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Outcomes and Perspectives

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A SURVEY ON INQUISITORIAL MICROCENSORSHIP OF BOOKS IN PORTUGAL: OUTCOMES AND PERSPECTIVES*

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According to Philipp Gaskell, the core purpose of the bibliographical science is «to serve the production and distribution of accurate texts» [1972, 1]. The early modern two-sided censorship, prohibition and expurgation, addresses the question of book production and distribution inasmuch as it interferes with the book market and raises issues in particular towards scribal expression and text reception. Consequently, the history of censorship is tightly linked to the bibliographical concerns, which implies a global approach. This point tends to oppose the skepticism among historians of culture and ideas: as Alain Viala summarized, «the Ancien Régime censorship cannot be viewed but through localized approaches»¹. In the debates raised by papers I read on microcensorship, it has been frequently argued that considering the individual book comes down to doom the field to a case-to-case study and leads to deprive the field of large scale theorization. Microcensorship is deeply rooted in the study of individual book. After defining this kind

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^{1. «}La censure d'ancien régime ne peut être envisagée que par des études localisées». See Viala 2009, 340 (my translation).

of textual control in the early modern period, the present work aims at showing its transversality and unity in diachronic and synchronic terms and then at analysing the information provided by the investigations I have been carrying out since 2010.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS MICROCENSORSHIP?

At first, microcensorship is not the only modality of books and texts control, but it happened to be the most sophisticated and systematic put on place during the early modern period in European countries so as to address the question of the proliferation of books consecutive to the printing technology. The word appeared in the last decades in the context of the Internet, referring to word deletions in social networks. An article entitled The Velocity of Censorship: High-Fidelity Detection of Microblog Post Deletions was published in 2013. It dealt with keywords based automatic proceedings of censorship [Tao Zhu 2013]. More recently, the collaboration of Google with China authorities through the Dragonfly case illustrated powerful censoring procedures of blocking access to information. The notion of microcensorship is used here as a near synonym of expurgation. A «near synonym» because expurgation, from the Latin word expurgatio, officially referred to textual censorship by the early modern Inquisitorial cultures. Ugo Rozzo, a specialist of Roman censorship, described the expurgation as an innovation introduced in 1559 [1997]. This is true only in the perspective of the sixteenth century catholic censorship and of the making of the modern indexes of prohibited books, the first of which to be published was produced by the Parisian Faculty of Theology². In fact, this procedure largely overcomes all time and space boundaries. Historically, the procedures of control of texts come back to the Antiquity [Gil 1961, 254, on Curitius Maternus; Rudich 2006-2007; Wilson 1983] and, geographically, all cultures, inquisitorial or not, from the Antiquity to our times, used textual purifying procedures, from suppression to substitution. Textual modes of euphemisation, like medieval moralizations [Bisconti 2000; Lachaud 2010], French classical ad usum Delphini editions [Volpilhac-Auger 2000] or nineteenth

^{2.} About modern indexes of prohibited books, see the editions of Martínez de Bujanda in bibliography.

century bowdlerization [Jones 2001, I, 276-277; Perrin 1994], is another common and still available procedure in this framework.

Closer to the so called innovation, the early modern censorship cataloguing technology is rooted at least in two kinds of lists: the catalogs of errors, with the famous Parisian thirteenth century *Collectio errorum* [Bianchi 1999, 58-61 and 215; Thijssen 1998] and the lists of heretics, like Bernardo de Lutzenburgus's *Catalogus haereticorum*, published from 1522 to 1537. A few years before the official introduction of the catholic expurgation by the Tridentine commission for the Index [Sacra Congregatio Index librorum prohibitorum 1564] and the first expurgatory [Index expurgatorius 1571], the Spanish published a *Censura generalis*, a list of biblical errors to be amended [Censura generalis 1554]. Early modern expurgatio should also be approached within the framework of Humanism and of what Anthony Grafton, focused on the Renaissance typographers, called the «culture of correction» [2011]. Organized practices of censoring corrections of ancient texts are documented from the end of the Quattrocento [Monfasani 1988].

The censorship studies tend to be fragmentated, which can be explained by the national approaches according to the variety of confessions, legal systems and politics of control in European countries. Differences existed even between the Inquisitorial countries [Bethencourt 1996, 9-11], and sometimes conflicts happened [Mattos 2013]. However, comparative approaches, still lacking in the field of the censoring proceedings [Alcalá 1992, 421-456; Infelise 1997, 261-279], and analysis of technological transfers (with, for example, the adoption or the counterfeits of indexes of prohibition) lead to a more unifying and comprehensive but also complex view shown by this mapping of European connexons.

As mentioned above, microcensorship is a systematic and specific modality of text control but its tools spread far beyond the boundaries of the inquisitorial countries. The question of their use in non-inquisitorial countries demands further investigations. Some were initiated for the French case [Baudry 2018 & 2020b; Quantin 2015]:

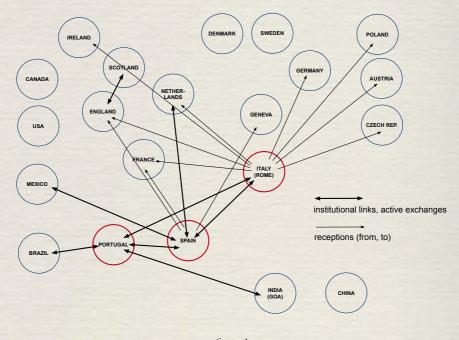


figure 1

Mapping the European production and the world reception of inquisitorial indexes

THE PROCEEDINGS: TWO EXAMPLES OF HOW MICROCENSORSHIP WAS ACHIEVED

The methodology of early modern microcensorship was initially carried out in the framework of the history of medicine in Portugal. The analysis of the items targeted by the censors show that the medical works represent between 5 and 11% of the total items to be expurgated according to the indexes of expurgation published between 1571 and 1624. Further investigations were extended to the humanist Thomas More [Baudry 2016], to the French historians (between 7 and 18% of the total) [Baudry 2013] and the Classical authors. One can consider that these investigations are the tip of the iceberg: except some precise works in other disciplines, the biggest part has to be methodologically carried out in Theology, Law, the other sciences and Humanities. This does not mean that nothing has been done on textual censorship in these areas, mainly in

Literature³. In the case of Law, probably the field less studied, the works of Laura Beck Varela are worth noting [2013].

Microcensorship specificity relies on the fact that expurgative censorship was principally carried out thanks to the use of *ad hoc* indexes. Referred to under the generic title of *Index librorum prohibitorum* or *Indexes of prohibition*, these instruments have been updated along the centuries and delivered precise information about all censoring prescriptions within the texts listed. The main outcome of these investigations consists in assuming the non-arbitrarity and assessable effectiveness of microcensorship practices that imply all the indexed works.

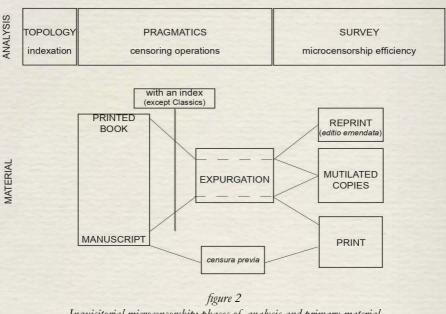
Let us consider two cases. At first, Amato Lusitano's works, a Jewish Portuguese Physician, were read all over Europe. His copies can be easily located in our days throughout the libraries. His first indexation comes back to the Portuguese expurgatory of 1581 that imposed four suppressions [Catalogo dos livros 1581, 27v]. Deletions and corrections were amplified up to the hundred from the next Portuguese expurgatory published in 1624 [Baudry 2017, 39 and 58-59]. Dov Front, a physician interested in Iberian early modern censorship, published two articles on his expurgation [Front 1998 & 2001]. Their interest comes from the impression he felt toward the mutilated copies, some of which he bought in Spain. For him, the presence of the cen expurgator sor is revealed by his seemingly bad-tempered inky deletions: undoubtfully, while reading the text he had been reacting against the scandalous propositions of the author and supressed passages. This trend can also be illustrated by Silvana Menchi's contribution: she set up an interesting typology to describe Erasmus's expurgations listing diferent levels of phenomena (chronology, material interventions, targeted contents). However, she failed to unify the normative proceedings used for microcensorship and concluded that the subjectivity of the individual censor played a critical part in the censoring practices [Menchi 1997]. Though we sometimes might be tempted to infer subjective attitudes from deleting styles that make the words unreadable or not, nothing was, in fact, more objectively achieved than expurgation.

Of the 82 copies consulted in the Portuguese libraries, 49 show evidence of censorship (59.75%). Every mutilated copy may provide

^{3.} The bibliography is quite abundant but dispersed as most of the contributions concern one author's work. As to Portugal, see Martins 2005.

multifaceted information, in particular about the circumstances of expurgation (agent, place, date, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries), the style of the deletions, and, more crucial toward a theorization, the degrees of censoring practices.

Secondly, let us consider Oliva Sabuco's Nueva Filosofia. The majority of the copies located in the local funds (nine of fourteen) are those of a Portuguese edition published in 1622 which is an expurgated reprint. Of the remaining five Spanish editions, four show evidence of censorship. Therefore, it is likely that the Portuguese public could not but read a purified text, whether from the original prints (1587 and 1588), whether in the expurgated one [Baudry 2017, 26 and 35]. Both cases illustrate the two axes of the microcensoring chain from the printed and handwritten copies to the cleansed texts. Microcensorship was a planned operation within the censoring chain which can be mapped by the following table:



Inquisitorial microcensorship: phases of analysis and primary material

Historically, most of the phenomena observed as the microcensoring of printed texts happened during the post-press period. The censura previa is left apart because it happened as a pre-press procedure; technically, it also deals with the issues of microcensorship but the manuscripts are not copies but originals.

Furthermore, from these investigations that cover more than 600 copies we can state that expurgation was a bureaucratic task. According to the sociologists of the organisation, bureaucracy aims at limiting the arbitrary and at resolving the issue of organizational efficiency [Mayntz 2010]. As a border case, some wrong deletions appear to have been made under mere routine. In chronological terms, a stabilized situation, that is the full effectiveness of phases 1 and 2, could not be fully implemented before the production and diffusion of the expurgatories, that is from the last quarter of the sixteenth century⁴. We can say that the seventeenth century was the golden age of microcensorship.

Just a few words about the Classics [Baudry 2020a]. They were scarcely indexed (except Artemidorus and Lucian). When their name appears in an index, in the great majority of the cases it is because they are edited or commented by heretics, like Platon edited by Serranus or Ciceron by Melanchthon. Therefore the textual purification was mostly achieved for pedagogical purpose, in particular in the Jesuit colleges [Fabre 1995]. The expurgated copy of a Classic, like Horatio's poetry, and of any other modern author looks exactly the same.

SOME REFLEXIONS ON THE FIELD OF THE MICROCENSORSHIP STUDIES

Early modern censorship: effectiveness and efficiency

Early modern censorship inefficiency is a commonplace in the historiography⁵. Many historians checked out situations in which prohibition

^{4.} Consider Index expurgatorius 1571 (not for overall diffusion); Catalogo dos livros 1581; Index librorum expurgatorum 1584; Index librorum expurgandorum 1607; Index librorum prohibitorum 1612; Index Auctorum 1624; Novus index 1632, and Novissimus librorum prohibitorum et expurgandorum index 1640.

^{5.} See Costa 2013, 267; Manningn 2009, 73; Leitão and Martins 2006, 49-50; Rodrigues 2005, 190; Jones 2001, II, 1152; Marquilhas 2000, 365 and 372, and Domingos 1993, 193-194.

was not achieved and where, according to modern patterns, it should have occurred. Thus they induce the weakness or near inexistence of real controls. Besides, contrary to the eighteenth century, in particular with the investigations in the clandestine book and the market policies (with a reference, in passing, to Robert Darnton's studies), the history of early modern censorship lacks documents to assess the flows. The historians are mainly doomed to investigate the remaining products. Recently, Beck Varela explained that we cannot expect full efficiency due to the very limits of the laws and circumstances themselves [2015, 71-89]. It may also appear easier to measure the effects of censorship on one individual, for example a writer or the owner of books, than on a collective level. But a survey on a specific print production may give strong answers on censorship efficacy [Pailler 1981]. The methodology of microcensorship studies also gives evidence to varied degrees of efficiency, as for example with Amato Lusitano and Oliva Sabuco. And, contrary to the studies on macrocensorship, or full prohibition of the works, such investigations lead to collect meaningful datas and therefore may aim at generalizing factors. But, as the investigations are limited to the extant copies (however, thousands of them), we only can assert that relatively to a given number of copies that have been consulted one by one, x percent provide information about aspects of microcensoring achievement. These elements make up the basis of data to launch comparative approaches between periods, disciplines and places.

When we speak of efficiency, we should precise on what level: the market as a producing-consuming framework, the intellectual producer (the «author») or the material producer (from printers to sellers), the consumer (collective, individual). According to José Pardo Tomás, a historian of the scientific censorship in Spain, it is all about a question of readership: «Censorship almost did not impact on the individuals (most of them were far from its reach), not even on the books, but in fact addressed the readers by whom it was obviously mainly concerned»⁶. There is deep continuity between the apprentice reader and the learned adult: both relie more or

^{6. «}La censura inquisitorial no actuó casi sobre los autores (la mayoría de ellos lejos de su alcance), ni siquiera sobre los libros por sí mismos, sino que iba claramente dirigida a los lectores: ellos eran su principal preocupación». See Pardo Tomás 2003 & 2004, 12 (my translation).

less directly on the books. These highly suspicious objects, in particular since they have been multiplied thanks to typography, are controlled both externally, at the level of the market, and internally, within the text. The first investigations encourage thinking like Bianchi who, on the point of medieval censorship, was convinced that the mechanisms of ideological control generally achieved their goal⁷.

Self-censorship is an important issue for the historians once it deals with expression and textual creativity, possible factors of innovation and sometimes sources of heterodoxy. But this capacity is first the apanage of the learned community. The massive effect of microcensorship over everyone's intellectual life must have reached, in number of people and degrees of sensibility, proportions that self-censorship, related to theorization of controls effectiveness, can be considered as a collateral issue⁸: text silencing, as the microcensorship proceedings can be defined, provides a key answer against the dangers of books and texts. Strategically focused on the receptors, its tactics allow description in every aspect. In other words, analysing the levels of effectiveness reflects the search for efficiency.

Cleansing the library: microcensoring as a massive attack

microcensorship procedures and consequent efficiency are related to cultural topics such as the anti-humanist reaction against the proliferation of books and their selection between good and bad works, full or partial orthodox and unorthodox texts⁹. Seemingly paradoxical, microcensoring

- 7. «Les mécanismes de contrôle idéologique [...] ont en général atteint leur but». See Bianchi 1999, 57.
- 8. The concept of self-censorship was born among the early twentieth century psychologists and later adopted by the historians of censorship studies. See Binet & Simon 1908, 140-145. Originally a mental mechanism of correction, it became the equivalent within each individual of the institutions of control, henceforth the idea of an interiorisation of the «censor». In this way, Charles Dejob, though deprived of the concept of self-censorship, argued that «in France, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, no expurgated editions were published; the authors ended up expurging their works themselves» (1884, 198). However, Dejob, who was uninformed about expurgated editions in France, interestingly links his theory of French classicism to the post-Tridentine structures of control.
 - 9. On the notion of anti-humanism, see Gouhier 1987.

exhibits the silencing of the texts. Showing what should not be read, the «censor» (generic term for the function and its agents) aimed at moving away from innocent reading, setting up an individual mental cordon sanitaire around the book. A generalized suspicion shades over what originally was a divine invention for the humanists. In that sense, the issue of the libraries is crucial until the eighteenth century as Lucien Nouis showed in his essay From the infinite of the libraries to the unique book [2013; my translation]. The raise of librarianship (in French «bibliothéconomie») in the inquisitorial context is not a coincidence. The French Jesuit Claude Clément [1635, 396 and 404], a professor at the Imperial College of Madrid under the reign of Philip II, wrote a treatise on library science applied to the Royal Library of Saint Lawrence of the Escorial. A «sacral space» [Géal 1999, chap. 6], the library is, according to its decorum, the mirror of the triumph over the Evil, exhibiting condemned heretics, like Paracelsus or Sleidanus, in the form of carvatids. It is also a cleansed space out of which, in conformity with the inquisitorial censorship, undesirables are expurgated, hidden or burnt 10. In another passage, Clément explains the politics of control we are interested in here: for him, some books vowed to jail (in Latin, carcer) may be read by faithful people because they are a mix of good and bad things, as it is the case with the texts written by mathematicians, poets, chemists, philologists and historians [1635, 432]. These happy few in the temple of the Muses, above any suspicion, are the ones who deserve reading licenses because they are theologically trained to separate the wheat from the chaff. Achieving this task for the common of the mortals, microcensorship, for its part, meets pragmatism: if the rot has already set in, you should remove it and keep the useful part. For us, the ultimate consequence is that theology appears to make a breach in its own fortress, opening to secularization by removing itself from the other disciplines, in particular sciences. In this sense, microcensorship

^{10.} According to Jean-Louis Haquette 2008, 211, Naudé and Clément conceive the library within a same common humanist background. He sees in the *Musei* an «encyclopedic cumulative logic» («logique encyclopédique cumulative», 204). But he never takes into account the Jesuit's firm position against the heresy materialized through the library decoration and the book cleansing procedures (Clément 1635, 396, 404 and 433). Naudé was the exact opposite librarian, claiming against the Roman expurgations: 1644, 88; see also 31-33 and 96-97. On the question of the good and bad books, Montaigne's humanism opposes Descartes's anti-humanism, as is exposed in Baudry 2015, 278-280.

studies meet the need for a reevaluation of secularization and the process of disenchantment¹¹.

CONCLUSION

The study of early modern microcensorship proceedings drastically improve our understanding of what was done and give us a clearer and more comprehensive view of the phenomena. No theory of censorship and, broadly, of text controls can avoid factors that implied, during centuries and at a high level, much human and intellectual resources, from the quest of the targets to the control of the consumer. The necessity for wide and systematic investigations on this field can be grounded on the fact that, inside the early modern censorship studies, this field is now duly methodologized and proved to provide varied upstream and downstream information.

Another point is that microcensorship studies occupy a central position at the crossroads of theorizations. Against the vertical traditional conceptions of medieval and early modern censorship and following Alain de Libera's steps on censorship as a mediator and a «historical operator» or, in the words of Samantha Sherry, a «productive process» [2010, 2], various theorizing frameworks were set up in the last decades that shed light on specific relationships and operating modes involving powers and strongly embodied by individuals, like the theories of theological negotiation for the jewish canon [Raz-Krakotzkin 2007], commercial collaboration in Geneva [Jostock 2007] or self-control among the Spanish historians [Esteve 2017].

Civil and religious learned's spatiality is tightly framed between creative productive spaces, in particular writing rooms or halls, academies, printing houses, and the consuming and diffusing places like bookshops, libraries or reading spaces. This is where intervene three kinds of agents according to Jean Jehasse in his study on the raise of literary criticism: «The words *Critic* and *Critics* are equal to 'censorship' and 'censors', 'correction' and 'correctors'» [1976, 672]. Obviously, microcensorship studies meet the general concerns about the history of deletions. Besides Grafton's approach, we

^{11.} The paradoxical effect of the catholic censorship on, at least, early modern culture has not been taken into account by Taylor 2007.

can join Bernard Cerquiligni's perspective of literary genetics and a «new philology» towards the writing of a «history of the correction of printed stuff» ¹². Though Cerquiligni never tackles the issue of censorship, the purpose of the microcensorship studies critically addresses the issues of modern history of authorship and text-making.

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12. «Une histoire de la correction des choses imprimées». See Cerquiligni 1989, 20.

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RESUMEN: En este trabajo el autor ofrece un panorama sobre cuestiones relativas a la microcensura en la Alta Edad Moderna. Esta noción de microcensura pretende abarcar la historia teórica y práctica de la expurgación de textos. Se fundamenta metodológicamente en la observación, el análisis y la interpretación de todos los fenómenos que afectan a la producción textual de la Alta Edad Moderna, impresos y, en menor medida, libros manuscritos. Este acercamiento sistemático se ha llevado a cabo hasta ahora en casi mil copias en bibliotecas portuguesas y no portuguesas, la mayoría en disciplinas de humanidades y ciencias. Es el momento de preguntarse qué lecciones se pueden extraer desde este enfoque metodológico y cuáles son los resultados en este contexto y desde una perspectiva europea más amplia.

PALABRAS CLAVE: censura, expurgación, Alta Edad Moderna, Portugal.

ABSTRACT: In this paper, the author provides an overview of the issues of early modern micro-censorship. This notion aims to cover the theoretical and practical history of the expurgation of texts. It is methodologically grounded on the observation, analysis, and interpretation of all phenomena throughout the early modern textual production, that is, printed and, in a lesser degree, handwritten books. This systematic approach has been done so far on nearly a thousand copies in Portuguese and non-Portuguese libraries, mostly in the disciplines of humanities and science. It is now possible to ask ourselves what lessons we can learn from such a methodological approach and what are its outcomes, both in this context and in a broader European perspective.

KEYWORDS: censorship, expurgation, early modern period, Portugal.