

Art during communism assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Communist Art- Restraint or Challenge? What is art without freedom? Is it limited, or can it be constrained to blossom? Communism, in spite of its limitations imposed on expression and actions of citizens, has many times delivered a true inspiration for artists. During such harsh times, one of the few ways of entertaining were subtle ironic attacks on the political leaders and on the difficult life. Hidden, still, from the view of the secret police or any official of the time. One of the characteristics of any communist regime is that of monopoly over all means of information.

Namely, censorship. Therefore, art is totally under the control of the party-state, and as the ideology and the opinions of it are considered the absolute truth, everything that is published is thoroughly verified before being brought out. All 'offensive' details are disposed of, and others, in accordance with the ideology, are added. For instance, in the novel 'Descult' by Zaharia Stancu, the readers are offered a glimpse on how landlords oblige peasants to cover their mouth while working, in order not to eat grapes.

These scenes were meant to create a pejorative image of the boyars and landowners, who would always exploit the workers, and thus blaming the 'class enemies' for treating the working class as such. Another aspect related to art in communism is what is called monopolization of the media. Through television programs and movies, the viewers are offered only one perspective on "values, policies, or public images". [1] In the absence of another vision on the above-mentioned aspects, which would offer a comparison and a better representation on the facts, the audience believes what it is offered.

Moreover, art in communist Romania pursued a chauvinist path. Especially throughout the 1980's, all artistic means in general and literature in particular were emphasizing Romanian themes, therefore indirectly exhibiting anti-Semitism. Moreover, there were those 'artists' close to the Ceausescu family were elevating Romanian history through paintings or poems to unrealistic heights, putting in practice the party's policy of assimilating the national minorities in Romania. 2] On the other hand, art was paid more attention during those times than in post-communism. Because of the lack of alternative sources of entertaining and activities in leisure time, people would rather read a book, write poems, take part in literary circles or go to the theatre. On the contrary, nowadays, much less people show interest towards this type of activities, the Internet, different TV programs, pubs or clubs are more attractive and popular. From this perspective, art was more advantaged in those days.

What is more, individuals may be challenged by the limits imposed by the party-state and do their best to use their creativity. Thus, 'underground' jokes concerning lack of professionalism of communists leading former private factories and enterprises were very popular among ordinary people. However, parodies regarding directly political elites were considered a serious offense, thus, they were forbidden as well. To conclude with, art in communism is primarily characterized by censorship and monopoly.

However, within such limits, individuals may feel the need to break the rules and use their imagination and talent as to attack the regime in a subtle manner. And here, one question may arise- are people using their creativity more wisely in totalitarianism as a sign of revolt than in democracy?

BIBLIOGRAPHY – Gilberg, Trond. Nationalism and Communism in Romania: The Rise and Fall Ceausescu’s Personal Dictatorship. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990. – Paul F Lazarsfeld and Robert K.

Merton, “ Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action”, in Lyman Bryson (ed.), The communication of Ideas, New York, Harper & Bros. , 1948. ————— [1] Paul F Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, “ Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action”, in Lyman Bryson (ed.), The communication of Ideas, New York, Harper & Bros. , 1948, p. 27. [2] Trond Gilberg, ??????? Nationalism and Communism in Romania: The Rise and Fall Ceausescu’s Personal Dictatorship. Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1990.