

# New Europe College Yearbook 2011-2012



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## ON “IDEOLOGICAL VIGILANCE”: CONTROLLING DAILY NEWSPAPERS IN ORADEA DURING THE FIRST YEARS OF CEAUȘESCU’S SYSTEM (1966-1970)<sup>1</sup>

Though elite groups and culture consumers in Ceaușescu’s Romania have experienced censorship, its complete history is not yet written. By stock-tacking some techniques of the General Directorate for Press and Printing – Direcția Generală pentru Presă și Tipărituri, the longest-living institution for censoring in the socialist Romania<sup>2</sup> – my study tries to add pieces to this unfinished puzzle. Analyzing mechanisms of control on local newspapers in the 1960s and 1970 (1966-1970), through national and local archive sources and interviews, has three main objectives: to reveal techniques of censoring daily newspapers, to place these strategies in a complex world of the state- communist power and to identify similarities and differences in controlling majority (Romanian) and minority (Hungarian) daily newspapers from Oradea during the above-mentioned decade.

First two issues (describing mechanisms of control and placing them in a matrix of power) are strongly interrelated in the following sections. Though enlisting all aspects of the broader network of control is incomplete, it clearly indicates what an institution of censorship in state-socialist Romania was set up for. As it has already been stated, the GDPP was – by its constitutive act – subordinated to the Communist Party (Kiss, manuscript), being responsible only for effecting the control, not for elaborating its principles, or applying refined techniques of sanctions to the elites. Hence, this paper cannot bring into light the nuanced and sophisticated set of devices used to control citizens of the ceaușist Romania; it describes functions of a mechanical machinery (the GDPP), which – in lack of basic researches on the topic – are still partly unfolded up till now.

A second pillar for my analysis – ethnicizing censorship – claims to contrast the overwhelming idea of minority victimization, related by many members of the Hungarian cultural elite (see for instance Cseke in Petcu, ed. 2005). As repression towards ethnic Hungarians in Ceaușescu's Romania was embedded in assimilationist politics and therefore experienced by almost each member of the minority group, the aim of my paper is not to reject but to nuance this phenomenon.

### **Approaching censorship**

However Romanian censorship-literature proposes to reveal its societal aspects, except one paper (Kiss, manuscript) it has no other aim than mere description of control, in lack of solid theoretical frame (Petcu, 1999; Petcu ed. 2005; Györffy, 2007; Marino, 2000, etc.).<sup>3</sup> Moreover – in many cases –, data collection is rather unsystematic: Ion Zainea, for instance, in his study on the local branch of the General Directorate of Press and Printing from Oradea, selects archive documents without revealing his sampling methods (Zainea, in Petcu 2005). It could be so, as investigations on controlling high culture and public sphere in Romanian state socialism are obstructed by the lack of basic researches and the scanty preservation of documents especially on the last decades of Ceaușescu's regime.

Out of describing – in a, hopefully, systematic way – general mechanisms of controlling daily newspapers, aspects of minority studies' were chosen as theoretical framework for approaching censorship. During state-communism, similarly to the 1920s and 1930s, the Hungarian minority nationalism in Romania was, too, strongly connected with public discourses; it implied not just setting up own institutions but also a textual representation of national aspirations and launching such imagery in the public sphere (Bárdi, 2004; Gáll, 1995; Domokos, 2004). Being in a framework of the (Romanian) nationalizing state, Hungarian cultural nationalism implicitly entailed a minority condition: members of the group had smaller chances to have their nation-building projects accepted, compared to the majority elite. Albeit some scholars deal with minority aspects of censoring, (Lázok in Olti-Gidó eds. 2009; Györffy, 2007 Cseke in Petcu eds. 2005) – except Klára Lázok – they regard controlling Hungarian culture and public sphere through an “isolationist” approach. The above-mentioned authors focus on specificities of the minority censorship and give less stress to its stately designed framework,

common for both Romanian and Hungarian institutions. In order to adjust such empirical insularity, my work proposes a comparison between the censor-interventions on local Hungarian and Romanian newspapers, to avoid a taken for granted approach of minority and majority conditions. Subsequently, this comparison aims to understand whether the sociological term of minority group can be applied to the investigated archive material: according to the literature (for a collection of relevant bibliography see Horváth 2006) minority groups, including ethno-national ones, are not necessarily smaller in number compared to a majoritarian counterpart, their inequality consists in limited access to resources. Contrasting Hungarian and Romanian censored materials (both belonging to the same genre, both being subjected to interventions of the same agents) meant to answer whether the Hungarian press had undergone to a different, more severe treatment compared to the Romanian one.

As it had already been mentioned, the purpose of my study is to compare censor-interventions on the Romanian (*Crișana*) and Hungarian (*Fáklya*) newspapers from Oradea in the first years of Ceaușescu's regime. Out of the availability of data (local archives in Oradea preserved documents on GDPP only from 1966 to 1977, till GDPP and CPP ceased to function), the period for investigation was meaningfully assigned: it meant to complete the contributions of Kiss Ágnes, who has been doing censorship in the Groza and Dej-periods (Kiss, manuscript).

Analyzing local dailies in Oradea has many other reasons: together with a difficult and sophisticated control of *Familia* literary journal, the two newspapers represented a major activity for the local GDPP branch. Though, stock-tacking and analyzing interventions on *Familia* would bring into light many nuanced aspects of censorship (see the section on unjustified interventions), I had to renounce its complete presentation. This is due to my limited knowledge on a general framework of the Romanian literature, as well as a lack of a local Hungarian counterpart for the journal.

Two types of methods were used in this paper: the use of local and national archive sources, completed by interviews with former journalists. Added to some unrecorded talks, there were also conducted two recorded interviews: one with a former column-editor in the central Hungarian newspaper in the 1960s and 1970s and his wife, the other with a former woman journalist from the Hungarian daily published in Oradea; in lack of respondents, I have no interviews with the old local Romanian editorial staff.

Before beginning to picture a larger framework for the ideological control and the mechanisms of censorship, my paper offers some details about the field, the GDPP local branch in Oradea. The local institution of censorship in the town had four members: Teodor Copil, as president of the team, Emilia Bölönyi, Andrei Opreș and Vasile Nagyari, the latter replaced after his emigration in 1970 by Ioan Lenghel. The local institution is responsible for controlling the local periodicals, like *Familia* cultural journal, as well as other publications (brochures, including those of the town museum, secondary-school newspapers). It also controlled the local TV and radio-stations, the import and export of printed matter. Two of the censors were controlling *Familia*, the other two the newspapers.

In accordance with Order 113/1966, the control of literary journals was assigned to local censors, instead of those at the center, in Bucharest. As the archive documents show, for the censors in Oradea it was a difficult task to accomplish:

Though *Familia* journal, is paralelly studied by the Regional Party Committee, there are still some faults in the control. (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1967, p. 13)

Or:

It is widely acknowledged that *Familia* is the richest a most difficult domain, I'd say. (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 12/1968, p. 8)

## **A general context**

### **1. Ideological work, or the Party being everywhere**

The role and place of the Communist Party is important for understanding censorship. Similarly to the situation in other communist states, the Romanian public sphere was officially subordinated to the party ideology. In order to make citizens familiar with the "true" line, the system set up occasions to "socialize" its people. In the first years of Ceaușescu's rule, party ideologies were conveyed through three main channels: schools and courses, arts, and mass media.

Schools and courses for adult citizens (organized by local party organizations and UTM, the Union of Working Class Youth) was the first



item of this series; in regular school curricula, as well as in the evening “party schools” (*școala de partid*), courses on political economy, dialectical materialism and scientific socialism were organized. Art and literature were equally “charged” with ideological values, which meant that they had to echo the ideological expectations of the system. Subsequently

Writers and fine artists, composers, architects, cinema and theatre people, young and old critics, regardless of national background are active participants together with the whole people in works of art that construct the socialist society. [...] The creators of art in the socialist society have to identify themselves with the aspirations of the working people, to serve the lofty aim of achieving a happier life for all. (9<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, 1965, 95).

Mass-media was the third of these channels responsible for ideological socialization. As the official documents stated:

The Radio and the Television play an important role in disseminating the party politics among the masses, in educating them in the spirit of patriotism and socialist internationalism, in promoting the virtues of our national culture and of the universal one. The Radio-television should permanently enrich the quality of programs, should present a larger variety of topics encompassing all aspects of social life [...]. It has to show an increasing awareness in structuring the programs, in deepening their contribution to the widening of the political and cultural horizon of the masses. (*idem*, 94)

The printed media should have as a central concern (*preocupare*) the mirroring of the of the Party’s internal and external politics [...]. In its pages [the printed media] has to offer systematically large exchanges of opinions on problems regarding the activities of the Party, on state-upbuilding, on economy, on culture and education, as well as on other topics of interest to the community (*interes obștesc*); [the printed media] has to analyze critically, through a constructive spirit the faults and the deficiencies that occur in different domains (*sectoare*) of our activity, to reveal their causes, and to show ways to avert them. (*ibidem*, 846)

The ideological dependence of the local dailies was even more emphasized, as they were formally declared official fora of the Communist Party. Therefore, they had to express its official viewpoint.

Beyond its claim for ideological subordination, the Communist Party developed a more sophisticated way to control. It even acted as a pre-censorship (Györfy, 2007):

During the reaping or sowing, we had to go to the county branch of the party, not we, I mean the editor-in-chief. (D., former woman-journalist at the Hungarian daily in Oradea)

There was a party activist, called Koppándi, assigned with the Hungarian press from the 1970s to the end. He came to our meetings, told us what to do, and, many times, he just called the editor-in-chief drawing his attention to certain themes. But editors-in-chief, themselves, had often personally visited Ceauşescu, having meetings with him every two weeks, about the current topics. (M., former editor at the Hungarian central daily)

Party guidance and control was sometimes carried out through a complex network of formal and informal, top-down relations between journalists and party bureaucrats:

We had a daily meeting, when L.L. was editor-in-chief. He had no experience in editing, being named by the party, but had good intentions and assigned the work to others [...]. There was a topic for each day, assigned by the party to write an editorial on it. While the local party branch preferred to let the Romanian newspaper know about this assigned topic, we, the Hungarian daily were somehow forgotten. When I.F. was appointed editor-in-chief, our situation became easier, as his brother was working at the Press Committee of the Party in Bucharest. He used to call his brother there, in order to ask, what was the current topic assigned for the editorial column. [...] Then we had to wait for Ceauşescu's daily speech, sent by Agerpress for editing and publishing. Sometimes the speech was translated into Hungarian, I suppose, from the central Hungarian newspaper, but we had to wait for it each day, even for the translated version. Many times I arrived home in the morning, when trams started their service [because I had to wait the speech to arrive]. (D., former woman-journalist from the Hungarian daily)

Or:

It was a day for celebrating the local teaching staff and the event was observed at the theatre, attended by a party leader, too, who held an endless speech, beginning with Adam and Eve, and finally, reaching the

topic itself: teachers. I didn't know, I wasn't told that his speech should be entirely published in the newspaper, so I took notes only on the part about the teachers. Next day he sent after me, and started yelling: where is my speech? Well, I said, seeing the newspaper on his desk, I didn't know about printing the entire speech, so I didn't take notes. One editor came with me, as we were afraid of a scandal, and yes, I was sanctioned for this; on that moment I promised I'd always take notes on the whole. (D., former woman-journalist from the Hungarian daily)

## **2. Local dailies in the mid-1960s: duplicity in themes**

In order to understand the range and place of the GDPP in the mid-1960s, other aspects of the larger framework should be investigated: the ideological role of the newspapers in those times, as well as the nature of the officially set themes.

One semestrial report submitted by the Oradea GDPP branch describes the two local dailies, whose description could be seen as a general feature for all the Romanian counterparts:

The main domain for the two dailies is the achievement in industry and agriculture. Having a high number of factories with national interest, the two newspapers debate various aspects connected to a good development of production and work, etc. There is a high number of articles on the scientific organization of production, dealing with factories from different areas: light-, heavy, and local industry. (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1967, p. 30)

So the two dailies are dealing with the following topics: operative planning (of production), efficient use of work capacities, extension of modern working methods, application of scientific researches in production, formation of working collectives, importance of saving materials, the Central Committee's reglementation of the working time, higher efficiency in work, investments, increasing local productivity, reducing local production costs, mobilizing tools for accelerating agricultural work, activity of commercial units, highlighting negative aspects in purchasing and serving the population (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1967, p. 30-32).

The above stock-taking clearly shows the role of mass media, which has to mirror (the local) industrial and agricultural achievements, in line with the official party ideologies. Still, a more detailed analysis may show

how such themes had to – and synchronically did not – follow the official ideologies. The annexes contain a database with a description of themes from the two dailies in Oradea, based on all the articles published during a week time. In doing so I tried to preserve their original place in the newspaper, having in mind that the positioning on the page should be relevant (most important columns are on page 1, and so on). Even though the two dailies follow the ideological line set up by the Communist Party, dealing with “transposing into life” of official political line, they convey some credibility to their readers, due to:

- a relatively open treatment of the themes assigned by party documents: in a interview with freshly graduated students, future teachers in rural schools, one respondent openly affirms: “I don’t run from the village, but I would if I could.” (Annex nr. 1). Similarly, from an article on problems regarding the young generation in Sântimreu (a village in Bihor county), local parents are astound because, at the initiative of the local leader of the Communist Youth Organization, their children are forbidden to attend the dancing-balls in the village. It is unfair – affirm the parents – as kids from the neighboring village can participate to such events. Besides presenting all viewpoints, the article gives a description of the local school, draws mini-portraits of the parents and the youth-leader (*Fáklya*, 6<sup>th</sup> of July/1968, p. 2). Other article reveals opinions of teachers, who declare, they cannot serve as a positive example for the future generations (*Fáklya*, 3<sup>rd</sup> of July/1968, p. 2). Many social problems are presented relatively open in newsprint, true, in a moralizing tone: the *Crișana* publishes a reader’s letter, a mother of two children, who has been abandoned by her husband. In order to solve the problem, journalists leave for Tulcea to find and talk to the father, pursuing him to return. Though, their task remains unaccomplished, the article concludes: “Being a party-member [the father], we wait for the local party branch from Tulcea to communicate us the communists’ viewpoint on a runaway father.” (*Crișana*, 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 1968, p. 3).

- Some credibility of the local newspapers is given by their initial role, that of publishing news of interest to the general public: cultural events, TV, radio or movie programs, news on the latest goods purchasable in the stores (clothes, shoes, etc.). Newspapers also share information about the production of such goods, interviews with engineers and workers contributing to their manufacture, etc. (see for instance a presentation of a new factory in Marghita in Annexes).

- Personalizing figures involved in agricultural and industrial achievements also put ideological line aside. Many articles use a familiar tone to present such (official) themes, depicting portraits of the local engineers, peasants, workers, agents of new technical achievements, as well as their conflicts with colleagues. József Bráta from Ciocaia, “who tries to find some time each day to visit the tomato-seedlings” applies innovative methods in the agricultural co-operative. First results of implementing new technologies bring a decrease in the number of seedlings, causing suspicion among the colleagues. At the request of engineer Bráta, implementation goes on, seedlings are recalculated and – finally – their number increases. (*Fáklya*, 6<sup>th</sup> of July/1968, p. 1). Though newspapers are frequently presenting new decisions and events from the assemblies and plenaries of different party and youth organizations, readers can also learn, how these activists spent New Year’s Eve: where were they partying, what dishes were served, etc. (*Crișana*, 1<sup>st</sup> of January/1969).

On the other hand, one has to mention the limitations of such a liberty of speech and expression: portraits conferring familiarity to political activists, stories of agricultural achievements with their human sides and stories told, all these sometimes replaced the publishing of important problems and topics:

When I was assigned with topics of mass-culture, I had to follow in the county the performances held in the rural community arts center: *Cântarea României* and *Nunțașii din Bihor*. There were no Hungarian poems, occasionally one Hungarian folk dance among many Romanian ones, and there was no heating in the hall. But during my stay I talked a lot with the local teachers, who told me about their condition. That they had to do many extra work: operator for the census, organizer of festivities for children with poems and dances. And no one pays them. Their condition was worse than that of the local engineers or doctors who were allocated apartments to live in, or liquefied gas bottles of propane-butane, but these people were given nothing. Of course, it was impossible to write about such topics, and I did not want to lie them, by writing something false, so I wrote about local families, local balls, local portraits, this is how I proceeded. (D., former woman-journalist at the Hungarian daily)

An important theme for the local newspapers in the 1960s was the “reveling” of insufficiencies in serving the citizens. Albeit, it was a topic in line with the official ideologies (see above the role of the printed media as in the Congress documents), to criticize the shortage in supply and services

was of interest for the readers, too. Articles on bad purchase of goods in local stores describe not only problems and needs of either shop-keepers or customers, but their preferences and suggestions, too. (*Fáklya*, 6<sup>th</sup> of July/1968, p. 3). Critics on bad quality provision and services present either in articles or in reader's letters addressed to the newspapers. In *Moral Satisfaction*, a reader relates, how he was attended in a local butchery:

The butcher seemed quite keen to attend me under one condition, if he attaches to my one kilogram of pork meet another one kilo of lamb. At the end of our quarrel, he invoked even God himself, to whom each consumer can address his complains [...]. Well, in my view, it wasn't quite proper mentioning God, as in Oradea He is not in charge with supplying goods. (*Fáklya*, 5<sup>th</sup> of July/1968, p. 1).

In some, supposingly not too many, cases quality of allocation increases due to the newspaper's intervention: after an article on bad supplying of fresh vegetables in a grocery from Episcopia Bihor, according to a new article, the shopkeeper resigns. (*Fáklya*, 5<sup>th</sup> of July/1968, p. 2)

As stock-taking of newspaper themes may show, in the first years of Ceaușescu's regime, it was the official ideology itself that left a niche for system critics and, somehow, free speech (embedded in complains about supply with goods). True, levels of such "liberty" are questionable, still, it is worth to be mentioned. On the other hand, personalizing official agents and events was a technique that conveyed certain familiarity and credibility to the newspapers, and helped the readers to "swallow" their ideological framework.

### **3. The Directorate as a sophisticated institution in a complex system of power**

Beyond the above-mentioned reasons (complexity of an external framework for control, sophisticated implementation of ideological themes), the Directorate itself was an institution difficult to grasp for a scholarly analysis. Though, there are many aspects of its refined functioning, I shall mention now just two, both referring to the same period of time and field of activity, both dealing with problems in discerning the GDPP institutional borders. Due to such overarching presence, duty of control is (almost) equally performed either by official censors or (outside the institution) by producers of culture:

Censorship was in fact the last link. First, there was the column editor, who looked through the manuscript, then he discussed with the editor-in-chief, whether it could or not be published, then came the “clear head”, the last to read the whole page after the newspaper was done, and then came the censor. Normally, responsibility was taken by the editor-in-chief. Thus, the literary column was edited by him, who knew exactly what to keep in and what to filter out. (M., former editor at the Hungarian central newspaper)

Second in this line is complicity of censors; this “we know and they know” – attitude that conveyed a flexibility of the borders between cultural producers and censors, representatives and critics of the system:

In those times I was editor at the weekly *A Hét*. [...] Censors were, too, human beings, up to a certain moment. There was for instance, Rósi, not a girl, but a censor, Rosenberg, on duty with controlling the press. We played ping-pong with him, in a shift, as we knew he likes playing ping-pong, and the more we play, the less time he has for control. He knew it and we knew it. (Láng in Balázs ed. 1998, 120)

Such difficulties in grasping institutions of control made – in my opinion – possible its relatively soft reframing in 1977, the year when – as ideology stated – censorship in Romania disappeared:

Censorship had not been vanished after 1977, only the framework was changed, as censors of the 1960s and 1970s were transferred to daily newspapers. Well, not everyone, some started a new life, some remained. Our censor, for instance, was a guy from Oradea, who, after 1977, had been appointed as editor to our newspaper; we shared the same office and got along well. His work there was, in fact, a good thing for the editor-in-chief, who, hereby, acquired an external person within the newspaper. At the beginning, R. was “tested”: your tasks remain unchanged – said the editor to him – You would come, as usual, a bit later than the others and look through the manuscripts, and signal to me the most important problems. And so it was, R. went to the editor and informed him. Well, the editor did not convey such things to us directly at the meetings, but pointed out some issues: themes from industry and agriculture, numbers of production, he suggested some directions. After three months R. became a real editor, he worked as a political responsible, a sort of a weekly editor, like many of us. (M., former journalist at the central Hungarian daily)

## Stages in the activity of control

By and large, a local GDPP branch, settled at the (Western) border, had the following duties: controlling the local press, the local publishing houses, the customs (import-export of printed matter), local cultural journals, school newspapers and newsletters, local mass media.

The daily activity of censoring newspapers in the counties had the following phases (according to the official documents): acquiring necessary knowledge on the party-line in order to become ideologically “vigilant” enough, having discussions with the editors (guiding them in order to know what to filter out), controlling the freshly outprinted proof sheets in the publishing house and filtering out banned topics, reporting unclear cases to the center in Bucharest or to the local party branch, in order to ask their advice, analyzing the interventions of the previous day, submitting notes of interventions and undergoing the overall supervision in accordance with the Directorate for Instructing and Controlling in Bucharest.

Most of the archive documents stress on the ideological training, regarded as a highly important phase of a censors’ work:

Being aware that only a permanent political and ideological training, as well as an industrious familiarization with the working dispositions can make us efficient, our team gave special attention to acquiring the Romanian Communist Party’s documents on the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress, likewise other party materials issued before that. (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d.20/1969, p. 1)

Documents that “needed an industrious study and acquiring” (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1966, p. 2.), in order to “raise the level of ideological training” (ANR, fond CPT, d.3/1966, p. 7), in other words to make justified interventions, are in fact of three types: book of dispositions with all its changes (containing state, military and industrial secrets under the form of a quantified, factual information). Second type: party and state documents, meant to help in familiarization with the “right” ideological line: Congress materials, Central Committee decisions, Ceaușescu’s speeches, political-ideological journals like *Lupta de clasă*, *Scânteia*, *Analele Institutului de Istorie*, studies on different moments of national history. A third type, rare for controlling newspapers, but frequent in censoring high culture, comprised literary journals with ideological articles on rules to be followed in the literary creation, literary genres: *Contemporanul*, *Gazeta Literară*. It is worth to be mentioned, that the lectures were following a certain script, in order to increase efficiency of purchasing and reading all the materials:



To assure lecturing for all important materials, we have a book of notes with all the articles recommended from the central press. We put down article title, newspaper, date of issuing and a cell for signatures. If a comrade have read the material, puts his signature in the right cell. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 136)

Beside an individual procession of dispositions and other ideological materials, these were subjected to common discussions within the local branches. Such discussions served to standardize the possible questions and answers on the margins of the ideological texts in order to increase (and thus make efficient) the control itself:

Thus, for the analyzed period, we had studied individually and discussed collectively, in close relation to documents of the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Romanian Communist Party [the following documents]. (ANR – DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1967, p. 2)

Processing ideological materials is followed by the second stage, the proper work of controlling, distinguishable into three types:

- Consulting newspaper editors, who ask for censors' "help" in publishing or not certain manuscripts:

When unusual issues appear, editors consult us, thus we can prevent possible problems with the printing houses. Thus, editors have consulted us with issues like: building a new, 12-levelled hotel in Arad. Does it go? Yes! Can we right about day nurseries? What do you want to write? How are toys used there. We'd consult the GDPP. We talked to comrade Blegoiev, yes, go on. School workshops? NO, if it's about theoretical high schools, though it was not recorded in the book of dispositions. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 136)

- The mere process of controlling has, starting with daily interventions on the proofsheets each night, in the printing house:

Now we have a separate office at the printing house for a better efficiency in our work. We also have collections of newspapers, brochures, dictionaries, the book of dispositions, the GDPP documentary, etc. Work usually starts at 9 p.m. and ends at 1 or 2 a.m. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 136)

A similar process was revealed in one of my interviews:

The editorial staff had its own censors, who were in the printing house each night. He had a notebook, containing forbidden and free issues to publish. He checked his notebook and decided whether to filter out something or not. If his answer was negative, we had to replace the article in question, so we were always prepared for that; thus sending more than one article was a common practice. The aim of this process was to hide the existence of censorship, not to leave a blank hole in the newspaper. (D., former woman-journalist from the local Hungarian daily)

- Verifying the *Agerpress* news, as these were the grounds for writing the domestic and external news:

The most important *Agerpress* stuff – party and state leader’s speeches – are usually confronted; the Hungarian text with its Romanian original, word by word. In a few cases, as a result of co-reading, the Romanian text was corrected in *Flacăra Roşie*, the article being sent incorrectly from *Agerpress*. Examples: Romanian version of *Agerpress* news – speaking about a visit of our leaders to the Mureş–Hungarian Autonomous Region, in Târnăveni: what was achieved in a factory in one year-time, now it’s achieved in a month. They’d omitted, what year are they talking about. When the text was faced in the two newspapers, they made a correction and wrote: what was achieved in a year in 1938, now is achieved in a month. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 137).

Naturally, the process of control is full of unpredictable events. In solving difficult cases, censors have the following options:

- Discussing with their local colleagues, in order to decide about the fate of an intervention and find solutions for correcting it:

We have different methods for a more efficient control. If problems occur, the comrades are consulting each other, be it a political matter or a problem with the GDPP dispositions. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 136).

- Consulting the GDPP superiors from Bucharest:

Delay is, too, used as a working method. We have few of such cases, but still, there are some. So was with the article entitled “Friend and false attorney”, related in our meeting in Bucharest. After reading the article, I

consulted comrade Beculaț [responsible in Bucharest for the region], then asked for delaying the publication. The case was reported to Bucharest during a phone call. Then I sent the article at once, through rapid mail, and the GDPP confirmed, I was right. It is quite seldom for an article to be delayed. The GDPP intervenes at once and tells us what to do. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 136-137).

- Consulting the local party branch: "in the most important issues, being at the core of the propaganda, we were helped by the County Cabinet of the Party, who suggested us themes regarding the socialist state". (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 20/1969, p. 8) or: "we were given assistance by the County Cabinet of the Party in solving some difficult issues". (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 20/1969, p. 2.)

After filtering out banned themes, and making the interventions, these are discussed within the local staff, submitted to the Directorate for Instruction and Control in Bucharest and to the local party branch. Through submitting, the local GDPP branch fulfils a self-control and standardizes techniques and solutions:

Each Monday we hold a meeting, where interventions are analyzed and problems debated. [...] By doing so, each comrade finds out his tasks. (*ibidem*, p. 138)

Or more exactly:

Delayed articles are studiously debated within the team. In the evening these are discussed between the comrades on duty, next day by the whole team. Otherwise, this procedure is also used for solving smaller problems, thus all comrades know all the issues and can solve them in accordance with decisions taken. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 138)

The process of sending interventions to Bucharest and the analysis of the local censor's activity performed by the Directorate of Instructing and Control are materialized in periodical notes on interventions, semestrial and trimestrial reports, observations, referata (see for instance ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d.3/1967, p. 32; *Dare de seamă* II/1966, d.3/1967, p. 16-30). The importance of the DIC shows, in fact, the existence of supercontrol within the institutions (see details in the section on wrong interventions).

Transmitting the important interventions to the local party branch has many functions: on one hand, it can lead to sanctioning the journalists. Secondly, by submitting the notes on interventions, the local GDPP branch is controlled:

When special situations occur, we inform comrade Moț, secretary on propaganda matters in the town committee. We did so, with a delayed article from a theatrical program [...]. At the end of each month we submit a written report on interventions in the local newspapers and on problems with other institutions. (ANR, fond CPT, d.1966-1969, p. 138)

## **Interventions and types of interventions**

Archive materials give evidence to three types of interventions operated in the newspaper proofsheets: political-ideological, on working dispositions and on state secrets; in a different classification there are “good” and unjustified interventions (*intervenții bune și nejustificate*). But a careful analysis may inform about the formality of such categories. Though – in accordance with official sources – interventions “on political-ideological matters [deal with cases when a] biased treatment on our party’s position [occurred] (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d.12/1968, p.11), understanding this category needs additional investigations. According to one fragment from notes of interventions: “One, of the political-ideological interventions made on the daily *Fáklya*, nr. 146 of 23<sup>th</sup> of July [1967], refers to the recruitment of students for a vocational school of hotel business in France. [...]. Important to mention that two delegates of the local branch, having in mind that there is impossible to publish such and advertisement, consulted the permanent service of the GDPP in Bucharest, where a decision was made on filtering out the add, signing similar ones in the future, as it is impossible to publish such information in the press.” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d.3/1967, p. 17)

Not only this advert, but a letter from a reader is, too, stopped from publishing. The author of the letter wants to know “whether the years spent in the USSR with work of reconstruction, could be accepted as years in service”. The censors argue that “as the citizen is of German origin [who spent years in working camps in the USSR after 1945, as a punishment because of his ethnic belonging, similar to the Nazi war-enemies], both

the question and the answer are eliminated.” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d.16/1968, p. 19-20)

A similar type can be traced in the case of interventions, which meant to preserve state secrets or follow working dispositions; most of these issues refer to simple, quantifiable information, like military ranks, location of industrial objectives, location of sport camps (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 12/1968, p. 10). But in some cases, relevant information should be filtered out through censoring: “From *Crișana* nr. 51, of 1<sup>st</sup> of March [1968] it was taken out the article *And Still, There is a Chance* by Florica Maștei, dealing with the functioning of a school for children with special needs. The article is generally negativist, presenting the miserable conditions of the children. Intervention was made as of page 34, point 3 in the book of dispositions.” (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d.16/1968, p.19). The disposition in question informs: “The organization and the functioning of educational institutions for children with physical, sensorial and mental deficiencies are published with permission of the leaders from Ministry of Education.” (ANR, fond CPT, d.69/1968, p. 34)

As the four fragments above reveal, the classification of the interventions given by the censors has a more formal logic. In my view, a relevant distinction of interventions should be made in accordance with their meaning and importance: some omissions are not compromising the whole newspaper article, meanwhile many others do (those about working camps in the USSR, or not mentioning poor conditions in schools). Thus, two main categories of interventions should be named: meaningful or less meaningful ones.

## Local interventions

In lack of relevant statistics for a longer period of time, I tried to make up one for the single complete year of 1968, when records of interventions on the two newspapers were complete. As Annexes 2 clearly show, the majority of the interventions are meaningless, more exactly, they are not compromising the meaning of the entire article. Omissions of this kind refer to “*Minierul* soccer team, which played in Petru Groza town” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1968, p.12), or the omission of a location, where the Romanian Railways’ patriotic guard is settled (*ibidem*, p. 80).

In accordance with my database, there are no significant differences in the number of the occurrences of mechanical (less meaningful) or

meaningful interventions made on the two newspapers. In 1968 there were made 28 mechanical and 11 meaningful interventions in *Crișana*, 27 and 16 in *Fáklya*.

Based on archive documents, I discerned the meaningful interventions into six main categories: those on party issues, the social ones, ethnic (Hungarian or Romanian) ones, historical ones, and those referring to external politics. The first category contains “biased” (from the official viewpoint) interventions on the history of communism, on the role of the Communist Party, on the role of state-communism, etc. With regard to an interview given by the Romanian poet Mihai Beniuc, it is said: “We have to achieve our liberty. Omitted, argument: our liberty has been achieved 30 years ago [when the state-communist system was settled in Romania].” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 30/1970, p. 62). Social interventions are omissions of socially relevant topics: social phenomena, social categories. In an article published by the Hungarian newspaper, references to a trial of a person, condemned for sexual perversions was omitted: “In *Fáklya* of the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, the article *Beyond the Trial*, by Implon Irén, which dealt with a closed trial of a citizen, accused with sexually pervert behavior. The author gives an analysis on youth education, to prevent people from these situations. As a result of consulting comrades Copil Teodor and Fodor Alexandru, secretary of the County Committee of the Party, it was decided the elimination of the article.” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 30/1970, p. 57). In *Crișana*, the mentioning of a night-shift of women and young people was omitted, as such a topic was banned by the working dispositions (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 16/1968, p. 38).

Historical interventions imply omitting representations of the past, different from the official ones: “Robotos Imre’s article, dealing with the moral problem of making tests on living humans, by alluding to the book of the local physician Nyiszli, who condemns the tests on human beings effectuated by Mengele.” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 16/1968, p. 61)

Interventions of ethnic values contain omissions of ethno-cultural themes, banned by the official representations of inter-ethnic relations and past: In an article in *Fáklya* – evoking the life of Gheorghe Barițiu – it is specified: “1867, the year of setting up the Austrian-Hungarian dualism, was a turning point in Barițiu’s life: from then on, his attention focused on history. The fragment was eliminated, as it presents in a positive light the dualism, that in fact deepened the Romanians’ subordination in Transylvania.” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 16/1968, p. 51)

Interventions on Hungarian ethnic themes are quite various and rich, containing different representations of the minority group. From an article in *Crișana* a reference is omitted on the first Hungarian presence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the current territory of Romania (ANR-DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 16/1968, p. 17). From a series in *Fáklya*, entitled *Portraits from Bihor*, a fragment is eliminated in an article on the most important figure of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian literature, Pázmány Péter: "In introduction the author wrote: He was a sun, lifegiver of the planet, for the indigenous homeland of the 17<sup>th</sup> century [...]. On our recommendation, the fragment is omitted." (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 16/1968, p. 39). Other intervention on *Crișana* states: "In administrative-territorial units inhabited by ethnics other than Romanians, citizens of non-Romanian nationalities are elected for the local state organs. To our suggestion the fragment was replaced by: citizens of non-Romanian nationalities were, too, elected." (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT , d. 16/1968, p. 67).

The last type of interventions refers to external politics. Though, as Lázok points out, "the Transylvanian problem", as well as that of Bessarabia, were ethno-political taboos, here the foreign policy denotes a relation to states with which Romania had no territorial disputes: "Ioan Antoniu Vanica, foreman at Înfrățirea factory from Oradea, recalls the dramatic experience lived during his illegal stay in Austria, during a trip made in the summer of 1966. Vanica relates of his twelve months abroad, when – during his illegal stay – he was submitted to the severe lager regime, under police control. [...]. As we find ourselves close to comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu's visit in Austria, the publishing of the article seemed to be improper." (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT , d. 30/1970, p. 75).

### **Wrong or unjustified interventions**

Discussing unjustified interventions is essential for understanding the system itself. According to the archive documents, in 1966 only, 44 interventions were made by the censors in the two dailies and the local literary journal, out of which, 6 were unjustified: one in *Fáklya*, the other five in *Familia*. In the case of *Fáklya* "comrade Opreș intervened to eliminate the assumption that cultural entertainment are exclusively for men. Obviously, the author referred to it figuratively, without restricting women's right for entertainment." (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT , d. 3/1967 p. 20).

The five unjustified interventions in *Familia* are of a different content, due to the complex summary of the journal. Thus, censors eliminated – without the consent of the Directorate for Instruction and Control – a fragment stating that “a contemporary historian started revealing the truth from Goethe” (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT , d. 3/1967 p.22). In a different article, the local censors filtered out that “effects of industrialization would cease differentiation between village and city”, though – as the supercontrollers remark – “there is no allusion to it in the text. [In the same manner, local censors claimed one article] to reveal, what is made for people in socialist states, similarly to our one, though the author did not propose such a thing. [...]„ I have to point out that we have approached some documents with an insufficient level of documentation. [...] In nr. 9 of the journal comrade Copil has stopped upon the last rows of the poem *The Shadow* by I. Covaci, which seemed to him prophetic in the negative sense (*profetic in sens negativ*) “as we will always live in dark, as we are followed by a fear, that rolls over.”

In the same number of the journal, comrade Copil marked

[the article] *A voice losing its singer* by D. Solomon that – in a discussion between the author and his friend – plays down, or misses to notice the literary production from our country; [... literature in the author’s view] is sinking into simplicity since 16 years; [he also thinks] that everything can be written today, as the past is regarded like the ash. I have to underline that all the delegates have stopped upon this problem.

So, an industrious training on political, ideological and cultural issues has to be the central focus of our attention, each delegate having the duty to learn as much as possible in the field he considers to have insufficiencies (*goluri*). (AJ-BH, fond DGPT, d3-1967, p. 22)

Other sources of mistakes are the limited knowledge on working dispositions:

Comradine Bölönyi could not resolve the news on the issuing of journals at the secondary school in Sebiş. The dispositions indicate to mention the news about them, but the fact that they are printed is hidden or remains unclear. A similar case happened to comrade Opreş Andrei with an item of news on the *Alumina* factory, relating the directorate’s initiative to produce steel for its own needs. [...]. Comrade Opreş, in lack of enough loyalty, applied to this article a disposition on new industrial objectives [banned mentioning their production of steel] (ANR- DJ BH, fond DGPT, d. 3/1967 p. 8).



Since the misuse of the working dispositions is a broader issue, some clarifications should be added to explain this local case. As archive documents clearly show, a book of dispositions contains a set of formal, quantifiable, usually meaningless restrictions (the filtering out of references to industrial objectives, to soccer camps, etc.). Such data are not just difficult to memorize but subjected to a permanent change (nullified or completed with new ones) by the center. It is no wonder that local censors skip some of them during their work. Moreover, the book requires partial banning for some dispositions and total banning for others: e.g., printed matters are free to mention power plants on the Olt, Siret, Râul Mare, Sebeş and other rivers, but total restriction is applied for the thermal power station in Deva (ANR, fond CPT, d.20/1966, p. 9). As concerns the additions for the book: in 1966 the GDPP leaders had issued 27 documents, with 10-15 pages each, to modify it. Subsequently, it is clear that the misuse of the book reveals systemic insufficiencies and not simply mistakes of the censors.

## Conclusions

First conclusion refers to the complexity in the mechanisms of control. The institution of censorship is but one piece in a complex of power, having the Communist Party (and, probably the Securitate) in its core. Moreover, banning and freedom of speech is connected not just to censorship, but also to the way official ideologies are set up: speaking about the real living conditions, appraising the purchasing of and allocation with goods were in fact a niche encouraged by the official party-line, not a proper initiative of the journalists. In this sense, the institution of censorship is nothing but a machinery, observing the party rules; subsequently, analyzing institutions of censorship – alone – can but partly relate how freedom of speech was restricted in Ceauşescu's Romania: it can only tell, how *one unit* responsible for control was functioning.

Top-bottom construction and subjectivity are core features for the GDPP and its local branch, whose delegates are permanently asking for the advice of their superiors in Bucharest; meanwhile, the letters re-evaluate their interventions. But the supercontrol (so common for other censoring institutions, see Leftwich – Curry for Poland) is accompanied by subjectivity during the activity of control; discerning good interventions from unjustified ones is a decision of a few people, as it is highlighted

from archive fragments on controlling dailies and the literary review. And introducing subjectivity in the process of control has two faces: on one hand it increases the central core of censorship, filtering out individual decisions and power of local branches, on the other hand it gives a certain fragility to the system: in the case of interventions on literary issues, subjective selection of right and wrong makes room for unjustified interventions. The misuse of working dispositions, as well as the sophisticated upbuilding of the GDPP, underline the above-mentioned systemic fragility of censorship, and give more solid grounds to regard it as a powerful, but similarly brittle construction. Due to its dichotomy, the institution of censorship embodies and reinforces state-communist duplicity (Kligman, 1998, Verdery, 1994): claiming to totalize power, but unable to stop “leaking” strains of freedom of speech and expression.

My second conclusion is on ethnicizing censorship, as it comes out from a – more or less – comparative database of newspaper-interventions. Though, it is quite clear, “the Hungarian themes” are marginalized, the representation of the Hungarian minority subordinated to the framework of the nation-state, this inferiority is a contextual one. It is so, as many “Hungarian topics”, such as ethnic past, representation of minorities in local councils, are not just ethnic, but political taboos, equally banned for either a Romanian, or a Hungarian editorial staff. Secondly, the database clearly shows that the number and frequency of interventions are not significantly different in Romanian and Hungarian newspapers, which – as Annexes 1 may reveal – do not have relevant differences in their themes.

Taking a local cultural field as a research unit may nuance the understanding of ethnicity in censorship. Though the following argument needs further clarifications, it is worth mentioning that, from the censors’ viewpoint, controlling *Familia* is “the big issue”, bigger and harder to comprehend than the issue of the Hungarian daily. In other words: a mechanical approach to a more severe control for the Hungarian field does not help us to get a nuanced comprehension of censorship and, implicitly, of the political power in Ceaușescu’s Romania.

## ANNEXES

**Annex 1.** A comparative analysis of Romanian and Hungarian daily newspaper contents (same year, same period of time).

**1<sup>st</sup> of July, 1969**

○ **Page 1.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- *Székelyhíd pártszervezeteinek konferenciája* – Conference of the local party organizations in Săcuieni

- *Bihar megyei termékek hírneve*: Bihar megyei vállalatok exportja: ki, hova exportál? – interjú az Exportcikkek Ellenőrző Hivatal váradi vezetőjével – Goods exported by local factories – interview with the director of the Office for Controlling the Exported Goods.

- *Tanerők ünnepi ülése* (tudósítás) – Festive assembly of the local teaching staff.

- *Betakarítás Remetén*. Interjú az mgtsz elnökével, utána, megjegyzés: “Tehát két hektárnyi aratnivaló jut egy-egy csoportra. Ez nem sok, de ha figyelembe vesszük, hogy esett az eső ...” – Harvesting campaign at Remete. Interview with the agricultural-cooperative leader, followed by a journalist remark: “So each group had to harvest two hectares. Not much, but if we have in mind the rain ...”

- *Eminescu emlékünnepe* a Színházban (csak román résztvevőkkel). Tudósítás. – Eminescu commemoration at the local theatre, report. Romanian participants only.

- *Jó elmondani*: hogy valósítják meg a Ruhagyárban a kongresszus követelményeit: “milyen jó, hogy szóba kerülnek, hogy a textilgyáriak elmondhatják, a száz szövőgép helyett ma 320 automata és félautomata zakatol, (...), évi 100 000 m2 szöttes helyett 1968-ban 7 738 m2-t adtak a nemzetgazdaságnak” – *Good to Speak Out*: how Congress goals are “achieved” in the local light industry: “it is good to speak out that the textile factory instead of 100 sewing machine, today 320 automatic and semi-automatic ones are clattering (...), instead of a 100 000 m2 material, produced per year, in 1968 were woven 7 738 m2.”

➤ *Crișana*

- Două materiale despre realizările locale ale Congresului X – Two articles on local congress achievements.

- Produse bihorene: material identic. Local products exported: identical document.

- *Posibilități sporite pentru valorificarea rezervelor în agricultură: realizări locale în agricultură. Increased possibilities for valorifying agricultural resources: local achievements in agriculture.*

- *Adunarea festivă a cadrelor didactice: identical.*

- *Comemorarea lui Eminescu, identical - Commemorating Eminescu (Obituary to Eminescu): identical.*

- *Două știri pe scurt despre industrie – two short news about industry.*

- *Cântec pentru țară – însemnări. – Song for Motherland – notes.*

o **Page 1.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- *Krónika (elégedetlenségek): “Vasárnap a strand pénztáránál minden halandó egy lejt fizetett, mivel bent barátságos vízilabda-mérkőzést játszottak - vala. (...) Már rég otthon ebédeltek a játékosok, amikor Kriza néni Kalangyafalváról még mindig köteles volt 1 lejt fizetni. Hogy lássa, ímhol az a híres váradi medence, ahol pár órája még javában pólóztak.”*

- *Cronicle: (on complains): “Each mortal had to pay one lei at the cash desk of the pool, as a polo game took place there – couple of hours ago. (...) The players had already begun their lunch when aunt Kriza from Kalangyafalva was still obliged to pay one leu. In order to see where this famous pool from Oradea could be, where the polo game took place – a couple of hours ago.”*

- *Sport, mozi, Tvműsor, gyászjelentés, apróhirdetés. Štiri de sport, program de cinema și tv, mica publicitate, decese - Sport news, TV and movie programs, obituaries, classified advertisements.*

- *Jól sikerült szakmai vetélkedő: beszámoló Szatmár, Bihar, Kolozs megye KISZ tagjainak vetélkedőjéről “a legjobb szabó” címért. Színes közbeszólások: “A zsúfolásig telt teremben végig jó hangulat uralkodott. Régen láttunk már ilyen magasszintű vetélkedőt, s a fiatalok ilyen sportszerű viselkedését.” - A Successful Competition: presentation on the professional contest for “the best tailor” – award, between Young Communist Organization Members of Bihor, Cluj, Satu-Mare counties. “The atmosphere in the crowded hall was tensioned. Such a good competition and such a sportsmen-attitude of the youngsters couldn’t be seen for ages.”*

- *Értelmetlen halál a közutakon: moralizáló írás a gyorshajtásról - Senseless death on the roads: value-set article on exceeding speed limits.*

➤ *Crișana*

- Sport, emisiuni TV, mică publicitate – sports, tv program, classified advertisements.

- *Reuniunea de cântări*: ansamblul Hilaria, și spectacolul său de vechi cântece bihorene. Reportaj: cine ce cântă. *Gathering with songs*: Hilaria singing assembly performing old songs from Bihor region. News on titles of performances, names of performers.

- *Note de spectator*: evaluarea performanței SC Crișul. *Notes of supporters*: evaluation of the performance of Crișul FC.

○ **Page 2.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- Eminescu-ünnepség, folytatás – Eminescu Commemoration, continuation.

- Székelyhídi pártszervezet, folytatás – Săcuieni local party branch, continuation.

- Tanerők gyűlése, folytatás – Teacher’s meeting, continuation.

- Bihari termékek, folytatás – Local products from Bihor, continuation.

- Képzőművészeti kiállítás Székelyhídon: művész és műtárgy neve – fine art exhibition at Săcuieni, names of artists and titles of works of art.

- Diószegi téesz: mennyit termelnek – CAP din Diosig – The Agricultural Production Co-operative from Diosig, how much they produce.

➤ *Crișana*

- Produse bihorene, continuare – local products, continuation.

- Posibilități ale agriculturii, IAS Oradea – Possibilities in agriculture, the State Agricultural Enterprise of Oradea.

- Olimpiada Croitorului – Competition of “the best tailor”.

- Eminescu, continuare – Eminescu, continuation.

- Cadre didactice, continuare – Teachers, continuation.

- *Viața de partid*: rubrică, organizația din Petru Groza – *Party Life*: column, the party branch in Petru Groza.

○ **Page 3.**

Știri interne și externe Agerpres, identic – Domestic and international news based on Agerpress sources, identical.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> of July, 1969

### ○ Page 1.

#### ➤ *Fáklya*

- Publicarea documentelor de partid scoase cu ocazia congresului X – party documents issued on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress.

- NC la Constanța – NC in Constanța.

- Local news: *Arta* factory (tan-yard) produced 24 000 bags. The beginning of raffia production at *Arta*.

- Concertul Hilaria – the Hilaria concert: 50-100 words.

- Congresul cosmeticienelor în Viena – the congress of cosmeticians in Viena

#### ➤ *Crișana*

- Publicarea documentelor de partid scoase cu ocazia congresului X – party documents published on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress.

- NC la Constanța – NC in Constanța.

- Grădini de legume: lucrări de sezon – seasonal works at the vegetable gardens.

- Reportaj despre IASuri, începuturile însămânțării – report about the State Agricultural Enterprises: the beginning of seeding.

- Nouă fabrică la Marghita: cum arată, ce va produce, interviu cu angajați – new factory in Marghita: outlook, future products, interview with future employees.

### ○ Page 2.

#### ➤ *Fáklya*

- *Cronica (Krónika)*: neajunsuri, plângeri. În locuința magazionerului clubului sportiv *Recolta*, din Săcuieni, cade ploaia. – *Cronica*: complain. In the dwelling of the storeman of sports club *Recolta*, from Săcuieni, it's raining.

- Sfaturi juridice – legal advice.

- Programe, decese, mica publicitate – programs, obituaries, classified advertisements.

- *Csendes delelott (Amiază silențioasă)*: doi copii din Aleșd se joacă cu o piatră în fața cofetăriei – two kids from Aleșd are rolling a stone in front of the sweetshop.

#### ➤ *Crișana*

- Documente de congres, continuare – congress documents, continuation.

- Noutățile Editurii Politice – new titles at Editura Politică.

- Sport news, programs.

- Tabără în Nucet (interviuri): “Cu toată oboseala determinată de zeci de kilometri parcurși pe jos, copiii erau veseli, manifestându-și bucuria că au ajuns la cantină, unde li s-a pregătit o mâncare gustoasă.” – Camping in Nucet (interviews) “With all their fatigue caused by walking tens of kilometers, the children were happy, expressing their joy for reaching the canteen, where they had a tasty meal.”

- Sfârșit de stagiune la Filarmonică, cine ce a realizat, câteva rânduri de critică – end of the stage-year at the local philharmonic orchestra, achievements and some critical remarks.

o **Page 3.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- *Viața de partid* (rubrică): ședința de partid a filialei Transilvania – *Party Life* (column): meeting of the party branch in Transylvania.

- *Telex din străinătate*: știri mondiale pe scurt – *Telex from Abroad*: international news in brief.

- Realizările așteptate ale Congresului X în industrie – Expected Congress 10 achievements in industry

- *Pe meleagurile noastre (Szép hazánk tájai)* – on old Arad schools and landscapes.

- *Kár mindenképpen (Pácat, de tot)*: “Szerettem volna működésben látni az üres gépeket. Sajnos nem láthattam, kár, mindenképpen kár” – Notes on the authors’ attempt to see wood-cutting machines at work. It was not possible, as they were not in use.

- *Tanulság 2000 lejért* – A moral for 2000 lei: a retired person sues the *Metalica* factory, which did not allocate him the right amount of pension. He wins.

➤ *Crișana*

- Material de congres – congress document

### 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, 1969

o **Page 1.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- NC visiting factories.

- Congress documents.

- Achievements in agriculture, numbers.

➤ *Crișana*

- Vizită NC în fabrici – NC visiting factories.
- Documente de congres – congress documents.
- Procesul continuu în ocrotirea sănătății publice – The continuous process of public health care.

○ **Page 2.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- Programs, obituaries, medical advice.
- Content of the literary journals *Korunk* and *Igaz Szó*.
- *Tudja, hogy mire vállalkozott (Știe la ce s-a angajat)* – (*He Knows what He Had Assumed*) interviews with university graduates who will work in education at rural schools (four Romanians and one Hungarian): “I’m not running away from the village, although I would do it if I could.”; “During my contractual time I would try to make up a serious basis for a local soccer team.”

➤ *Crișana*

- Programs.
- *Familia* – cuprins – *Familia*, contents.
- Recital Nicolae Labiș – Performance with Nicolae Labiș’ poems.
- *Poșta juridică* – *Law Correspondence*.
- *Pentru posesori de Dacia 1100: mecanici auto specializați. For owners of Dacia 1100: specialized car mechanics.*
- *Știri despre industrie* – News on local industry.

○ **Page 3.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- Materiale de congres, vizita NC la Constanța, CAP-urile, probleme și realizări – Congress documents, NC’s visit to Constanța, problems and achievements of the Agricultural Production Co-operatives.
- Realizări între perioada celor două congrese (IX și X) – Achievements in the four years between Congress 9 and Congress 10.

➤ *Crișana*

- Identic – the same.

**4<sup>th</sup> of July, 1969**

○ **Page 1.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- Congress documents.
- Local economic news.



- Local agricultural news, critical tone: "Elkönyvetük a tényt: a gazdaságban is kevés a munkaerő. Ám úgy véljük, azt a keveset, ami van, jobban ki kellene használni. Akaratlanul célzott erre egyik termelészövetkezeti tag is, amikor a székház előtti kis placcon a régi nehéz időkről beszélt: hajnalban háromkor keltek, éjszakába nyúlóan dolgoztak. Most van mindenkinek betevő falatja, pedig egyszerre kelnek a napsugarakkal. Itt lenne tennivalója a vezetőségnek: megértetni a tagsággal, korábban álljon munkába, este ne siessen haza, hiszen saját kenyerének előállításán dolgozik." – "We have understood: there is a shortage in the industrial workforce. Still, we think, those few should have been used better. It is exactly, what a CAP [Agricultural Production Co-operative] member had willy-nilly mentioned in his remembering the hard, old times, in the small place in front of the headquarters. We had been woken up at three a.m. and had worked till dawn. Nowadays each of us has food, even though we woke up after the break of dawn. Leaders could make improvements here: to make the workers understand to wake up earlier, not to hurry home, as they have been working for their own bread."

➤ *Crișana*

- Materiale de congres – Congress documents.
- Pentru recolta 1969 – For the 1969 crops.
- Serbare în Poiana Mailor, la Pociovești, în cinstea a celei de a 25-a aniversării a patriei, 500 de cuvinte – Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the motherland (1944), 500 words.
- Arta: colecții pentru expoziții – Fine arts: a new exhibition.
- Anchetă: "Realizări" pe șantier. Ce va fi pe acest șantier în 10 ani
- Achievements: Reports from construction sites. What will be here in 10 years?

○ **Page 2.**

➤ *Fáklya*

- *Krónika (Cronică)*: – *Chronicle*: the sidewalk in front of the post office is not swept tidy, the bank of the river is full of bicycle riders who impede pedestrians to walk.
- Sport, programe, mica publicitate – News on sports, adverts.
- News on the local radio station from Cluj, the recording of an operetta from the local Hungarian theatre.
- Interview with an architect from Bucharest.

➤ *Crișana*

- Sport, programe, mica publicitate – News on sports, programs, adverts.

- Concert Hilaria: cântece populare bihorene în Beiuș –Hilaria concert (folk music assembly): folk songs from Bihor in Beiuș.

- Expoziție Marosi Adalbert la Beiuș – Marosi Adalbert exhibition in Beiuș.

**Annex 2.** Table on types and frequencies of interventions made on the two local newspapers in 1968.

Name of the daily newspaper	No. of mechanical interventions	No. of meaningful interventions	Missing	Ethnic-Hungarian	Party	Social	History	International politics	Ethnic - Romanian
<i>Crișana</i>	28	11	11	3	2	5	1		
<i>Fáklya</i>	27	16	7	6	2	3	3	1	1

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This research paper is the outcome of a NECSOC Fellowship granted by New Europe College within the project DOCSOC, *Excellency, Innovation and Interdisciplinarity in doctoral and postdoctoral studies in sociology (contract POSDRU/21/1.5/G/27059)*, a project co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Operational Sectorial Program for the Development of Human Resources 2007 – 2013. A previous version of the paper has been published in Romanian language by the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities. It is available at: <http://www.ispmn.gov.ro/node/controlul-presei-locale-ordene-n-primii-ani-ai-sistemului-ceauist-descriere-general-i-aspecte-minoritare>.
- <sup>2</sup> Direcția Generală de Presă și Tipărituri, was set up in the 1940s, being subordinated to the Council of Ministers (Kiss, manuscript). Renamed as Comitetul pentru Presă și Tipărituri (Committee for Press and Printing in 1975), the Directorate was dismissed in 1977, and replaced by Comitetul de Cultură și a Educație Socialistă (the Committee of Culture and Socialist Education).
- <sup>3</sup> Understanding the place of censorship within the local society of Oradea needs a research based on more carefully archived material than the files available at the Oradea archives.

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