" or contained elements that contravened the good relations between Romania and the United Nations or Soviet Union. The mechanism by which this interdiction list was applied was elaborated on the basis of Decree-Law no. 364 "for the withdrawal of certain periodical and non-periodical publications, graphic and plastic reproductions, films, discs, medals and metallic insignia", given on May 2, 1945 by King Mihai and published on May 4 in the Official Gazette. The methodology for implementation was achieved by issuing a separate brochure entitled "List of Out-of-Print Publications" and containing prints whose content violated the principles of good relations between Romania and the United Nations. The purpose of these bans was given by the publications that appeared between the 1st of January 1917 and 23rd of August 1944, namely those containing fascist, Nazi, Legionary and Chauvinist ideas.



The operation itself consisted of several stages: the drawing up of lists of prohibited books, activity carried out at central level by a ministerial commission and at local level by printers, publishers, antiques, libraries, public institutions holding book funds. The removal and handing over of prohibited publications to the County Prefectures / Councils or the Office of Paper Stack for their destruction. Of course, there followed the punishment of those who did not respect this law. Coordinated at the center, the

censorship action followed a specific plan, so that periodic lists of banned documents came in the territory in the form of official brochures with clear, precise titles and with a well-substantiated and argued legal content. Here is a sample from their sequence: "Publications Drawn Out of Circulation Until the 1st of August 1945", Bucharest, Ministry of Propaganda (Commission for the Application of Article 16 of the Armistice Convention), 1945; "Publications Drawn Out of Circulation (Brochure No. 2)", Bucharest, Ministry of Propaganda (Commission for the Application of Article 16 of the Armistice Convention), 1945; "Publications Drawn Out of Circulation (Brochure No. 3)", Bucharest, Ministry of Propaganda (Commission for the Application of Article 16 of the Armistice Convention), 1945; "Publications Drawn Out of Circulation until the 1st of June 1946", Bucharest, Ministry of Information (Commission for the application of Article 16 of the Armistice Convention), 1946; "Publications forbidden until the 1st of May 1948", Bucharest, Ministry of the Arts and Information, 1948; "Prohibited publications: Supplement I, the 1st of May – the 1st of November 1948", Bucharest, Ministry of the Arts and Information, 1948.



These strictly technical details are able to convince us of the strictness and meticulousness of the specialized center bodies that proved in a period in which in Romania there was still formally, a monarchy and, on the other hand, it was under the occupation the soviets, who were preparing the radical change of the political regime and the establishment of the Communists in power.

Moreover, as soon as the new communist leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej took the lead,

another strategy of strict censorship was established. To this end, the Guidelines on the selection of books from the libraries' fund, or the Regulation on the import of press and publishing materials, their classification, keeping and use, were developed, followed by the introduction of Instruction no. 346/13 October 1960 on the establishment of library books by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the General Directorate of Cultural Establishments, through the State Fund of the Book, originally established by the Library Directorate and then merged into BCS with the approval of the Control and Guidance for Local State Administration. Lists of libraries in the country that had the right to hold fund D ("documentary", accessible only to specialists, but with approval) and S ("special", almost inaccessible) are compiled. Scientific papers are introduced under the same regime. Scientific and technical publications are removed from these funds and made available to the public only in 1964 (PETCU, 1999).

There follows a long Ceausescu era with an extremely vigilant censorship, with its representatives in every printing house, from which no new document of a certain social importance could come out without their signature. Generally, in the two decades and a half of dictatorship, Romania had been isolated from the large-scale journalism of Europe and the US, from the valuable books that were being printed in the West at that time. There was also a happy exception, which, unfortunately, lasted for only a few years, and which almost gave the impression of Romanian intellectuals, writers and artists, first of all, that Romania was opening to an almost unexpected freedom. It was the period of 1968-1971, when suddenly there was no firm forbiddence against prints and publishing houses, so that the book had become almost free, and the Western literature had begun to enter the country through translations or direct acquisition. However, there appeared "the July thesis" published in 1971, which announced a fundamental change in the perception of literature and art, which, from now on, had to contribute greatly to the improvement of the ideological activity, of the "Marxist-Leninist education of party members, of all the working class".

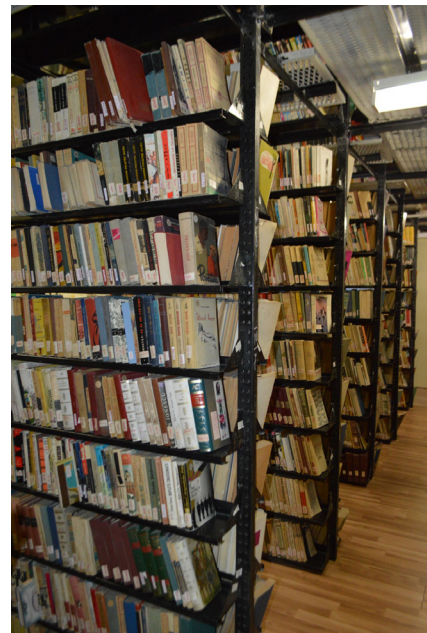
The reaction of the writers, artists and of all the Romanian art creators was immediate, they immediately adopted the most subtle ways of avoiding these "indications" and the continuation of the writings at work, initiating an allusive, seemingly evocative writing, deceitful laudative or altogether ironic, under the camouflage of literary means, a writing to evade the barriers of communist censorship. There appears as a second syndrome of circumvention, the drawer literature, about which many hopes were issued, unfortunately not respected, as seen immediately after the revolution. The exile literature also developed, supported by an important group of writers who managed to flee to the West to continue their work in complete freedom. We must not forget the few cases of dissidence, so we have in front of us a rather rich register of artists' refusal to enrol in an ideology which they did not believe in.

The complete freedom the Romanian writings, the arts, all forms of creation enjoyed as soon as the totalitarian regime was removed did not make censorship in any way possible. Today, everybody can publish everything they want, publishers have no interdictions in making their printing plans, and on the other hand, the press is as free as possible if we do not consider servitude of certain publications to economic or ideological group interests. And, of course, the economic censorship, which does not allow some to publish on their own, in collaboration with certain publishing houses (IGNA, 2002).

Over the past 25 years, so much, fiction, science, political, historical, and specialized literature was printed that it would be extremely difficult to initiate and sustain a quite reasonable classification. In addition, the world's libraries are now deeply involved in the digitization process, and under these conditions, assuming that within a shorter or longer time all existing documentary funds will enter on an electronic basis, the notion of censorship itself must, fundamentally be reformulated. A paper-based book could be retracted, hidden and even burned, but what would happen to a virtual document if its censorship is ever applied? Here's a good deal to consider.

Of course, the international tense situation with terrorist attacks already shows us what

forms can censorship take, even on the Internet. A simple search can give a result like this: "Censorship on the Internet is the control or suppression of publication of/ access to information on the Internet. It can be done by governments or private organizations, government orders, regulatory authorities or on their own initiative. Individuals and organizations can self-censor for moral, religious, business reasons to comply with societal norms because of intimidation or fear of legal or other consequences.



After the Attempt against the Charlie Hebdo magazine in 2015, the Paris government adopted a decree providing the closure of the Jihadist and pedo-pornographic sites without the need for the judgment of Justice. "Not to mention what is happening in Russia, Turkey, in various forms, or in more serious forms in recognized dictatorships. In a top published on the following address: <http://incont.stirileprotv.ro/tehnologie-si-media/ai-putea-sa-traiesti-fara-internet-vezi-ce-tari-cenzuraaza-online-si-si-code-uses.html>, the countries with the most rigid censorship program would be North Korea, Burma, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Iran (IORGULESCU, 2002).

To all of the above presented, it should be mentioned that a crucial role in knowing the debated phenomena is the reference to the history of censorship. Obviously, the books will also be "hidden," even if their digitization will be entirely applied, as well as that of the magazines,

in the context of the information explosion in the democratic countries, information explosion that is also a form of censorship, controlled or not.

The desirability of ensuring the free movement of information adds to the old desideratum of the free movement of persons, which must, of course, be revised in the context of the refugee crisis.

The future of censorship will surely exist because there are categories of population that have to be protected from crimes of all kinds, the censorship can be a means of controlling these crimes and only for that purpose it will have to be designed. It is one of the lessons that history teaches us, from which we must always learn. A history that is always a history of communication too, the only one that ensures people's cooperation, their solidarity, the only one that helps our species really progress, for a better, safer life, in which the freedom of access of persons entitled to certain sources of the information should be provided.

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