

## CENSORSHIP MANIFESTATIONS, AFTER THE GREAT UNION

### MANIFESTĂRI ALE CENZURII, DUPĂ MAREA UNIRE

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#### **Abstract**

*In the present article I carried out a short presentation of the institutional censorship evolution from Romania, after the 1918 Union. It is about the abuse of the Romanian authorities in relation to the press, the cinematography, public meetings, etc., especially towards the Hungarian minority from Transylvania. The studied documents certify that the new kingdom of Romania is concerned about the agreement, a totally arrangement of the press, with the official point of view, that after 1918 in our country controlled pluralism is installed. Of course, these manifests of the authorities are explainable, partially, in the military-political tensions after the first World War, of the communism danger, of the hostile propaganda towards Romania.*

#### **Rezumat**

*În articolul de față am realizat o scurtă prezentare a evoluției cenzurii instituționale din România, după Unirea din anul 1918. Este vorba aici despre excesele autorităților române prin raport cu presa, cinematografia, întrunirile publice etc., în special față de minoritatea maghiară din Transilvania. Documentele studiate atestă că noul regat al României este preocupat de consensualitatea, de un acord total al presei, cu punctul de vedere oficial, că după 1918 în țara noastră se instituie un pluralism controlat. Desigur, aceste manifestări ale autorității sunt explicabile, parțial, în contextul tensiunilor politico-militare de după primul război mondial, al pericolului comunist, al propagandei ostile față de România.*

**Key words:** *Censorship, Romania, Transylvania, press, Great Union, freedom of speech*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Cenzură, România, Transilvania, presă, Marea Unire, libertatea de expresie*

#### **Argument**

The euphoric speech, festive and glorified about the Great Union sometimes hides shadows, such as censorship. More exactly, the censorship established by the administration of the Romanian Kingdom, which is different from the other censorships, meaning that it often takes tougher and more diversified appearances. Even if it passed 100 years since then, we can still talk about a “nowadays censorship” because with the beginning of 1919, according to historians the “contemporary era” begins.

I will present, in the given interference, a historical contour of the institutional censorship, in a “complete”, “reunited”, “united” and so on Romania. Without taking the evocation of the wretch context of the First World War<sup>1</sup>, in which all the territories inhabited by Romanians cross episodes of extreme drama, I hope that it will be understood the necessity of the facts to be judged in context.

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<sup>1</sup> See, „Presa anilor de foc. Secvențe din jurnalismul Primului Război Mondial” /“<Years of fire> press. Footages from the First World War journalism”, in the *First World War press*, coordinator Catalin Negoita, Zanfir Ilie, Tritonic-Axis Libri Editure, Bucharest-Galati, 2015 p. 317-337.

I remind here that on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1918, the Peace Treat from Bucharest is signed, with Romania on one side and Germany, Bulgaria, Austro-Hungary and Turkey on the other side. Practically, the First World War end on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1918, with the surrender of Germany (and the scrapping of Austro-Hungary)<sup>2</sup>.

### **Innovation and continuity in the censorship's practices**

Propagandists aggressions from the neighbored states, the Romanian administration tries to answer with an informational amour, with barriers that were about to complete the ones established during the war<sup>3</sup>. It turned out to be a naivety, but at that time all countries acted in the same way.

As the Romanian Kingdom is doubling, after Union, the formation legislation-laws, rules, formations etc.- is uneven composite and it often contains contradictory formations. The first Hungarian law of the press was enacted in 1848 (Law XVII), inspired by the Belgian legislation, a new law being the one from 1914 (Law XIV), being effective in Transylvania even after 1918. In the former Kingdom the Law Press was taking action from 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1862, but, Ioan Popovici assessed "both laws have basic flaws, they no longer correspond to the democratic spirit which dominates the humanity after the war" so that "a new unification law of the press is wanted and waited for a long time by the entire country"<sup>4</sup>. In Bessarabia and Bucovina, they were producing the formations of the military censorship effect, as well as the civil legislations.

One of the current measures, from which all form of public communications control were intensified was the establishment/extension of the siege, opportunity that the military authority gained unlimited power as a matter of censorship. Even after the end of the war, the siege legislation will give trouble to editors, artists, photographers and so on. For example, the Edict no. 2.798 from 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1916, regarding the siege, will be changed on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1918, meaning that the army is forced "to censorship the press and any publications, having the right to block the issue of any newspaper, publication or just the issue of some news or articles, to control any correspondence either from the outside or from the inside and to block reaching the destination the ones found"<sup>5</sup>.

For instance, the Romanian troupes that were about to enter Transylvania, were told that they have to make sure of the good functioning of the administration, the continuity of the press appearance and other publications, whom "will be restricted the military censorship"<sup>6</sup>. And to make it clearer, the troupes commanders will view the printers that "they are not allowed to print anything without the approval of the censorship, which will be found at the <Country Council>, authorizing one or more members for this Censorship office. There will be called out pressmen and they will be communicated that the press and other publications will be allowed to continue with their appearance, but military censorship will be assessed"<sup>7</sup>.

It is understood that the Censorship was not only watching the press from the occupied territories, but the one from the border of the former Kingdom. Some examples – in November 1918, at Targu Jiu there are 5 publications censored, under the decision of the local Prime-

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<sup>2</sup> *First World War press*, coordinator Catalin Negoita, Zanfir Ilie, Tritonic-Axis Libri Publishing house, Bucharest-Galati, 2015 p.317-337. Note: Trianon Treat (1920) ratifies the Union in the case of Transylvania, Crisana and Maramures. The Versailles Treat (1920), in the case of Basarabia and the one of Saint Germain (1919) and the case of Bucovina.

<sup>3</sup> See the law regarding the state of siege, for example.

<sup>4</sup> *Legea preseii în vigoare în Transilvania /Press Law in force in Transylvania*. Annotated by John I. Popovici, Tip. Unirea, Braşov, s.a., p.2.

<sup>5</sup> *Monitorul Oficial/The Official Gazette*, No. 79 bis, July 1, 1918. On September 6, 1918, the "Decree on censorship of newspapers, telegrams and correspondence" stipulated that "censorship is exercised by the President of the Council of Ministers on all printed products, illustrations, musical products, theatrical or cinematographic performances. The appearance of any new newspaper is subject to the prior approval of censorship".

<sup>6</sup> Bistrita Nasaud County Service of National Archives, personal fund Nacu Dumitru, d. 15/2, f. 3. See *O cronologie a cenzurii în România /A Censorship Timeline in Romania*, coord. Marian Petcu, Tritonic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup> Bistrita Nasaud County National Archives Service, personal fund Nacu Dumitru, d. 15/2, ff. 4-5.

Prosecutor – *Cuvântul Gorjului / The Word of Gorj, Gazeta Poporului din Gorj/People's newspaper from Gorj, Îndrumarea nouă/ The New Leading and Romanism*<sup>8</sup>. At Ramnicu Sarat the newspaper *Amicul Poporului* is suspended because of the “revolutionary” articles like “Old times should be reformed with people from the nation”, “The working nation from the city, so bugged for twenty years, reckless laws, is to be headed in a healthier way”<sup>9</sup> etc.

The end of the year 1918 brings joy as much as concern. For example, on 17<sup>th</sup> December is issued the Order with the no.143 of the Grand Headquarters that states – “1) In the cities where Romanian, Hungarian, and German newspapers will be constituted a form of censorship commission as point number 2 shows and that will have the responsibilities from point 3. 2) The censorship commission will consist of: a) In the cities where there are headquarters (Division, Brigade, Regiment ) that have informative officers of (..) the bosses of these offices, that will help the two appointed interpreters by the county chief b) In the other cities where there will be newspapers there will be named as chief a worthy officer from the Romanian army and the appointed team by the chief of the local administration (if in the county there is no head of prefecture from point a) (..)”<sup>10</sup>.

Whereupon, the heads of the stations from Cluj, Dej and Targu Mures are forwarded the Order no.665 from the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1918, from which they are ordered “1) *All journals that arrive from Budapest will be stopped at station by Military Commander of the Station.* The censorship is done in the station by the Censorship Division and then given to sale, only the newspapers that make no hostile propaganda to the Romanian people, the rest of them being burnt. 2) For journals that appear around Division (the 7<sup>th</sup>) will be left free from censorship, in case they will notice that the behavior is anti-Romanian they will be suspended and given a fee.” In brief, the Edict no.6/1918 of the Troops Commanders from Transylvania from Sibiu specify: “ All product models, as well as their reproduction of writing and illustrations, including the musical ones, made on a mechanical way or chemical way and in store of being disseminated, are submitted to censorship, which is done by the Divisions Commandments and by the Foot Brigades Commandments...”<sup>11</sup>.

The abuse of censorship has made the academics from Iasi to reunite in December 1918, to blame for “keeping the Censorship that gives the man the freedom of thinking, asking the government to be legal. The gesture done by the University of Iasi, made in the Capital an excellent impression, except for the censorship offices and Home Office”<sup>12</sup>, as Vasile Th. Cancicov was writing.

In such circumstances, the leaders of the journalistic community, such as Constantin Ghe. Costa-Foru put their hope into the king. So it is that on 20<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, at his request, as the vice-president of the General Association of the Romanian Press, Costa-Foru<sup>13</sup> is met up in audience by the King Ferdinand I, occasion that the King will receive a memoir, from which we remember: “Sire, The Powers that have the mission of respect your Majesty have three points: censorship, suppression of newspapers, arrest of journalists (..) The press, according to the

<sup>8</sup> *O cronologie a cenzurii în România /A censorship timeline in Romania*, coord. Marian Petcu, Tritonic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, p. 153.

<sup>9</sup> Viorel Frîncu, *Istoria jurnalismului din județul Buzău/ History of Journalism in Buzău County. Chronological Encyclopedia. 1839-2014*, Buzau, Teocora Publishing House, 2015, p. 106.

<sup>10</sup> Marin Călinescu, *Cenzura poștală militară română în Transilvania și Banat, 1918-1921/The Romanian military postal censorship in Transylvania and Banat 1918-1921*, in *The Army and Mass Media. Studies and Communications* presented at the Scientific Session dedicated to the Military Archives Day and the 93th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Historical Military Archives Studies and Conservation Center, Istros Publishing House, Brăila, 2013, p. 51.

<sup>11</sup> Marin Călinescu, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>12</sup> Vasile Th. Cancicov, *Impresii și păreri personale din timpul Războiului României/ Impressions and personal opinions during the War of Romania. Daily diary. August 13, 1916-31, 1918*, vol. II, Bucharest, Workshops of the "Universul" Society, 1921, p. 734.

<sup>13</sup> Constantin Ghe. Costa-Foru (1856-1935), a journalist and lawyer in Bucharest, a militant for human rights. Son of Gheorghe Costaforu (1820-1876), liberal, professor of law, diplomat, first rector of the University of Bucharest.

Constitution, is subject only of the control of the Courts of the Judiciary. Guilty journalists to be judged and punished. We want it, we ask for it; for the more effective and severe responsibilities, the more the authority and the prestige of the Press will grow, and the purged press will fulfill its mission in the state higher and higher. However, the responsibilities are set out in the legal way, openly in the light of the day, and the punishments given by the legal judges. In fact, since the declaration of war, the press, on the basis of the law of siege, has been subjected to a censure harsher than nowhere. In Tsarist Russia she was much more gentle. The law of the state of siege is, however, in law, non-existent, and in fact unconstitutional. Inexistent, - because it was formally abrogated by Article 29 of the Constitution of 1866, which was founded in 1864 after the coup of Voda-Cuza, under which - theoretically - we are still living. It is illegal because a law that contravenes the Constitution can not be lawful (...) For two years and four months, censorship exists, and now, newspapers have been suppressed and, at the same time, the journalists who wrote them were arrested in the block and hospitalized in a hotel”<sup>14</sup>.

With extensive knowledge of the Law, Costa-Foru takes a quick look at the legal grounds of press control, relevant to the history of journalism: “The distinction between 1907 and 1915 is that while the Government of 1907 has fled to reach the press, the 1915 government has rushed over the Press, not only with no inspiration, but with a fierce endorsement. Another difference is that, then, the of dictatorship ad been voted during the strict time limitations at those difficult moments and did not apply to the Press, this time they have been applied for two years and four months, with the tendency to establish a military-civil alternate despotic regime, nor bridle. The absence of law and the factual illegality of the law of the siege is not questionable (...) The exhumation of the law of 1864 had no other purpose but to present with apparently legitimate measures manifestly contrary to the Constitution, in order to mislead the public opinion and in the first place the King of the Land himself (...)In the collection of censored articles and news, the evidence, fully convincing, of the uselessness of the suppression (suppression) of the freedom of the Press and of the great damage to public interests by the establishment of censorship. Ask, Sire, The Censorship the question: Did she find it two years and four months since there is only one article to attract any criminal prosecution to her author? If so, why did not the author go to court? Was there just one news offensive to the defenses and the Army? If so, show it! Now there can be no danger. Censorship of all articles and news that censored. From their objective discussion, it would be easy to see that the censorship efforts served not the public interests of the Land or the Army, but *only political and personal interests* (s.n.). Proven inadmissible in law, censorship remains unjustifiable in fact, throughout the course of its existence”<sup>15</sup>.

The sovereign's reactions are not known, according to the evoked audience, but only the "traces" of the censorship institutions. More elegantly, the meeting did not have the hoped effects. That's why, in the first part of 1919 (especially in February), the Bucharest newspapers published numerous protests against censorship in general, but especially the censorship practiced in Bucovina, Banat and Transylvania<sup>16</sup> by the military authorities. This was the context in which, on February 22, 1919, the Syndicate of Newspaper Directors was set up in Bucharest "in order to defend our mutual interests and our mutual interests”<sup>17</sup>.

Of the many threats to the country, as they were then qualified (more or less legitimate), we mention the Communist movement (the Bolshevik danger), the refusal of the ethnic minorities to accept the new political and military realities ("irredentism"), the refusal of the Hungarian elites to

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<sup>14</sup> *Memoriul Asociației Generale a Presei Române către Majestatea Sa Regele Ferdinand I/Memorandum of the General Association of the Romanian Press to His Majesty King Ferdinand I*, Adevărul Publishing house, Bucharest, 1919, pp. 4-6. Note: these are journalists who worked in the Bucharest editorial offices during the German occupation, including I. Slavici, T. Arghezi, D. Karnabatt and others.

<sup>15</sup> *Memorandum of the General Association of the Romanian Press to His Majesty King Ferdinand I*, Adevărul Publishing house, Bucharest, 1919, p. 8.

<sup>16</sup> Some information about Hungarian media censorship in Cseke Peter, *Valori ale presei maghiare din România /Values of Hungarian Press in Romania (1919-2014)*. *Studies and essays*, Tritonic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> *Dacia*, year I, no.77, 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1919, p.2

take the oath of loyalty to the Kingdom of Romania, propaganda of neighboring countries, attempts to sabotage strategic institutions and others. A complete inventory remains to be done, I have evoked them here to understand the excessive caution of the Romanian authorities. For each of the threats, the archives and press collections kept testimonies.

But let's continue the series of censorship examples. For example, in 1919, a labor magazine, such as *Sfatul muncii/ The Council of Labor*, "the organ of the trade union movement in Brăila and Galati", changed its title and subtitle in *the Social Republic* to the labor council, "socialist-communist organ, Brăila-Galati", but being censored new), the editorial has to give up the words "former" and "communist"<sup>18</sup>. Contrary to the Censorship logic, the Bucharest journalists will choose to address the Queen Maria on May 23, 1919, claiming the treaty they are subject to, as well as the fact that the institution censored the sovereign's statements during a trip to Paris<sup>19</sup>. The answer was kind - you can not say I have not spoken, it will be considered ...

### Protests of journalists continue

A sign of vigilance, even of normality, we would say, were the reactions of the press (neither rare nor true).

For example, the editorial *Universul* accuses the Censorship of Scams, in terms of "Censorship to Complain to Its Masters, Simply Causes Infamy, True Scams (...) This system to cut off the press articles, everything that strikes in the government and its participants so that the public can not know the guilty of the state of affairs today, constituted by the criminal code a scandal and must cease; against him, we must protest from all power and promise to fight until the last breath, as the censors who are complicit in this scam do not escape being punished with all their might. Judgment Day will come. We will not stop the fight that we started and where we are sure, the wretched and speculative audience will be with us"<sup>20</sup>.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1919, *Adevarul* editorial was publishing in a border, the following text: "In this place we find the remnants of the article of our colleague C. Bacalbasa, a ruthless murderous article of censorship, with the head, the middle and the legs cut that it became incomprehensible - we have to suppress it from the newspaper"<sup>21</sup>. "The same edition of the newspaper contains the editorial titled "Keeping the Censorship" by Constantin Mille: "We are told that the new government of King Ferdinand, instead of simply raising the state of siege and censorship, will soften the state of siege, in an interpretative way (?)" and will keep censorship tightening it, for from preventive it will turn it into repressive (s.n.). Of certain matters, it is said that we will be stopped to touch and if someone in the government thinks that the day-to-day orders of the press, that person was not heard, and not the natural justice, even the martial court, will suspend the newspaper (...) Under the current censorship regime you can write what you want. The censor is in the right to cut off the whole article or only the passengers that do not like it. He is accountable to his boss. But you are punishable only if you do not obey and appear with your caged article. How can censorship be thwarted under the militarist regime, as it is natural. *A government of generals who would leave the free press would be nonsense. The army is not being discussed, it is running. That this applies now not only to the military but also to the civilians, that of course means progress, a democratization of the country, an inauguration of a new liberty, but with handcuffs but with a hint of mouth.* But the generals in their naiveté want the press complicit to this new attempt to freedom of thought. The government is calling on the newspaper directors to explain to them about the new regime of the press. I do not know what the other newspapers will do. As far as we

<sup>18</sup> *Publicațiile periodice românești /Romanian periodicals (newspapers, magazines)*. Tom III. Alphabetical catalog: 1919-1924. Bibliographic description by Ileana Stanca Desa, Dulciu Morărescu, Ioana Petrache, Adriana Raliade and Iliana Sulică. Post by Gabriel Ștrempel. Bucharest, 1987, p. 863.

<sup>19</sup> *Universul /The Universe*, Year XXXVII, no. 158, 23 May 1919.

<sup>20</sup> „For Censorship and Censors”, *Universul / The Universe*, XXXVII, no. illegible, 1 Aug. 1919, p.1

<sup>21</sup> *Adevarul*, XXXII, no. 10.912, 2 October 1919, p. 1.

are concerned with *Adevărul* and *the Morning*, we will not fall into the race that stretches out to us. If we are summoned, we will not respond to the invitation.

It is not like an embarrassment that we will do, but as the logical consequence of the attitude that we must have (...) Journalists who respect their pen are obliged to do just like we do<sup>22</sup>. "Over a day, the editors announced that the Presidency of the Council of Ministers issued Decree no. 1.229 (October 3, 1919) whereby "preventative censorship for daily and periodical press. However, it is forbidden to publish the attacks against the Crown, against the current form of government, against the army, against the Allied Powers, as well as incitement to rebellion or against legal order. Also, news of any kind that interests the military situation, apart from those authorized, is also stopped. In case of deviation, reprisal will be done, according to the Law and Decree No. 2.798 of 14 August 1916 on the siege"<sup>23</sup>. In similar terms, he presents *the Dacia* newspaper "The raising of the preventive censorship", mentioning that "any other publications, such as brochures, posters, etc. shall remain subject to the preventive censorship to be exercised by the courts of the place where such publications are to be printed (...). In the Allied provinces, as military operations are still in progress, local and special provisions will be taken "<sup>24</sup>.

C. Mille will return to the Censorship in another editorial called "Dictatorship and Military Terror": "It's over! By the <high> decree-law, which, during the electoral period, establishes a new regime more harsh than before the siege and the censorship, the opposition and the whole country is removed except from the law. It is simply the regime of military dictatorship in which the only Crown is omnipotent, the Crown and the Liberal Party, and as the executor of this double will, is the government of generals. It is a state of fact in which the Constitution and laws are replaced by the regime of good pleasure and terror (...) We can be suppressed throughout the siege. We can be translated before the Martial Court to realize our writing, and so we can be sentenced to more or less severe punishments, of which the death penalty will not be ruled out after all. However, we accept the struggle, under conditions that are equally equal to us. We count ourselves in the middle of an armed band that is outlawed and wears brutal forces, but instead we have only a sign, a cry, the word that can be suppressed from one minute to another - because in its place to be the grave silence. However they will fly this flag and fall we will still cry out: Down the tyranny! Long live your freedom!"<sup>25</sup>

Among the censored publications of Censorship, there were many other titles - for example, on November 6, 1919, some newspapers announced the resumption of *Facla's* magazine in the following terms: "Citizens, Martial Urgency has illegally and abusively suspended the newspaper CHEMAREA, or any other newspaper that will include in the title the word *Call*, either *the Red Call*, *the Social Call*, *the Recall*, etc. Citizens, the rebellion of odious acts, terror, and violations of the Constitution, should not be stifled. This morning FACLA reappeared. Citizens, we all read the FACLA newspaper"<sup>26</sup>.

But censorship did not only look at the forms of communication mentioned above but various other aspects of economic and social life. Each of the regions, localities, communities affected by prohibitions could be cases worthy of the attention of historians. For example, on 10 November 1919, the Prefecture of Timis-Torontal County has replaced all German, Hungarian inscriptions, as well as emblems or trademarks related to the former Hungarian state (from the bicep Hal monarchy), from the public, commercial, industrial and other institutions, with inscriptions in Romanian (within 30 days from the publication of the ordinance). At the same time, secondary inscriptions in the languages of national minorities, institutions, corporations, meetings, etc., are

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>23</sup> *Buletinul Oficial al României / Official Gazette of Romania*, no. 135, October 4, 1919, p. 7.765.

<sup>24</sup> *Dacia*, year I, no. 278, 5 October 1919, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Constantin Mille, "Dictatorship and Military Terror", *Adevărul*, XXXII, no. 10.915, 5 October 1919, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Adevarul*, XXXII, no. 10.947, 6 November 1919, p. 4. Note: *Facla* was a left-wing journal, anti moharnic (founded in 1910), led by N.D.Cocea.

non-confessional, and the persons responsible for enforcing the Ordinance are established.<sup>27</sup> The team of censors in Timisoara, headed by Daniel Voniga<sup>28</sup>, consists of 49 employees and controls the press, correspondence, telephones, train station, and so on,<sup>29</sup> each paying 30 crowns a day.

The Census of Transylvania and Banat was managed, if we can say so, by the Transitional Government called the Conducting Council (Sibiu), an institution that uses a large number of sources of information from the administrative, military, clerical and other sources. But this is how the censorship device appeared on October 1, 1919, according to the Command of the Transylvanian Troops (Sibiu), the General Staff-Office of Information: in the Transylvanian counties, censorship was to operate under the direct authority of the Surveillance Area Command; in the counties belonging to the military area, censorship should be organized by the governor of that area, by all means at his disposal; in Banat, the censorship function "under the control of the garrison commanders of the county residences and under the superior direction of the respective Group Commands"; all the censorship posts in a county were controlled by the Command of the garrison in the capital (residence) county; all postal and telegraphic correspondence from the telegraph-post offices or mayoralties departing from a county (county) had to be centralized at the telegraph-post office in the capital of the county (county), which goes to the census; all newspapers, prints, theatrical and cinematographic representations, speeches of any kind were sent in the manuscript to the censorship station in the county capital; any postal, telegraphic correspondence, newspapers, prints of any kind, as well as C.F.'s correspondence coming from outside the line occupied by the Romanian troops (for example, the Serbian Banat, Yugoslavia- in fact, the Serbo-Croat-Slovenian Kingdom; Hungary; CehoSlovakia - actually, Czechoslovakia; Austria, etc.) had to be submitted to the censorship post in Cluj. The three principles of censorship are presented: censorship at the county level, under the control of the military authorities; the stability of the staff of census offices; independence from troop movements. It is also stated that the censors were state officials, appointed and dismissed by the Transylvanian Troops Command after the approval of the General Headquarters. Censorship should not have allowed the publication of articles, notes, information, etc. to propagate ideas "against State Security; anarchic, blasphemous or revolutionary; against the whole nation in the motherland; against the interest of our nation". Equally, censorship did not allow the publication of articles, notes, information, etc. libelous or injurious to the "Royal Family; our political people (from any party, from the old and the new united territory); against the government (whichever it is) and against the Conducting Council". It was also forbidden to "publish political polemics, with injuries to political people of no nationality or political nuance". Private correspondence in the Old Kingdom, Transylvania, Bucovina and Bessarabia had to be censored within 48 hours of arrival. At the end of the instructions there is a special chapter dedicated to hiring, salaries and payment formalities for censorship services in the area occupied by Romanian troops<sup>30</sup>.

If things can seem predictable, in the context evoked, we have to remember that the French army is also dealing with censorship in the affiliated territories. For example, the Territorial Command of the French Occupation Zone of Banat issues an order by which the newspapers Timișoara *Nepakarat* and *Forward* (Socialist Orientation) suspend their appearance, starting with

<sup>27</sup> Timiș County Service of National Archives, Ordinance Nr. 4.484 of 10 November 1919, file 12-12v, Timis-Torontal County Prefect Fund (1901-1928) (d. 2/1919) (Romanian).

<sup>28</sup> Daniel Voniga (1867-1933) was born in Gyula (in some documents he appears with the name David). Studies in her native town, Beius and Budapest. He studied theology at Arad (1890), then moved to Siria, where he published the magazine *Gazeta Economului*. Priest in Giroc village, gazetteer. In 1886 he was editor in the newspapers *Dreptatea* and *Sunday Sheet* (Timisoara). Collaborates with *the Tribune of the People* (Arad), publishes *Controla* publications and *Priestly magazine*, and others.

<sup>29</sup> Nominal State Nr. 2 of September 21, 1919, 5-6, Timiș County Service of National Archives, Timiș-Torontal County Prefect Fund (1901-1928) (d. 10/1919) (Romanian).

<sup>30</sup> Instructions No. 6622 from October 1, 1919, file 15-19v, 21v, 27-29, Timiș County Service of National Archives, Timiș-Torontal County Prefecture Fund (1901-1928) (d. 10/1919) (Romanian). Note: thank you prof. dr. Eusebiu Narai, West University of Timisoara, for help in documenting.

July 28, 1919. The order is signed by the General of Tournadre<sup>31</sup>. But - as I said - not just the press, firms, names, etc. were censored, but also the films. For example, in the *Universe* it was announced that it was forbidden, who invade revolutionary, international and antireligious ideas or obscenities and indecency, as well as those that suggests evil to doers means that jeopardize public safety; movies that, through dramatis, can shatter the nerves of the public and especially of the youth, those whose subject matter triumphs the cause of evil, the erotic ones and those that inspire deception and disgust of life. (...) Existing movies are divided into three categories today: uncensored, temporarily centered, and definitively centered by projection. Uncensored ones are totally excluded. The provisional pricing is admitted to run only until April 2 at. only with respect to the conditions enumerated here. The houses or cinemas that they will introduce after the final censure, uncontrolled parts of the censorship, will be considered bad faith and will be punished by military justice. It is forbidden to share a title or subtitle in both films and programs<sup>32</sup>". Returning to the editors' reactions from *Adevărul*, I mention the unnamed "Parliament and Censorship" from November 25, 1919 - "The first duty of the Parliament is to demand and impose the suppression of the press censorship. Freedom of the press is the essential condition of parliamentary life. In Parliament working in a country where the press suffers the terror of the censorship, it is not a Parliament but a the secret cenacle, because he does not have the echo and the echo that gives the press free speech, he can not find out what they are thinking, what they feel, what they expect in times and moments from their mandates. That is why, before starting any work, Parliament must say: In part, the censorship and re-entry into the freedom of the press, as provided by the old Constitution, because if the freedom of the press is not conquered now, the Romanian people can say goodbye to all the other citizens' liberties, the first one being their pledge and leverage"<sup>33</sup>.

Finally, under the pseudonym Saturn, on 5 December the article "Anomaly Censure" could be read: "The very fact that the Censorship is in force after a Parliament has been elected by universal suffrage is an anomaly (...) Two months before the election, a military regime was in place, and preventative censorship became repressive in the kingdom, but it remained preventive in the liberated regions, where it continued to prevent any manifestation of thought that was not the covenants of the censors. The media and public opinion in Transylvania, Bucovina and Bessarabia are mutilated daily in expressing their thoughts. This incoherence and anomaly must cease. Parliament is bound to end if it claims to be the country's expression"<sup>34</sup>.

### **Suspensions and protests**

And the year 1920 is marked by censorship. Newspapers are suspended - *Socialismul* (Bucharest) for the promoted pro-communist / republican discourse; *Rendkivnali Ujsag* (Arad), for offending affirmations for the royal family of Romania, etc. Others are severely censored – *Luptătorul /The Fighter*, *Chemarea/ Calling*, *Neamul românesc/ The Romanian nation*; new newspapers are forbidden, like *Lumea nouă /The New World*. Calls are being made for embargoes - under the title "Lovers of Censorship" the editors at *Chemarea* urge journalists "not to forget the lawmakers who voted for censorship and ignore them when they will again need the support of the press" (19<sup>th</sup> of December 1920). There are alarm signals - in the *Dacia* newspaper (Bucharest, October 14, 1920), alarming articles about the press situation in Transylvania appear. The newspaper *Înfrățirea / The Brotherhood* in Cluj had been sued for no good reason, the newspaper *Țărănimea/Peasantry* in Sibiu already had "seven lawsuits on the grounds that it attacked official persons"; *Renașterea română/The Romanian Renaissance* in Cluj, she was also intimidated by the authorities, and *Patria's* routines were often carried out with threats<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Order no. 1762/2 of July 28, 1919, file 22, Timiș County Service of National Archives, Timiș-Torontal County Prefecture Fund (1901-1928) (d. 11/1919) (French).

<sup>32</sup> "Censorship of Cinema Films", *Universul*, nr. 137, 20 February 1919, p.1.

<sup>33</sup> *Adevarul*, XXXII, no. 10.965, 25 November 1919, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> *Adevarul*, XXXII, no. 10.974, 5 December 1919, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Marian Petcu, coord., *A censorship timeline in Romania*, Tritonic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, p. 168.



Thus, on 12 March 1921, the press published the letter of the President of the General Press Association to the Minister of the Interior: "The Minister, the President of the Journalists' Union of Cluj, telephonies me that the prefect of the county has suspended the most senior newspapers appearing in the Hungarian language, praying to intervene with you. Indeed, no matter how aggressive, embracing and provocative we find the press appearing in the Hungarian language in Transylvania, we can not take against it measures similar to those which the Hungarians have taken against our newspapers, which they thus qualify. Article 24 of the Constitution prohibits the suspension of newspapers. If the newspapers in question fell in contravention of the law, they would be brought to justice; and the prefect to guard himself from being in contravention of the Constitution of the land, applicable to Transylvania since the proclamation of the union<sup>36</sup>".

The press collections reported do not show any signs of censorship of censorship mechanisms following this move. The paper crisis, in fact rationalization (discretionary distribution) was seen as a way of limiting the freedom of the press, suspending the appearance of some publications, thus compromising the contractual relationship with their subscribers, as well as many other forms of limiting media distribution have been blamed as much as editorial staff have been allowed. Here are a few cases. On February 20, 1920, the appearance of the *Schwäbische Volkspresse* (false allegation of accusation) was suspended for three days; on May 12, 1920, *the Socialism and Calling* (Bolshevism) newspapers were suspended; on May 25, 1920, the distribution of the newspaper is forbidden *Desteptarea* (edited in Detroit, USA - accused of Bolshevism); on July 22, 1920 *Temesvári Napló* newspaper (irredentism) was suspended; on November 15, 1920 *Munkáslap* (socialist), *Szakszervezet* magazine and the German edition *Arbeiter Zeitung* are forbidden; on 30 September 1920 *the Banater Tagblatt* newspaper was suspended for six days (hostile attitude to the Romanian kingdom) and so on.

There will be editorial strikes, public protests, critical articles, suspensions, suppressions and bankruptcies, print strikes.

### **Instead of conclusions**

Exploring the public archives in Romania and neighboring countries (civil, military, religious), capitalizing on private archives could reveal new aspects of power transfer in the territories that united with Romania (1918), repression mechanisms, actors of repression (civil and military), influences on culture / cultural diversity, patrimony issues and others.

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<sup>36</sup>See *Avântul* newspaper, cf. Marian Petcu, coord., *A cronology of censorship in Romania*, Tritonic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, p. 170.

