Rethinking Popular Music Censorship: Jazz in European Dictatorships (1925-1948)

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Popular music prohibition and silencing had received little academic attention until three decades ago, coinciding with a change of paradigm in studies about censorship[1]. This article evaluates this New Censorship Theory, now dominant in popular music studies, and applies it to jazz in European dictatorships of the second quarter of the 20th century, assessing its strengths and shortcomings. It aims to go beyond current models of studying popular music censorship in autocratic regimes, focused on legality and official banning, and the too inclusive conception of New Censorship Theory, which can trivialize state violence. I propose an ethnographic approach to popular music censorship that conceives it as the effect of complex assemblages linked to the states but not restricted to their apparatuses, and as a process of contingent effects that did not always leave traces in the official archives. Ultimately, I seek to frame popular music censorship in the cultural history of Europe from 1925, when totalitarian regimes began to be interested in jazz, to the start of the Cold War. It is therefore an attempt to see the period from 1925 to 1948 from a transnational perspective. The armed conflicts that devastated Europe from 1914 to 1945 and the rise of totalitarian regimes during this era had both national and global components that cannot be understood independently[2]. Limiting the study to wartime Europe allows me to go transnational but stay aware of Western notions of censorship without positioning them as universal and ahistorical.

[1]. This chapter was written within the framework of the research project 'Música popular y cultura urbana en el franquismo (1936-1975): sonidos cotidianos, dinámicas locales, procesos transnacionales' (PID2021-128307OB-I00), financed by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

[2]. Traverso 2016, pp. 53-58.

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A Paradigm Shift: New Censorship Theory and Popular Music

In the last three decades, New Censorship Theory has criticized the well-established liberal conception of censorship as an external, coercive, and repressive privation of free speech. This new epistemological framework has emphasized the multiple forms that censorship can assume and has broadened and reframed the notion, formerly associated with official acts of suppression in totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. One crucial consequence of this theoretical turn has been, of course, ontological. Since the 1990s, studies on censorship have emphasized the ubiquity and pervasion of censorship and have understood it not merely as a repressive force, but also as a producer of diverse genres, discourses, and experiences[3]. This new framework on censorship, initially formulated by authors such as Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, Sue Curry Jansen, Michael Holquist, and Robert Post, among others, is primarily an American phenomenon that owes much to pragmatism but also to psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, and constructivism.

New Censorship Theory has its obvious roots in the linguistic turn of the 1970s, which placed discourse at the centre of the meaning and experience of the world. Roland Barthes already identified a key feature of structural censorship in 1971, in his book *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, by distinguishing between what prevents something being said and what compels it to be said:

> Sade is apparently doubly censured: when, in one way or another, the sale of his books is banned; when he is declared to be boring, unreadable. Yet true censorship, the ultimate censorship, does not consist in banning (in abridgment, in suppression, in deprivation), but in unduly fostering, in maintaining, retaining, stifling, getting bogged down in (intellectual, novelistic, erotic) stereotypes, in taking for nourishment only the received word of others, the repetitious matter of common opinion. The real instrument of censorship is not the police, it is the *endoxa*. Just as a language is better defined by what it obliges to be said (its obligatory rubrics) than by what it forbids to be said (its rhetorical rules), so social censorship is not found where speech is hindered, but where it is constrained[4].

Beyond the obvious influence of Freud, Gramsci, Althusser, and Barthes, New Censorship Theory was consciously inspired, above all, by the writings of Michel Foucault, particularly *Discipline and Punish* (1975) and the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* (1976), translated into English in 1977 and 1978, as well as the selection of interviews and articles collected in *Power/Knowledge* (1980). Foucault understood that disciplinary power gravitates, especially since the Enlightenment, on its ubiquitous, reticular, and disseminated nature:

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3. See Freshwater 2004; Moore 2013; and Bunn 2015.
4. Barthes 1989, p. 126.

> Power is not to be taken to be a phenomenon of one individual's consolidated and homogeneous domination over others, or that of one group or class over others. What, by contrast, should always be kept in mind is that power, if we do not take too distant a view of it, is not that which makes the difference between those who exclusively possess and retain it, and those who do not have it and submit to it. Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application[5].

As Mathew Bunn argues, Foucault's main influence on New Censorship Theory has been the idea that limitations on speech not only have restrictive or interdictive effects but are also productive: they generate «new forms of discourse, new forms of communication, and new genres of speech»[6]. According to Foucault, the control of the body and sexuality has not been based primarily on repression, but on producing concrete disciplinary discourses and practices. Censorship, therefore, had unpredictable effects: it could generate both impediments and stimuli, both silence and proliferation. This idea comes from the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, where Foucault asserted that Victorian puritanism did not generate widespread prohibitions about sex:

> Rather than the uniform concern to hide sex, rather than a general prudishness of language, what distinguishes these last three centuries is the variety, the wide dispersion of devices that were invented for speaking about it, for having it be spoken about, for inducing it to speak of itself, for listening, recording, transcribing, and redistributing what is said about it: around sex, a whole network of varying, specific, and coercive transpositions into discourse. Rather than a massive censorship, beginning with the verbal proprieties imposed by the Age of Reason, what was involved was a regulated and polymorphous incitement to discourse[7].

The other model for New Censorship Theory was Pierre Bourdieu's work on how the structure of fields conditions what can be said, published in several articles since the 1970s and developed fundamentally in the books *Language and Symbolic Power* (1982) and *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger* (1988). If Foucault alluded to medical and penitentiary practices, Bourdieu pointed to the very foundations of the capitalist system:

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5. Foucault 1980, p. 98.
6. Bunn 2015, p. 26.
7. Foucault 1978, p. 34.

> The metaphor of censorship should not mislead: it is the structure of the field itself which governs expression by governing both access to expression and the form of expression, and not some legal proceeding which has been specially adapted to designate and repress the transgression of a kind of linguistic code. [...] The need for this censorship to manifest itself in the form of explicit prohibitions, imposed and sanctioned by an institutionalized authority, diminishes as the mechanisms which ensure the allocation of agents to different positions (and whose very success ensures their anonymity) are increasingly capable of ensuring that the different positions are occupied by agents able and inclined to engage in discourse (or to keep silent)[8].

This new framework thus questioned the liberal, conventional, and Manichean view of censorship as the institutional limits to free expression, presenting it as a constitutive, ubiquitous, diffuse, and inescapable part of any discourse, an all-pervading component of communication. In this sense, perhaps the foundational book was *Censorship: The Knot that Binds Power and Knowledge* (1988) by Sue Curry Jansen, who offered her own ontology of censorship:

> My definition of the term encompasses all socially structured proscriptions or prescriptions which inhibit or prohibit dissemination of ideas, information, images, and other messages through a society's channels of communication whether these obstructions are secured by political, economic, religious, or other systems of authority[9].

In Jansen's words, «the essential question is not "Is there censorship?" but rather what kind of censorship?». She distinguishes between «regulative» censorship, which consists of institutional and deliberate prohibitions or suppressions, and «constitutive» censorship, «which Liberal political theory ignores or denies» and comprises the fundamental rules of communication and expression[10]. Jansen is particularly interested in the latter. In her words, «because this fundamental censorship is largely unrecognized, its influence is insidious [...] Rules and conventions of censorship do change. But censorship remains a rule-embedded phenomenon»[11]. Michael Holquist reinforced this idea in 1994, arguing that censorship is ubiquitous and inescapable: «to be for or against censorship as such is to assume a freedom no one has. Censorship is»[12]. Hence, the study of censorship transformed the exception into the norm, turned from actions to structures, increased its possible agents and practices beyond the state, and explored self-censorship as an integral and systemic phenomenon.

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8. Bourdieu 1991, p. 138.
9. Jansen 1988, p. 221.
10. *Ibidem*, pp. 7-8.
11. *Ibidem*, p. 8.
12. Holquist 1994, p. 16.

This paradigm shift had little immediate impact on general studies of music censorship, which continued to identify it as an institutional or official exercise consisting of the deliberate and repressive deprivation of freedom of expression. This is what is reflected in the most important and comprehensive music dictionary, *Grove Music Online*, whose entry on the topic points out that «only in two regimes has censorship been directed systematically at music. These are Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union under Stalin»[13]. However, the effects were more visible in the first systematic attempts to study popular music censorship, published in the late 1980s and the 1990s. No doubt, this interest was also incited by the campaign of the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC), launched in April 1985, to limit the exposure of children to popular song lyrics, which led to Senate hearings and eventually to the implementation of 'Parental Advisory' stickers on rock, metal, and rap records. In his first book, *Rebel Rock: The Politics of Popular Music* (1986), John Street argues that «censorship may take place in the decision not to sign a band, or not to release a particular track as a single»[14]. Steve Jones contended, just like Jansen, that copyright has censorial implications and that «one can find evidence of censorship in virtually any artistic form, but it appears especially prevalent in popular music»[15]. This vague concept of censorship also led Dave Marsh to assert that «the majority of censorship is *economic*, which forces artists to work day jobs to stay alive, and prevents them from creating freely, let alone acquiring the equipment to work with and the space to work in»[16]. Jeffrey Sluka, Claude Chastagner, and Robert Corn-Revere regarded PMRC's implementation of the 'Parental Advisory' sticker on records «a reactionary form of censorship», even though the music remained available[17].

The biennium 2003-2004 was particularly important for studies on popular music censorship, with the publication of the volumes *Policing Pop* and *Shoot the Singer*[18], and the inclusion of an entry on the topic in the new *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*[19]. Both shared a common view of censorship as a ubiquitous phenomenon consisting of any restriction to free expression. Recent academic books and special issues within scientific journals assume that «music is continually censored by actors, states, religious leaders, radio stations, companies, parents, and the artists themselves»[20]. Even promoting «particular values and norms» by deeming certain musics as inappropriate, teachers allegedly display what Kallio has called a «school censorship frame» because «repertoire decisions are matters not so much

13. Rosselli 2001.
14. Street 1986, p. 108.
15. Jones 1991, pp. 75, 81-86.
16. Marsh 1991, p. 1.
17. Sluka 1994; Chastagner 1999; Corn-Revere 2021, pp. 128-157.
18. Cloonan – Garofalo 2003; Korpe 2004.
19. Shepherd 2003, pp. 168-172.
20. Kirkegaard – Otterbeck 2017a, p. 257.

of curation, but of coercion»[21]. To include this wide set of restrictive practices, Kirkegaard and Otterbeck suggest «the value of multiple definitions of censorship, each with its own particular strengths»[22].

This broad concept of censorship poses some questions about the limits of what counts as such. Certainly, the danger of defining censorship as a pervasive and unavoidable form of controlling discourse is that it loses its specificity as an analytical category. Robert Darnton, perhaps the most celebrated historian of censorship, considers that «identifying censorship with constraints of all kinds is to trivialize it», and this minimization «contrasts with the experience of censorship among those who suffered from it»[23]. The risk, as Robert Post warned in a collective volume that in 1998 synthesized the presuppositions of New Censorship Theory, is that an overly inclusive concept equates different types of power[24]. In doing so, the nature, logistics, and legal entity of states, fundamental to understanding the effective articulation of their power and their capacity to exercise violence, may also be omitted. More specifically, New Censorship Theory may erode the differences between the censorship of autocratic regimes and the constraints imposed by the mechanisms that establish the canon, the rules of the field, or the dynamics of the market. The next pages propose a model of studying censorship that does not confine it to the State but rejects equating it to any restriction of free expression.

Beyond Intentions: Jazz Censorship and the Rhetoric of the Nation

Analysing censorship involves circumventing ethical universalism. As Nicole Moore has pointed out, New Censorship Theory remains connected to the United States and the debates about free speech in the framework of the First Amendment, in a sort of universalization of the American case that, paradoxically, obliterates the state boundaries of legal actions. For Moore, «historically, censorship is coeval with the nation state», which remains its «administrative and ideological horizon». In this sense, it is «a geopolitical technology»[25]. Moore's observation is particularly relevant for European dictatorships during the 1930s and 1940s, when these regimes based their legitimacy on overblown discourses about the nation. This is where censorship connects with propaganda, which should be considered the other side of the same music policies. Pamela Potter has observed that the scholarship of arts in totalitarian states of

21. Kallio 2017.
22. Kirkegaard – Otterberck 2017b, p. 4.
23. Darnton 2014, pp. 17 and 229.
24. Post 1998, p. 4.
25. Moore 2013, pp. 54-56.

wartime Europe has taken hyperbolic rhetoric at face value, helping to construct a caricature of cultural conditions, «a dystopia of artistic constraint». Furthermore, Potter has warned about a notion of totalitarianism as absolute power that can obliterate many contradictions and exonerate «artists from any voluntary involvement» in cultural production[26].

The mediation of censorship has affected not only authors and audiences but also the historiography of individual genres of popular music. Accounts about formerly repressed musicians or music genres of the past have added layers of meaning to their history and have privileged particular tropes, frequently with moral implications. I am referring to what Hayden White calls a «metahistory», the way historians, consciously or not, narratively organize their accounts of the past as romance, tragedy, comedy, or satire. Most histories of censorship favoured one of these emplotments: romance, a heroic account of «the triumph of good over evil, of virtue over vice, of light over darkness»[27]. The perfect example is jazz, which has provided the most powerful metaphors for the opposition of art versus totalitarianism[28]. The identification of jazz with resistance to censorship during the 1940s served eventually to legitimize jazz as an autonomous art in countries such as Germany, the Soviet Union, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Censorship has been a crucial factor in the romanticization of jazz and continues to underpin both its enduring myths and historical narratives, even though «it becomes clear that the simplistic binary that pits heroic jazz in resistance against state oppression is deeply misleading»[29]. In fact, general histories of the genre continue to portray wartime Europe as a hostile place, although the Second World War was one of the periods of greatest dissemination of this music on the continent[30]. Even in the perhaps most rigorous handbook of jazz history, we can read that the genre was *illegal* in the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany[31].

Analysing which music was actually «banned» leads to addressing the distance that often separates discourse and practice, intention and effect in censorship. Forty years ago, Frederick Starr revealed the persistence of American jazz in the Soviet Union since the 1920s, despite frequent state interventions, including confiscating all saxophones on its territory on several occasions and even attempting to create a distinctly Soviet and proletarian «dhaz» in 1938[32]. For his part, Michael Kater showed that the inflamed Nazi discourse against American popular music as 'degenerate' did not prevent jazz from being regularly broadcast on the radio during the Third Reich, American recordings from regularly reaching Germany during World War II,

26. Potter 2016, pp. 35 and 244.
27. White 1973, p. 9.
28. Iglesias 2020.
29. Johnson 2016, p. 345.
30. Burns 2001, 1:32-5:22.
31. DeVeaux – Giddins 2009, p. 239.
32. Starr 1983. See also Lücke 2004.

and SS and SA officers from listening to jazz every week in musical theatres and nightclubs[33]. Something similar happened in Vichy France. The idea that jazz was forbidden during the Occupation — deeply rooted in French social imagination and taken for granted by some scholars[34] — «is false, but it helps to entertain the very real and enduring conviction that playing or even listening to jazz was a form of resistance»[35]. In fact, wartime was a particularly lively period for jazz in France. Ludovic Tournès has linked this myth to the «Vichy syndrome», a concept coined by Henry Rousso in 1987 to denominate the narrative of denial and shame of French people regarding their collaborationism with Nazi Germany[36].

In Italy, despite Fascist discourse against jazz as a Black, American, and Jewish product, and the fact that authorities went so far as to ban on several occasions both the term itself and performances and recordings of the genre, the music remained available and was tolerated, especially in certain «Italianized» forms promoted by the State[37]. Anna Harwell Celenza even points out that «from 1922 until 1943, jazz served as the soundtrack for Italy's Giovinezza generation»[38]. In Portugal, the attitude of the early Estado Novo towards jazz was contradictory. Although attacks against it were virulent and frequent in the official media, António de Oliveira Salazar's dictatorship never enacted any laws against this music. In fact, jazz maintained a prominent and increasing presence in Portugal in the 1930s and 1940s, even at the height of nationalist and imperialist discourses[39].

In Franco's Spain, the official discourse on jazz between 1940 and 1943 was influenced by the fascist discourse, which encouraged identification with the totalitarian policies of Germany and Italy, xenophobia against black and Jewish cultures, ultra-Catholicism, and contempt for the musical manifestations of capitalist countries, led by the United States. In the most important magazines of the 1940s, critics and musicologists claimed against «those exotic dances of negros, a product of the American jungles» and «those very vile tunes and evidently improper songs», which were «part of the arsenal of Judaic souls put into play to debase the select races» and «must be eliminated without pity, with the severe intervention of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities if necessary»[40]. This discourse affected record censorship. Although there was no specific legislation on musical recordings until 1957[41], restrictions were carried out through

33. Kater 1992.

34. Stovall 1996, p. 126; Beevor – Cooper 2004, p. 171.

35. Régnier 2009, p. 263.

36. Tournès 1999, pp. 59-60.

37. Cerchiari 2003, pp. 129-150; Merolla 2016, pp. 31-49; Celenza 2017, pp. 69-114; Poesio 2018.

38. Celenza 2017, p. 73.

39. Cravinho 2011, pp. 1-13; Cravinho 2016, pp. 218-238; Cravinho 2022; Roxo – Castelo-Branco 2016, pp. 200-235; Roxo 2016, pp. 193-217.

40. Otaño 1941, p. 3; López Chavarri 1942, p. 4.

41. Torres Blanco 2009, p. 161; Valiño 2012, pp. 39-40.

official orders of the Vice-Secretariat of Popular Education, a sort of Ministry of Propaganda belonging to the only permitted party, the Falange. In September 1942, Circular 95 informed all radio stations that it was «strictly forbidden» to broadcast «the so-called 'black' music, 'swing' dances, or any other genre of compositions whose lyrics are in a foreign language or that by any concept may touch the public morals or the most elementary good taste»[42]. A week later, Circular 98 banned the successful foxtrot 'Ébano Swing', by Santiago Crespo, allegedly for its title[43]. Finally, at the end of June 1943, the National Delegation of Propaganda sent to all the radio stations a series of memos that obliged to support «a music fundamentally ours», in accordance with the «Spanish race»[44]. Falangist authorities described the challenge that jazz posed for the Spanish cultural renaissance:

> What we want to banish is the wave of arbitrary, anti-musical and we could say anti-human 'jazz' wave with which America has invaded Europe for years. Nothing is further from our virile racial characteristics than those dead, cloying, decadent, and monotonous melodies, which, like a cry of impotence, soften and feminize the soul, numbing it into a sickly lassitude; nothing is further from our spiritual dignity than those dislocated and bewildered dances, in which the human nobility of attitude, the selected correctness of gesture, descends into a ridiculous and grotesque contortionism. [...] Spain must not allow itself to be won over, not even temporarily, by the disconcerted hubbub of a 'jazz' without any artistic justification, nor by the insinuating creeping of melodies that in their undulating laziness seem to have no other purpose than to stir up hidden wells of the subconscious, dried up in us, thank God, by the luminous southern and Latin sun, which, for Christian eternity, has forged our souls with light and fire[45].

Despite these vicious discourses and radical laws, jazz was one of the most present musical genres in Spain during the early Franco regime. This success is partly explained by the fact that the

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42. «Emisiones musicales», Circular 1942a.

43. «Prohibición de "Ebony Swing" y "Cachita"», Circular 1942b.

44. Circular 1943a; Circular 1943b.

45. «Lo que queremos desterrar es la ola de "jazz" arbitraria, antimusical y pudiéramos decir antihumana, con que América del Norte hace años que ha invadido a Europa. Nada más alejado de nuestras viriles características raciales que esas melodías muertas, dulzonas, decadentes y monótonas, que, como un lamento de impotencia, ablandan y afeminan el alma, adormeciéndola en una enfermiza languidez; nada más lejos de nuestra dignidad espiritual que esas danzas dislocadas, desconcertadas, en las que la nobleza humana de la actitud, la seleccionada corrección del gesto, desciende a un ridículo y grotesco contorsionismo. [...] España no ha de dejarse ganar, ni transitoriamente, por la desconcertada algarabía de un "jazz" sin justificación artística alguna, ni tampoco por el insinuante reptar de unas melodías que en su ondulante dejadez parecen no tener otra finalidad que la de remover ocultos pozos del subconsciente, secos en nosotros, gracias a Dios, por el luminoso sol meridional y latino, que, para la eternidad cristiana, ha forjado a la luz y el fuego nuestra alma». Circular 1942b, as cited in Iglesias 2013.

attitude of the dictatorship towards jazz in its first five years was not categorical, predictable, or coherent; it oscillated between its condemnation as degenerate music, its tolerance as economic support, and its naturalization as mass entertainment[46].

Beyond the Official: What the Archive Silences

Therefore, the virulent campaigns against jazz in the Europe of 1925-1945 seem to have been more rhetorical than real. Apparently, the censorship of European dictatorships was deceptive or, at least, inefficient. Following Michael Kater, Pamela Potter has pointed out «the widespread lack of control in cultural policy in the Third Reich and the constant infighting among Nazi leadership; the party's failure, despite relentless propaganda, to devise clear aesthetic criteria; and a pragmatic policy of balancing suppression with toleration, bending ideological principles to appease popular tastes»[47].

However, this «pragmatic» conception of European dictatorships, based on the lack of laws and official guidelines, contradicts the memory of jazz as transgression during the 1930s and 1940s, a commonplace for most memories of Stalin's, Hitler's, Mussolini's, Petain's, Salazar's and Franco's dictatorships beyond those of musicians and critics. Those who lived through those decades under these autocratic regimes remembered the experience of listening and dancing to jazz as officially impertinent, even defiant. I believe that the key to understanding this paradox lies in two premises: on the one hand, in remembering that in Europe, during this period, jazz was inseparable from the so-called «modern dances» (hot, swing, and boogie); on the other hand, in conceiving the state, in the vein of New Censorship Theory, not as a reified and stable entity, but as a reticular and dispersed one.

However, if the state is «the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities»[48] that «can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations»[49], how can its limits be located? I believe it is useful to distinguish between the official *(officiel)* and the unofficial *(officieuse)* — a distinction made by Bourdieu and developed by his discipline Luc Boltanski — which can serve to articulate types of censorship and to consider the silences of state archives. Originally, Bourdieu, in his study of kinship in Algerian Kabylia, and Boltanski, in his work on childbearing and abortion, conceived the *officieuse* as clandestine and inherently subversive, linked to a practice of women's resistance to public and official male power[50]. In

46. Iglesias 2017, pp. 103-130.
47. Potter 2016, p. 168.
48. Foucault 2008, p. 77.
49. Foucault 1980, p. 122.
50. Bourdieu 1992, pp. 169, 196, 200, 239, and 299; Boltanski 2013, pp. 16-23, 64-66, and 86-89.

a more recent work on the detective and spy narrative, however, Boltanski has expanded the concept to refer to institutions and groups that exercise power without legal expression, but with effects similar to those of the state[51].

In line with this change, I propose stripping the *officieuse* of its intrinsic subversive connotations to understand it as complementary rather than opposed to the legislative power of the state, that is, as *semiofficial* rather than *unofficial*[52]. From this point of view, semiofficial censorship would be practised by institutions and collectives that do not have the authority to decree laws but are legitimized by the state to carry out practices that imply real control of expression. This ability of certain groups to surreptitiously exercise power and censorship does not usually leave a trace in administrative records. Semiofficial censorship would thus serve to articulate what Sue Curry Jansen called «regulative censorship», that is, institutional and deliberate suppressions and prohibitions, and «constitutive censorship», derived from the tacitly assumed norms of a society.

As Michel-Rolph Trouillot warned us, silences have been inherent in the creation of archives and the writing of history[53]. In the case of the censorship of popular music, what official documents elide should be included in the research, particularly corporeal restrictions. As Diana Taylor argues, embodied memory (of rituals, theatre, sports, dances...) exceeds the capacity of traditional archives. This often leads to a false binarism between the written record or archive as a hegemonic power and the body as an anti-hegemonic challenge. However, Taylor clarifies that this is not a binary relationship, but an interaction. Instead of privileging the texts and narratives of censorship, we should also look at its gestures and scenarios[54]. It is these that reveal the subversive capacity of jazz in the European dictatorships of 1925-1945, insofar as they were the object of systematic semiofficial restrictions.

Jazz as popular dance challenged what Michel Foucault called official anatomopolitics and biopolitics. If anatomopolitics designates the surveillance and disciplinary intervention of the state on individual bodies, biopolitics encompasses the state and collective control of vital processes[55]. From a Foucauldian perspective, gestures, decorum, and the fulfilment of gender roles are not merely a matter of morality but an integral part of the health of the social body, its production and reproduction, which included questions of race and gender. The European dictatorships of 1925-1945 brought anatomopolitics, which at the end of the eighteenth century had been integrated into modern biopolitics, back to the forefront of power in order to carry out a double process of corporealization of the nation and nationalization of bodies.

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51. Boltanski 2014, pp. 21, 34, and 252-254.

52. In English translations of Bourdieu's and Boltanski's books, *officieuse* has always been rendered as «unofficial», a term that can be understood as «extraofficial» or even as «unauthorized».

53. Trouillot 1995.

54. Taylor 2003, pp. 17-30.

55. Foucault 2008, pp. 207-211.

Lively and erotic American dances such as the Charleston and the black bottom invaded European stages after 1925, especially with Sam Wooding's Chocolate Kiddies and Josephine Baker's tours, leading to campaigns against those exotic and sensual movements. In the 1930s Soviet Union, with Moscow established as the nocturnal capital of Eastern Europe and many factories offering foxtrot lessons free of charge, jazz dances became a serious problem for Stalinist guardians of body control[56]. The attacks on jazz were not a mere reaction against American culture. The regime founded a State Jazz Orchestra that played a selection of calm ballroom music in symphonic arrangements, avoiding swinging spontaneity[57]. Even in the 1940s, «the Communist youth organization, Komsomol, organized brigades of party aspirants and music students to check all restaurants, theatres, and dance halls» searching for proscribed tunes that included not only jazz but also tangos and rumbas[58].

In their conceptualization of French *zazous* as a form of youthful rebellion without specific political ends, both Gérard Regnier and Andy Fry seem to assume that resistance implies a conscious and explicit political ideology. However, the obsession with controlling those youngsters' bodies and putting them to work[59] was clearly an anatomopolitical obsession of Nazi Germany and Vichy France. Insofar as biopolitics is a governmentality shared by modern democracies and dictatorships, although radicalized and more explicit in the latter, the argument that *zazous* were not a subversion of Vichy values because they were also criticized after the end of the Occupation is meaningless. On the other hand, swing youth's activities cannot be reduced to a moral challenge, because intellectuals such as Charles Delaunay or André Hodeir, little suspicious of being timorous or ultra-Catholic, were very critical of the phenomenon[60].

Considering that in Italy, as Camilla Poesio argues, «in some respects, the Catholic world was harsher and more opposed to jazz than the fascist regime»[61], we should avoid artificially separating the diverse dimensions, official and semiofficial, of totalitarian power. The permanent tensions between Mussolini and Pope Pius XI went to a detente in 1929 with the Lateran Agreements, which turned Italy into a sacred and confessional state in close collaboration with the Vatican[62]. The Agreements granted the Church power over public education, law, and morals, and they became gradually more important when the papacy began its international anti-Communist crusade in the mid-1930s, endorsing Nazi Germany and Franco's coup in

56. Starr 1983, pp. 110-111.
57. Edmunds 2004, pp. 23-26.
58. Starr 1983, pp. 216-217.
59. Beyer – Ladurner 2011, pp. 92-95; Regnier 2009, pp. 248-251.
60. Fry 2014, pp. 214-215.
61. Poesio 2018, p. 70.
62. Ceci 2017, pp. 59-141.

Spain[63]. In this situation, church and state censorship were not isolated spheres. Poesio reports the testimony of an Italian peasant who recalls that the inhabitants of Bucine, in Arezzo, began to dance without fear of the Church in late 1945, not coincidentally after the demise of fascism[64]. Although the Catholic authorities' aversion to jazz continued until the 1950s, the Italian Church lost much of its legitimization by the state and thus its semiofficial censorious power once Mussolini's regime was overthrown.

Similarly, the Catholic Church was subordinated to the political objectives of Salazar's *Estado Novo* and played a crucial role in its legitimization. At the same time, it limited some aspirations of fascism in Portugal and, after the Second World War, participated in the rehabilitation of the dictatorship's international image[65]. In return, the Estado Novo identified itself unequivocally as Catholic, assumed the moral, racial, and gender principles of the Church, and carried out a gradual Catholicization of Portuguese society from the 1933 Constitution until the 1950s[66]. In this context, the Catholic Church became a semiofficial agent of propaganda and censorship, particularly concerned with morality and the body. In March 1938, the Portuguese Catholic Action initiated a «crusade» against modern dances. In a series of articles, the priest António Gonçalves Molho de Faria warned about the foxtrot, the shimmy, the java, the tango, the black bottom, and the Charleston, «all exciting, with constant spiralling and serpentine movements which wake up feelings that are not noble»[67]. They were a source of racial degeneration, contagion of venereal diseases, and female infertility, not only for the dancers but also for all those who watched[68].

For its part, the Franco regime entrusted the control of the body to the army, through compulsory military service, the Church, through the communion, the confession, and the publication of pastorals and books on women's behaviour, and three institutions of the Falange that played a structuring role in the formation of the new generations: the Frente de Juventudes (in charge of the indoctrination and mobilization of youth under 18 years of age), the Sindicato Español Universitario or SEU (instrument of surveillance and control in higher education), and the Sección Femenina (whose purpose was «to train women with a Christian and national-syndicalist sense»)[69]. Through these biopowers and their technologies of the body, individuals were corrected and guided, subjected to the discipline of standardized behaviour and precise gestures based on a rigid division between masculinity and femininity. «Swing girls» (also called

63. Chamedes 2019, pp. 121-166.
64. Poesio 2018, p. 73.
65. Costa Pinto 1995; Rezola 2012.
66. Simpson 2014.
67. Roxo – Castelo-Branco 2016, pp. 209-210; Roxo 2016, p. 201.
68. Cravinho 2022, pp. 21-22.
69. Cayuela Sánchez 2014.

«topolino girls» in Spain) functioned as an alterity, as the opposite side of those exhibited in those reinvented regional dances and gymnastic routines of the Sección Femenina that served the construction of the bodies of the «New Spain»[70]. Modern dances also represented the undermining of the «strong body and healthy soul» of Falangist men, characterized by military virility and Catholic patriotism. Male fans of modern popular dances were branded as sickos who had lost much of their masculine traits and had given themselves over to the foreign, the passive, and the frivolous.

From 1943, the foreseen defeat of fascism in the Second World War and the likely difficulties of integrating the Franco regime into the new political order, the Spanish media began a propaganda operation aimed at avoiding any identification with the Axis powers and showing Franco as the great ally of the West in its fight against communism[71]. Jazz was included in the state propaganda aimed at showing Spain as a renewed, tolerant, and pro-American country. From then until the 1960s, there was no record of any censorship of jazz in Francoist official archives, neither of recordings, nor of scores, nor of films. Nevertheless, what lasted beyond the diplomatic shift of Franco's dictatorship in 1944-1945 were semiofficial attacks on this music as dance, as physical pleasure and liberation that challenged anatomopolitics and biopolitics. The ultra-Catholic media continued a crusade against jazz as a pagan and anti-Christian dance that entailed «a satanic malice»[72]. The reprint and proliferation of prescriptions and behaviour manuals on dancing written by clergymen, particularly abundant from the mid-1940s[73], can be placed in this context. In books used for confession and reprinted several times for the bishop's order, the priests Carlos Salicrú Puigvert and Jeremías de las Sagradas Espinas sanctioned dancing to «hot, swing and boogie» as a «mortal sin in itself»[74]. In March 1946, the Archbishop of Seville, Cardinal Pedro Segura, promulgated his pastoral 'On Dances, Catholic Morals, and Christian Asceticism', which denounced the «infectious fever, true malaria of the souls [...] that manifests itself precisely in dances»[75]. The pastoral was accompanied by five obligatory norms for all the archdioceses, published by the magazine *Ecclesia* in April 1946, which declared that participation in modern dances was particularly sinful and, therefore, irreconcilable with communion[76]. These exhaustive texts illuminate the possible criteria of the music censorship commissions, in which priests were a regular presence until the end of the regime.

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70. Casero 2000; Martínez del Fresno 2013.
71. Thomàs 2011.
72. Ruiz Encina 1944.
73. Mera Felipe 2017.
74. Salicrú Puigvert 1947, pp. 14, 26, and 31; Sagradas Espinas 1949, pp. 44-48, 67, and 101.
75. Segura 1946, pp. 182-214.
76. *Ecclesia* 1946.

Conclusion: Beyond the Panopticon

As a scholar of popular music in twentieth-century European dictatorships, I try to reconcile the concern for diminishing autocratic violence with the certainty that the reflections and challenges raised by New Censorship Theory cannot be ignored. This new paradigm has embraced Foucault's panopticon, which according to Sue Curry Jansen, «provides a working model for agents of subterranean censorship»[77]. The panopticon was an ideal prison conceived by the English philosopher and jurist Jeremy Bentham at the end of the 18th century. It is a design consisting of a rotunda with an office at the centre, allowing a single guard for complete surveillance of inmates. Since prisoners could be seen but never knew when they were being watched, Bentham believed that the system compelled self-regulation. Brought to academic attention through Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (originally published in French in 1975), the panopticon has become the leading scholarly model for surveillance studies[78]. Its uncritical application to popular music under dictatorships can serve to lump together different kinds of violence and present the mechanisms of autocratic censorship as omnipotent and untraceable.

At the other end of the spectrum, concluding that «what is distinctive to the cultural operations of the Third Reich, then, is not the promotion of certain Nazi individuals, ideology, or aesthetics but the extreme care taken in presenting the arts to the public as proof of German greatness»[79] may reduce atrocious regimes to inflated rhetorics and pragmatic actions. No doubt, as Robert Darnton reminds us, «the constraint of imprisonment operates differently from the forces of the marketplace»[80]. However, I believe that reducing censorship to official suppressions and regulations, as Darnton does, is too restrictive, especially when studying autocratic regimes. In my opinion, studies about popular culture censorship have focused too much on a social aggregate previously decided *ad hoc*, either the state, the market, or any artistic field. Of course, this derives from the functionalist, structuralist, and post-structuralist convention of enclosing agents in some coherent and logical whole. In the case of dictatorships, we must query any notion of the autocratic state as a stable and self-explanatory framework to conceive it, in Timothy Mitchell's words, «as an effect of mundane processes of spatial organization, temporal arrangement, functional specification, supervision and surveillance, and representation that create the appearance of a world fundamentally divided into state and society»[81].

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77. Jansen 1988, p. 22.
78. Haggerty 2006.
79. Potter 2016, p. 247.
80. Darnton 2014, p. 230.
81. Mitchell 1999, p. 95.

The European dictatorships of the 1930s and 1940s brought about the complete subordination of written law, of the laws, to the «juridical ideals» defined by the «spirit» of each regime. They disregarded liberal normativism to rely, following Carl Schmitt's famous dichotomy, on legitimacy more than on legality[82]. Thus, autocratic power went beyond the official to include those institutions legitimized by the State, particularly useful when public propaganda and normative censorship were obvious or counterproductive. In this sense, Holquist's statement that «fearing its own arbitrariness, censorship comes to hate all that is uncertain»[83] seems to naturalize a liberal conception of censorship hardly applicable to autocratic governments. The control of popular music in the European dictatorships of the 1930s and the 1940s shows that arbitrariness was an inherent and deliberate feature of self-proclaimed totalitarian regimes, very useful for creating uncertainty, fear, and despair.

Beyond the undue dependence of Darnton's model on the state, I argue that he is right in approaching censorship from an ethnographic perspective that avoids reifying the concept and making power anonymous, predictable, and inescapable. Consequently, in popular music censorship under dictatorships, I propose replacing the metaphor of panopticism with the concept of «censorship assemblages»[84] as networks of ongoing interconnections among multiple actors, both official and semiofficial, identifiable as part of an «authoritarian governmentality»[85]. Thus, rather than an isolated activity detached from other strategies and means through dictatorships attempted to mould society, censorship becomes an indispensable but contingent strategy in the bigger picture of autocratic policies. For the dictatorships of the period 1925-1948, censorship was not only a geopolitical technology; it was a technology of political persistence. I suggest that the ambivalences of popular culture control are a key question in understanding authoritarian regimes and their survival. Conceiving censorship as a network of traceable actors also allows us to explore the action and typology of the music censors as intellectual and aesthetic mediators, rather than passive intermediaries or blockaders that only occupy places and perform potentialities. This could be a way to study the music censorship of European autocratic states of the 20th century beyond both dystopia and pragmatism.

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82. Rüthers 1988, pp. 56-58.

83. Holquist 1994, p. 19.

84. I draw on the Deleuzian concept of «surveillant assemblage» proposed by Haggerty – Ericson 2000 and developed by William Bogard 2006, but maintaining Foucault's historical and corporeal view of state governmentalities.

85. Dean 2010, pp. 155-174.

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