

CENSORSHIP AS A MEANS OF PRESERVING NATIONAL IDENTITY

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Abstract: In the current climate, preservation of identity and statesmanship depends on correct usage of censorship, which presents a guarding organism eliminating the consequences of “information war”. Over the past few decades cultural values have been replaced by quasivalues, which, in their turn, served as a basis for promulgation of new behavior patterns. Thus, society promotion, simplification of national culture, as well as attempts to control mass conscience in order to orient it towards strange and primitive norms and values, are a result of information war and lack of censorship as counterbalance.

Key words: censorship, manipulation of conscience, information war, information flow and mass media.

Censorship: patterns of development

In the current climate, preservation of identity and statesmanship depends on correct usage of censorship, which presents a guarding organism eliminating the consequences of “information war”. Theoretical basis of information war is principally constituted by A. Gramsci’s theory of “cultural nucleus”, the theory of cognitive discord and conception of P. Lazarsfeld’s gradual distribution of information. Such war is aimed at demolition of the public system of values, destabilization of society on spiritual, political and economic level. Thus, society promotion, simplification of national culture, as well as attempts to control mass conscience in order to orient it towards strange and primitive norms and values, are a result of information war and lack of censorship as counterbalance.

Over the past few decades cultural values have been replaced by quasivalues, which, in their turn, served as a basis for promulgation of new behavior patterns. Demolition of the system of values begins

with exposure of vulnerable spots in opponent’s semantic scope, definition of dissonant facts, stereotypes and conceptions, to which afterwards fundamental meaning is attributed through media propaganda. At that as an alternative to society a new world model is offered, that is based upon illusions and stereotypes of the given society, but not rooted in its historical memory, national traditions, underlying psychological paradigms and directly contradicting social and historical conditions of its existence.

A condition of effectiveness of manipulation is taking mass conscience beyond the framework of norms, values, stereotypes, destabilization of mass conscience through propaganda and diversion. Victory and information war is achieved when destructive system of values is perceived by target audience as a “way to freedom”, and the carriers of those values – as “liberators”. Thus, information war is a fundamental element in modern geopolitical division of the world, and growing importance is now being attached to development of countermeasures against manipulation technologies, as well as development of control and protection facilities with regard to information space. Owing to the lack of protection means to support information space, ideology matrix was dismantled, the public lost the system of value coordinates, and what remained was a bulk of people with no coherent worldview and no ability towards logical thinking, recognition of cause-and-effect relationships.

The close of the 20th century and the early 21st century clearly saw moral and intellectual degradation of considerable

part of population. Progressively, grew the potential of manipulating this part of society. At that, methods of manipulation came to be even more primitive. For example, with respect to political situation, winning is about disregarding political correctness. Electorate needs scandal, fight, exposure, because without intrigue even the best election program won't be heard, read or voted for by the majority, as politics as it is doesn't interest the masses anymore. As a result, in the framework of political technologies it is now possible to entirely refuse influence upon intellectual minority and stage consecutive "show" for undereducated masses with insignificant engagement of marginal segment. In these conditions, certain "elite" circles and its "guides" found it appropriate to deprive science and education of the power to influence the masses and hinder further simplification of manipulation technologies that goes along with exponential spread of manipulation.

The priority task was affiliated with keeping science representatives (first and foremost with regard to human sciences owing to its immense potential to influence opinion) and, consequently, humane knowledge as a whole, away for access to the "buffer zone" and preserving science within marginal layer, approximately on the same level with "middle management" and "mobsters" having pulled ahead to become "security chiefs". In other words, what is meant here is the level notable for its high activity, illusion of boisterous existence, possibility of leading normal life, but lacking real results in the framework of influence upon public opinion. As a consequence, humane sciences were confined in a closed world with its estrange "gibberish".

Approbation of most of research is conducted within the confines of the worlds of science and education, which indicates absolute invalidity of this research as socially significant phenomenon. Humanist scholars have practically no access to mass media. This was a mutual

process both on the part of media owners and scientist who refused to conform to the reality of consumer society. However, the gravity of current situation is enhanced as a result of academic community's poor mastering of PR means offered by the Internet. It would appear that academics should be the first to master new possibilities and employ them in order to influence marginal population strata forming their representatives into proper middle class. But whether intentionally or for reasons unknown, science is using outdated measures. Alongside with creation and active promotion of news feeds, blogs and forums, science is posting information on web-sites hardly ever visited by academic community. Thus, activist function of humane clerisy that appeared to be able to destroy a state as big as the Soviet Union, was over the past two decades brought under strikingly easy-to-exercise and low-cost control. The humanities were confined within themselves. At that, by virtue of current education system, this system of humane sciences is characterized by selfmaintenance.

Censorship: current status

At this point, we are faced with revolutionary type of censorship that has generalized and thoroughly analyzed the mistakes of the preceding regime. The Soviet Union assiduously prohibited manifestations of "nonconformity" in humane sciences and as a result acquired powerful social networks gathered around the liberal clerisy and oriented towards destruction of state mechanisms, samizdat and soviet rock music serving as examples. Modern elite, however, has created conditions in which formation of social networks around liberal clerisy is practically impossible. This demanded taking a number of steps:

1. Create "the rules of the game" that would enable "the big league" of the humanities to suppress creative initiatives "from below".

2. Separate neighboring society classes and form their distinct systems of values (middle management, for instance) and special culture.

3. Extensively “grease” the big league of the humane sciences and channel financial flow into shadow zone thus acquiring means of total control over leaders of liberal clerisy.

To illustrate the above-described inability of the humanities to exercise any kind of influence over public opinion one can examine the state of affairs with the works of G. Nosovsky and A. Fomenko. Having conducted adequate PR campaign in mass media while denying the laws and norms of scientific community, the authors of a rather questionable theory that is wide open to criticism, have come out at several thousand strong printing run and have definitely entered the “buffer zone” of people exerting influence over public opinion. The answer of official science was so pale and unexpressive, that all it could do was add popularity of the theory to Nosovsky and Fomenko’s theory. Thus, it seems absolutely necessary to conduct across-the-board reform of the principles of modern humane sciences, principles of pursuance and publication of research. Only structural reform can enable the humanities to comply with its social and public mission and stand against degradation of society. At modern stage, the attitude of society, mass conscience towards scientific research remarkably resembles a child’s attitude towards R. Kipling’s dried monkey paw. This tendency is worldwide, however nature abhors a vacuum, and a flow of voodoo doctors, psychics, sorcerers and magicians has rushed through the media, “charging”, “hexing”, “putting astral defense” and being seriously perceived by the masses who sincerely believe in achieving supernatural wealth and prosperity. This obviously presents a crisis undoubtedly caused by ideology of market and consumer society. In his book “Earth in the Balance”, the US vice president A. Gore speaks out about the dead-end faced

by American society because of “market and consumer civilization” that has drawn the planet to a dangerous point. It would appear that mankind has chosen the wrong way of going through bifurcation, hasn’t in due time changed development imperatives, so that general aims and stable future were sacrificed to instantaneous political profits of the elite. Thus, attention should be paid to three periods: the 18th century – Louis’s catch phrase “as if there were no tomorrow”; the 20th century – the citation of Nobel prize winner, liberal democrat Friedrich August von Hayek saying we shouldn’t care too much about future generations, as they can take care of us; the 21st century – the idea of the Golden Billion, intentional degradation of population aiming at closing immediately profitable deals of the elite and creation of gaps between moral imperatives and technology scale.

Obviously, the road of technological civilization that the mankind has been treading for the last four centuries, has come to an end, and society won’t be able to survive with such stereotypes of mass conscience. Hence the task to furnish alternatives for the future, plan it and understand what kind of a person could live in this future. Thus, once again arises the problem of “a new individual”, and this task should be taken care of before culture, ideology, religion manage to adapt to the new future. The later the humanity accepts responsibility for its past, the narrower will be the passage of opportunities. It is obvious that here one will have to rely on the potential of the humane sciences (at that it should be noted here that among leading Russian philosophers there are a lot of people educated in the field of physics and natural sciences. The reason lies in the fact that physics is a great school for critical thinking that explains that in various situations things can be proved and verified instead of hopefully believed at, which gives rise to non-standard approaches to problems seemingly detached from exact sciences). Many problems of the humanities,

including research in the field of censorship, could be attributed to cross-disciplinary issues, as today solving a problem in the framework of one science is no longer possible. For example, in order to conduct detailed research of censorship, one should possess research data of humanitarian (philology, sociology, political science), special (medicine), exact sciences (mathematics, physics), etc.

Therefore, in the present-day situation, in order to effectively resolve philosophical and cultural task in research of censorship, it is imperative to use results of humane and natural modules of study. If not, research will have self-confined character and won't have any practical realization in the public life. In case a possibility exists to realize key points of a research, including ours, a possibility emerges to give an adequate "ANSWER" when civilization is being "HISTORICALLY CHALLENGED" according to A. Toynbee, and at that it is preferable to have several communities offering various answer options. A. Toynbee analyzes historical destinies of different civilizations and notices bifurcation points that had defined the course of development of great states several centuries ahead. If we suggest that in the history of Russia such point occurred in the reformation period (1985), the forecast is rather hawkish. If, however such point hasn't yet occurred at all, introduction of imperative changes and beginning of the new era in Russia is still possible, from DEGRADATION to RENOVATION.

Censorship: measures to adopt

At this stage of "transition" censorship should:

Take up the function of separation of pseudoscience from science, as well as its suppression in mass media.

Form public opinion oriented towards western models and values which weren't historically rooted in the mentality of the people (Orthodoxy – Protestantism).

Prevent expansion of manipulation technologies provoking changes in an individual's psyche and health issues.

Provide basic education (starting with secondary school) through exercise of control over quality of the teaching process and provision of quality (from the scientific point of view) learning aids excluding propaganda of pseudoscientific views and ideological interpretations.

Essential problem is that censorship is classified among the concepts that society sees as negative phenomena owing to objective and subjective reasons (history of development of censorship and censors).

European countries that have rejected censorship institutes and are dictating their own mentality model, haven't however rejected it completely seeing that they have hidden and blurred censorship embargos in legislation. Over several centuries of such practice, the western world has elaborated stable notion of society, of the permissible and the inadmissible, while Russian society in respect of censorship is currently existing in legislative chaos, so that more often than not West-European assumptions of "the good" and "the evil" differ from those observed in Russia. In order to eliminate such residual controversies, NEWSPEAK is being employed. The term itself was introduced in a fiction work by G. Orwell, in which he showed totalitarian world where even thoughts of an individual were controlled through newspeak so that even thinking of something inappropriate and committing "thought crime" was impossible.

Newspeak is a linguistic system that implies creation of words in an already existing language, as well as substitution of the meaning of the old words. Even more importantly, the new meaning turns out to be exactly the opposite of the old one. Such system is used to manipulate public opinion, overmaster people's thinking processes and channel them in accordance with manipulator's wants. In the course of time, the terms of newspeak replace original words of the language together with

their conventional connotations, which brings about destruction of common sense – the people cease to understand what they are talking about and how they are expressing their thoughts. This is due to the fact that the new words have no stable connections in the language and no developed lexical niche, which explains the term “amoeba words” introduced by S. Kara-murza in his “Paths of a practical mind” to describe these vocabulary items that have integrated into the language and ruined it. Thus, another function of censorship is to fight newspeak, as usage of this linguistic system presents defeat in the war over common sense: to accept opponents’ language, to adopt expression means of wolves “in sheep’s clothing” means to gradually become their captive. Even if there exists conception of words different from the notions used by conversation partner, anyway one gets trapped in a semantic pitfall due to lack of comprehension of the meaning behind the word, which is often polysemantic and even covert. In this case censorship is supposed to employ new technologies to put up effective fight against newspeak and manipulation technologies, and not use technologies to fight common sense, which is exactly what is going on in this day and age.

Censorship doesn’t disappear as a notion, what can be lost is the term, but not the functions or methods through which a specific part of society exercises dosage and control over information flows for the masses. Owing to information revolution, information flows cannot be controlled through conventional methods anymore, and consequently, new methods were elaborated to fit into modern practices. In order to clearly understand what it is exactly that has to be altered in public conscience and society in general, it is imperative to research new censorship technologies and their influence upon mass conscience, as well as possible and current consequences of their usage for financial or political reasons for the benefit of a specific class.

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