

PROPAGANDA, BETWEEN LITERATURE AND IDEOLOGY

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***Summary:** In totalitarian regimes, propaganda uses culture to enforce and strengthen power. The artistic discourse thus becomes an ideological one, miming the political one. However, since no official public opposition was possible, parody was used as a weapon against the official ideology. The present article presents such an alternative for the mitigation of propaganda, in the case study dedicated to Marin Sorescu's debut in 1964, the volume *Singur printre poeti*.*

***Keywords:** propaganda, ideology, parody, mitigation, political discourse, censure.*

Realist-socialist literature and propaganda in Romania, an overview

Much can be said – and has, in fact, been written – on the precise and infamous manner in which propaganda served the Communist Party's interests in Romania. Literature and culture, in general, had been seen in all communist states as means to strengthen positions and power, a form to educate the worker and shape the New Man. Ideology was serving the Revolution, meaning to change the world, so it followed as a natural consequence that culture, literature, art, should contribute to this by weaving the official ideology into their fibres. Mass persuasion was not meant to be subversive, discrete, or insidious; it was a duty to be fulfilled by agitation, uproar, revolt, and, in the end, consensus, uniformity, conviction or, at least, complete submission.

The first step was to erase the past in order to make room for the new literature (in Romania, this happened starting with 1944, when the Armistice agreement with the governments of the United Nations was signed), to obtain control on all cultural

axiology that the ironist believes in. In fact, this is where the difference between pure satire and satirical irony is hidden: while the former does nothing but sanction reality, the latter carries with it an inherent axiological option, like the two faces of a coin.

Not surprisingly, parody was associated not only with intertext or hypertext, but also with metatext, seeing in these literary creations a form of literary criticism. Through the synthetic and contrastive mixture of pre-existing literary elements, ironic parody can truly become a form of literary criticism; it has, then, the advantage of remaining immanent, metaliterary (rather than para-literary), synthetic (rather than analytical). It is both recreation and creation; it is a criticism and an active form of exploration⁷.

Although intensely debated, cultural resistance, be it modest, flimsy or even, according to some, non-existent, is justified in parody. The implicit criticism brought to poetry and the realist-socialist literary criticisms can also be read as veiled criticism of the system that produced them.

Far from instrumentalizing literature, its active use through reading, writing, interpreting, debating (all encompassed in hermeneutics) can provide the necessary tools for digital literacy, especially useful in the fight to counter disinformation: critical thinking, text assessment, analyzing events and facts, synthesizing information and evaluating it based on language specificities, source, medium of transmission, intention of the text, drawing inferences making judgments and taking decisions.

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