

Source Analysis of Archive Documents on Censorship During the Stalinism Period-Evidence from Kazakhstan

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Abstract: The goal is to receive new high quality knowledge of formation of the printed media and fiction censorship system during the period of Stalinism in Kazakhstan based on the analysis of non-published archive sources. The principles of analysis of information concluded in materials, which were found in the holdings of CSA RK and PA RK, were objectivity, historicism, comprehensiveness and complexity. A very informative block of sources is introduced for scientific use, which sources include previously not used documents from archive funds of the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan (CSA RK) and the President's Archives of the Republic of Kazakhstan (PA RK). The revealed primary sources are categorized based on the following criteria: source origin, document's functions, contents. The source analysis provided determination of specificity of factors, which influenced the formation of the comprehensive set of sources; their functioning in social environment; types of censorship; peculiarities of fiction categories (A, B) and printed media of state printing houses (central and local), which were subject for censoring. The formation stages of the censorship system functioning in the territory of Kazakhstan have been reviewed. Based on revealing the conditions of the sources' appearance, the issue of the credibility of information provided by the sources as well as its completeness and accuracy are considered. The studied materials are presented with respect to the period as an organic part of the culture of those times and the sociocultural community, which produced them. Based on the analysis of non-published sources, we have defined the scientific questions for studying the Stalinism period censorship.

Key words: Archive science heuristics • Printed media censorship • Stalinism period • Fiction review • Glavlit • military censors • Prepublication censorship • Fund • Summaries of the most important deletions and stoppages of works of literature

INTRODUCTION

The research of the centralized printed materials control system functioning allows us to study more comprehensively the historical and cultural context of the period, which *played a social and political role based on the Lenin's theory of mass media, the main function of which was the mobilization of society for the building of Communism headed by the Communist Party* [1].

Understanding and digestion of the intellectual history of Kazakhstan in the first half of 20th century in its entirety requires paying enough attention to that invisible work of censors. *The concept of censorship includes a wide range of expressed or hidden restrictions imposed on cultural self-expression. Censorship becomes an overall concept of controlling the social discourse, which has a political importance* [2].

At the study of non-published sources, a diachronic analysis was carried out, archive heuristic, comparative and historic and source methods were used, as well as matching and opposing methods, method of logical semantic analysis and other research approaches. These scientific procedures, being the basis for analyzing the revealed sources, allow to represent both on micro level and in general the characteristic of the censorship system and the functioning of its mechanisms as well as its individual components and the results of activity of authorities dealing with printed media and fiction censorship.

The source base of the research includes a wide range of non-published documents of management and record keeping from two archives of Kazakhstan: The Central State Archive (CSA RK) and the President's Archives (PA RK). Most sources available in these two

main archives of Kazakhstan are documents of management and record keeping, which were issued in the process of the administrative authorities' activity. The contents of the documents and the specific set of documentation depended on the functions of the institutions, which issued them and the goals of their authors.

At the first stage of the source study work, the following materials were revealed, studied and analyzed: in PA RK – 92 files and in CSA RK – 90 files (totally, eight collections were studied).

For successful work with archive documents of management and record keeping, it is necessary to take into account that any individual documentation system is a component of another, more global one. Revealing, selection and analysis of this set of sources is a complex research process, as materials of the funds feature a certain structural phenomenon, which is a unified set of sources and, at the same time, consists of various types of sources located in one place. On the other hand, the versatility of materials allows to consider them as a single set, which has a common feature that unifies them, namely the formation of a printed media and fiction censorship system during the period of Stalinism in Kazakhstan. Differentiation of directions in this set of sources is abundant. These are official documents of Soviet and party public authorities of the USSR and the Republic of Kazakhstan; informative and analytical materials; and censorship reports in this area.

Besides, due to the specificity of the documents of management and record keeping, individual documents are only a chain link. Therefore, information travels from document to document. This allows to determine the contents of lost documents during the research. The knowledge of regularities with respect to documents flow inside the system and between systems allows to conduct targeted search for required information.

Analysis of the contents of various types of sources available in the collections of CSA RK and PA RK was carried out in compliance with the following principles:

- Objectivity, which allowed to consider each decision taken by censorship authorities by accumulation of both positive and negative aspects;
- Historicism, which assumed study of organization and reorganization of censorship structures and their activities based on the peculiarities of specific historical situation;
- Comprehensiveness and complexity, which conditioned the fulfillment of the analysis that accounted all directions rather than based on a single factor.

During fulfillment of archive heuristics, the regularities of ways, in which documents came in the archives, were taken into account. The departmental identity of documents of management and record keeping of state authorities played the core role in creating and saving them. In this context, a department means a system of institutions in the center and at the local level, which covered some certain area of state control. The following sets of sources were defined based on the sources, from which materials came to archives.

The *first group* of sources includes documents of central party authorities:

- Fund 708 - the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CC CP of Kazakhstan);
- Fund 141 - the Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) in Kazakhstan (Kazraicom VKP(b)), which is now stored in PA RK;
- Fund 81 - the People's Commissariat of Education of Kirghiz ASSR (between 1920 and 1924);
- Fund 30 - the Council of People's Commissars of Kirghiz ASSR (Sovnarcom of Kirghiz SSR, SNC of Kirghiz ASSR).

The Second group is represented by funds of specialized institutions:

- Fund 1740 - the Main Directorate of Literature and Publishing in the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR (Glavlit of Kazakh SSR) between June 5, 1932 and March 14, 1953;
- Fund 1386 - the Kazakh Regional Publishing House of OGIZ RSFSR;
- Fund 1383 - the Kazakh State Fiction Publishing House;
- Fund 929 – the Kazakhstan Publishing House, Almaty.

The **third group** includes documents of non-governmental organizations:

- Fund 1778 - the Board of the Union of Writers of Kazakhstan (Here, the manuscripts of works of Kazakh writers and their interlinear translations, reviews to them and creative characteristics of writers are stored).

While studying materials of these collections, an internal classification of them was formed based on the document function criteria. We have identified the following groups of materials based on their functionality:

Regulatory Documents:

- Guidance materials;
- Resolutions on the reports to KazGlavlit;
- Circular letters, orders of: Glavlit of Kazakh SSR; the chief of the Main Directorate of Protection of Military State Secrets in Printed Media in the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR; and of the Main Directorate of Fiction and Publishing Affairs at SNK of the Kazakh SSR;

Statistic Materials:

- Extracts from summaries of the military censorship department;
- Summaries of: prepublication and further censorship in Kazakh SSR; to Glavlit, Moscow;
- Summaries of the most important deletions and stoppages of works of literature; the most important deletions by prepublication censorship and breaches, identified by further censorship;
- On the process of withdrawals from libraries and book stores of counter-revolutionary and politically outdated literature as well as literature based on views of Trotsky and Zinoviev; the most important deletions and stoppages of works of literature by KazGlavlit authorities.

Reporting Documentation:

- Memorandums to Kraicom of VKP(b) on the state of censorship;
- References on withdrawal of books by KazGlavlit;
- Quarterly reports by KazGlavlit, Glavlits, Krailits and Oblits to the authorized representative of the SNC of the USSR with respect to the protection of military secrets in printed materials;
- Decade summaries on the most important deletions by prepublication censorship and breaches revealed by further censorship as per the list of A and B category literature;
- On the state of censorship work in Kazakhstan within the period from 1934 until May 1937.

Documents on the Censorship Actions:

- Certificates, reviews for work of Kazakh writers;
- Protocols, memorandums on the state of censorship in Kazakhstan between 1934 and May 1937;
- Report by KazGlavlit for August and September of 1925;

- Correspondence on liquidation of periodicals and its financing (there is a list of published newspapers and magazines in Kazakhstan);
- Reports and opinions on periodicals: regional, governorate – of Ural, Syr Darya, Aktyubinsk and other regions;
- Information on the state of anti-religious propaganda in Kazakhstan;
- Creative characteristics of writers, conclusion on the works by Saken Seyfullin and so on;
- Responsibilities of the KazGlavlit officials who supervised book reviews.

Based on the carried out research of materials of archive funds of CSA RK and PA RK, we revealed important factors of the Soviet political censorship:

- As a system of party and state ideological management and supervision of all spheres of social and cultural life of the society. Archive materials clearly evidence this: *to improve party management of periodicals of Kirghiz republic. To appoint reporters – Kirghiz communists – in the plans of all printed media outlets and, if possible, release them of any other work. With the purpose of elimination of nationalist influence of anti-Soviet elements in Ak-Zhol, Sana, Tlchi and increase the number of the party officials in the staff of these organizations. At the same time, it is unconditionally necessary to involve politically uncommitted Kirghiz intellegentzia in the publishing work providing ideological leadership of the party management with respect to them.* [3];
- As an instrument of influencing popular consciousness by way of formal and informal restrictions as well as targeted regulation of the information space of the culture. This required *increasing of publishing socio-political literature in Kirghiz language and, first of all, expedite publication of selected works by V.I. Lenin and literature on Leninism* [4] as well as *establishment of systematic accounting of published literature in the territory of KAZAKHSTAN both in the center and at the local level* [5].

In order to ensure political supervision and control of printed materials, in 1922, the government established *Glavlit, the Main Directorate of literature and the Publishing House, the official censorship authority, ... and, from 1929 until 1991, they assumed the functions of political instruments of the Communist Party*

management with further political and ideological goals [6]. Glavlit of Kazakh SSR, being an integral institution, had its own structure and development regularities: *Administration of KazGlavlit: 1. Military censors; 2. Political Editor of foreign literature; 3. Authorized Representative of Glavlit at the party publishing house; 4. Political Editor at Kazizdat; 5. Censor at Kazpravda. Regional structures: Southern Kazakhstan Oblit: 1. Head of Oblit, 2. Military censor at Oblit; 3. Censor at regional newspapers* [7].

According to archive materials, censorship was divided into two types: prepublication and further censorship. *First of all, it is necessary to arrange prepublication censorship in the centers of republics and regions as well as in districts, ensuring coverage of all printed materials with prepublication censorship. At the same time, it is required to provide completing the staff of the further censorship administration both in KazGlavlit and in Oblits with appropriate censorship officials depending on the quantity of printed materials published by them.*

Materials of the archive make it possible to determine the control areas of KazGlavlit:

- *Over any printed materials of state printing offices (central and local ones) of KazGIZ, OGIZ; fiction; and educational printed materials;*
- *Over radio, through controlling all types of radio broadcasts including outdoor broadcasts and wire broadcasts (audio teleconferences) and mechanical sound records (Shorinophone)* [9];

The control functions included permitting and forbidding pop repertoire and phonograph records, movies, plays, photos, wall newspapers and so on. The following facts from Glavlit's materials evidence this: *Inspections show that in Aktyubinsk and especially in Southern Kazakhstan regions certain local newspapers and house newspapers publish materials without reviewing and permitting by local authorities of Soviet censorship, which is an intolerable and grossest violation of the laws on the order of production and publication of printed works, [10]; KazGlavlit does not object against covering the functioning of border units to some extent, but it must be covered in a manner that would not disclose military secrets [11]; KazTAG's materials in the Vestnik and regional, district and other newspapers must be multiplied and distributed to subscribers, including republican newspapers and Kazradiokomitet only after receiving the permission of KazGlavlit's censor [12].*

Depending on the political landscape and historical events, the scope and structure of censorship authorities changed and it is necessary to highlight that *immediate state instruments of censorship for the creation and distribution of information* were formed in Kazakhstan [13]. According to decade summaries on deletions by prepublication censorship and political and ideological violations revealed by further censorship, there were category A (protection of state secrets in printed materials – military censorship) and B (political and ideological character of publications). This is confirmed by materials of the fund:

- In the Narodnoye Khozyaystvo magazine No.1 and 2 of 1936 – timeline of information on total campaign against violations of the list of category B literature;
- In the result of further censorship, violations of list of category A literature were revealed in the Karagandinskaya Communa newspaper, dated March 1, 1936 [14]. The censorship mechanism was getting more intensive: *as the Socialist Realism, a term adopted in 1932, determined the prescribed content in art and literature for years ahead* [15].

There were some peculiarities at the formation of the censorship system mechanism in the territory of Kazakhstan according to materials of the archives: first, there was a close link with specific historical conditions; secondly, there was a link with the process of formation of command and control administration during the Stalinism period. The materials of the archive confirm it. For example, the documents contain a mention that *the state publishing house in KSSR was established in 1922. Its establishment was caused by immediate necessity to give the Kazakh people a book in their native language* [16].

The information contained in the Fund 141 – the Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) in Kazakhstan – Kazraicom VKP(b) confirms the fact that there was a Department of Printing at Kazraicom VKP(b). In 1925, it was reorganized, which is confirmed by *Minutes No.6 of the Meeting of the Board of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of Kazraicom of RKP(b) dated November 26, 1925 at Kazakh Regional Committee of RKP(b) in Kzyl-Orda "On reorganization of Political Department of Printing under the Decree of CC of RKP(b) dated October 23, 1925: Since January 15, 1926, the Political Department to be reorganized into an independent department directly subordinate to the Bureau of Kraicom. The Political Department is suggested to*

complete organizational work by the said date, namely: selection and assignment of the staff of the Department of Printing, consisting of the following offices: curator (Cossack), deputy curator (being an instructor), first instructor in charge of printing affairs - Natsmen, executive secretary and clerical assistant [17]. This means that until that time, the censorship department had not existed as an independent structural unit and the editor had carried out its functions.

However, the resolution of the Board of the Department of Printing of the Kazakh Kraicom of VKP(b) indicates that the Board resolved: the work of KazGlavlit between January 1925 and April 1926 to be defined as unsatisfactory and to prescribe systematic accounting of published literature in the territory of Kazakhstan, both in the center and at the local level [18].

The inspection of local censorship authorities was carried out beginning from the 1930s, which is evidenced by reports of KazGlavlit regarding inspections of Oblits and Railits. On the meetings of KazKraicom and SNC of Kazakh SSR, the issue of the state of censorship work in Kazakhstan was on the agenda and resolutions taken at the meetings were followed by orders to Obkoms of VKP(b) and Oblispolcoms to arrange censorship activities at the local level. This fact allows us to believe that the systematic censorship administration started being formed in Kazakhstan since this period and targeted censorship activities started being carried out both in the center and at the local level. Oblits started being established first in Southern Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Eastern Kazakhstan, Northern Kazakhstan regions and, starting from the beginning of 1937, in all other regions of Kazakhstan. Officials – members of VKP(b) – who were released from their duties were assigned to this work [19].

Glavlit initially existed as one of Departments of Narcompros [20] and later it was reorganized into the independent Main Directorate of literature and publishing at the Council of People's Commissars of Kazakh SSR and at the local level – at Oblispolcoms and Raiispolcoms. The staff of the central administration was increased to 15 staffing positions instead of 2 that had existed before. In regions, the staff included three operating executives with record keeping arranged through security offices of Oblispolcoms. In addition, Guriev Okrlit, Almaty Gorlit and 65 Railits in the Republic were established.

Kazkraicom of VKP(b) and Obcom of VKP(b) assigned 19 persons who were members of VKP(b) during this period. Besides, the Main Directorate assigned 15 persons who were members of VKP(b) and 3 Komsomol members as well as 5 persons from other places for the

prepublication censorship work (as a second job mainly). Totally, 42 persons worked at these positions (excluding authorized representatives of Oblits and Railits) instead of 2 persons in 1936. 16 of them were engaged in further censorship activities.

Censorial review was arranged with respect to all materials published by Kazgosizdat, Kazpartizdat, the Kazakh Regional Fiction Publishing House and publishing houses for Komsomol and Pioneer newspapers and magazines, newspapers published in Almaty, newspapers published in regional centers [21]. Such totalitarian censorship system was determined by the fact that by 1929, Stalin upstaged all of his opponents in the higher echelon of Soviet Union. Since that time and until his death in 1953, all mass media and communications in the Soviet Union were formed and targeted creation of the prestigious and reputed image of the Soviet leader, the glorification of the Soviet Union's achievements, as well as representation of the only formal Stalin's line [22]. Regulatory documents, namely the rules of Glavlit included only the regulatory principles with respect to what was to be censored [23].

Materials of the Main Directorate of Protection of Military State Secrets in printed media in the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR available in the archive of CSA RK starting from 1930 evidence the establishment of a separated unit of fiction censors at Glavlit. *Import, translation and distribution of foreign literature in the Soviet Union were restricted until the end of the 1930s. Secrecy and censorship became standard procedures for controlling information* [24]. The functions of these authorities were strongly influenced by the historical reality: documents on rehabilitation prevailed between 1934 and 1956 and during war times the censorship changed. Thus, for example, documents were issued *in order to supervise the fulfillment and provide the control of fulfillment of Orders of Glavlit of the RSFSR No.1323 dated June 19, 1935; No.129 dated July 11, 1935; No.1856 dated September 15, 1935; No.105/c dated October 7, 1936 and No.108/c dated October16, 1936 on withdrawal of works, relating to anti-revolutionary Trotsky and Zinoviev-related terrorist organization as well as outdated literature with no scientific and political value and not reflecting political aspects of the issues covered by it* [25].

At the same time, there is a document *On the Issue of Literary Directions of Kazakh Literary Scholars*, which provides *assessment of Kazakh literature*, subject for consideration from points of view different from those of European literature. The document reads that Kazakh

literature was just starting to exist and did not have any comprehensive history. The Kazakh economy and the Kazakh society were rather different from the European ones. This means that it was impossible to import alien elements into the Kazakh literature and to find the same scope of literature directions as we can observe in western and Russian literature. Most of European literature sects are absolutely alien to Kazakh people.

When assessing Kazakh literature, we can determine two main areas of focus in it. The first one can be called the popular nationalist strand due to its character. This is the older strand, which represents Kazakh reality and Kazakh people as they were when became free of the burden of czarist autocracy and remained for some time after the revolution. As for other achievements of the revolution related to realization of the communism, representatives of this strand tend to believe Kazakh people were not ready for them. Therefore, representatives of this strand applied all their efforts to the enlightenment of Kazakh people. Most of them were engaged in preparing textbooks and education guidances for schools, the issues of national school, Kazakh science, issues of fonts and spelling and other issues. One of typical representatives of this strand was A.B. Baytursynov, a famous Kazakh scientist and a man of pen and ink.

The second area of focus of the Kazakh literary concept can be called the revolutionary strand. This strand appeared due to the revolution and gathered all young powers of Kazakh men of pen and ink. Its main peculiarity was the strive to show the insignificance of achievements of the October revolution for Kazakh people.

The main topic of the strand is the Kazakh people in the times of destroying their previous state system and on the way to realization of Communism. However, this strand often faced difficulties in the selection of live material for its art works. Not having enough revolutionary charge, the Kazakh reality did not often give authors of the strand any real topics to be expressed in their works. On the other hand, the representatives of the strand had not managed to get free from the old ideology inside them. Therefore, the literary creative work of those authors seemed to be artificial and works suffered lack of artistic merit.

As for the character of their literary creative work, the Kazakh men of pen and ink divided into the following groups: [26].

Writers of popular national direction		Writers of revolutionary direction	
1)	Baitursunov (linguistic scientist)	1)	Torekulov (linguist)
2)	Omarov (mathematician)	2)	Togzhanov (political Marxian writer)
3)	Aymautov (literary and art writer)	3)	Dzhuldubaev (same)
4)	Dosmukhamedov (teacher)	4)	Maylin (poet of fiction)
5)	Auezov (literary and art writer)	5)	Sadvakasov (artistic fiction)
6)	Dulatov (artistic poet)	6)	Seyfullin (artistic poet)
7)	Tnyshbaev (ethnographer)	7)	Zhansugurov (artistic poet)
8)	Shonanov (teacher and ethnographer)	8)	Baidildin (political Marxian writer)
9)	Bukeykhanov (economic statistics)	9)	Aldongarov (reporter)
10)	Tleshin (medicine translator)	10)	Basimov (playwriter)
11)	Dzhumabaev (artistic poet)		
12)	Kemengerov (literary and art writer)		
13)	Nurumov (translator)		
14)	Yusupov (translator)		

Along with two main strands, certain intermediate sects can be also marked out in Kazakh literature.

Materials of another type, which allow us to see the censorship work from another angle, are also interesting. For example, there is evidence in the archive materials regarding the quality of translation into the Russian language of the Kyz Zhibek poem: Kyz Zhibek is a great work by people. It includes the rich wealth of folklore, beautiful truly popular *dialogs in songs* of heroes (*Singing competitions*, as the Kazakhs call them); and the significance of the poem cannot be doubted. Unfortunately, the translation provided by A. Nikolskaya

does not reflect all the wealth and beauty of the work. A lot has not been conveyed or has been translated with bad quality. The reader feels and imagines these things through the head of the translator who has not managed to convey all nuances of the original. The translator's dictionary is poor and limited; the translator conveys the contents of the poem and its outstanding figurality very rough, being incapable to *choose the best suitable words and place them in the most suitable order* [27].

Based on the above, it is necessary to point out that the formation of the censorship system in the territory of Kazakhstan is a means of influencing the population.

And the studying of archive documents allows to determine the extent, in which the state had the tools necessary for implementation of their provisions. Therefore, verification of the veracity of materials related to this issue in the archives of CSA RK and PA RK included in the research can be carried out by finding out how established facts are consistent with each other and with the historical reality. This requires taking into account, in which cultural environment the documents of management and record keeping were issued and functioned. Besides, it is required not only to recover the process of their execution in the system of legislative institutions, but also to integrate the materials in the system of social, political and cultural life of this society as well as to understand the idea of structures of KazGlavlit at different stages of development according to those real goals, which it stated.

The archive materials of CSA RK and PA RK feature tendency, which is expressly observed in most of them and in some documents exists implicitly. We cannot judge of the political or ideological strand of the materials based on one or several facts or information present in materials of an archive. The content of the sources is also influenced by the goal of the document and its destination, i.e. its targeted focus. *Censorship and its concept are as wide as the civilization and the humanity are old. It serves as an instrument of suppression and deletion of statements, which are found to be undesirable due to moral, political, religious, military or other motives. The term is used mostly for pointing out intervention by a government or a regime into interpersonal or mass communication. Censorship can have various forms, including prohibition of books, consideration and approval of information at the state level before its publication or broadcasting, as well as military restrictions with respect to news that can affect the security.* [28]. In this view, the author offers an interesting opinion that *special committee for TV and radio broadcasting is conceptualized as percutaneous needle, with which information is injected into the audience* [29].

CONCLUSION

Thus, making the representativeness of the studied archive sources of CSA RK and PA RK more precise, we can state the following:

- Materials of these archives feature immediate managerial decisions as well as documents, which support their taking and implementation. There is a

total dependence of documents of management and record keeping on the party ideology and policy. The materials not only mirror the reality of censorship system functioning based on different points of view, but also build and transform it. Censorship (within the considered period) was a tool of forming public opinion, managing events and handling environment;

- The content of documents for further study allows to point out a number of issues related to censorship during the Stalinism period: reorganization of publishing activities in Kazakhstan; monopolization of libraries; mechanism of censorship with respect to literature and periodicals; the state and development of Kazakh literature and how it mirrored historical reality; reorganization of the censorship system; etc.

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