

UNPOPULAR SOURCES

By Tedd Urnes

BAAC Conference 2008: "Transformation as Stability: Audiovisual archives in the Era of new Media".

A strategy and philosophy of archiving controversial books, radio, television programmes and movies.

BOOK BURNING IN OUR TIME ONLY?

" ... Where they have burned books, they will end in burning human beings ..."
(In German: Dort, wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch Menschen)

Quotation from the German journalist, essayist and romantic poet: Heinrich Heine (1797-1857).



In year 1933, May 10, the books written by Heinrich Heine were burned in Berlin, Germany due to the official policy of the government.

About 20 000 so-called degenerate books were burned during a student rally. The aim of the action was to suppress the freedom of speech and the freedom of information.



THE AIM OF MY PRESENTATION

is to highlight selection policy of different libraries, audiovisual archives, collections of radio Programmes transmitted and not transmitted and television archives and collections. The hidden censorship of movies is also subject of great interest and I will deal with the issue too.

SELECTION

of the content of audiovisual archives with reference to political censorship of the collections and the struggle for freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and to UNESCO promoting the value of human rights.

Selection of books and radio, film and television programmes due to moral and religious issues are not a dominating part of my lecture.

CENSORSHIP

The exclusion of certain topics from the collections of radio and television programmes transmitted to the population of the country. No access to controversial programmes or productions disliked by a management or a government after having been published.

SELECTION POLICY

The exclusion of different subjects from the content of broadcast programming.

Selection is made due to critical evaluation of the programme and if the programme is not accepted because of the standard both technically and due to the content, the only product might be wiped. No copy is made of the programme. An unofficial and hidden censorship are introduced to the corporation or the production company.

WIPING OF TRANSMITTED PROGRAMMES CALLED SELECTION

An official policy for the wiping of programmes transmitted with reference to an internal working group set up by the company for this aim only. Due to the cost of new tapes for television programmes during 1960 – 1980 programmes were wiped to be used in new productions. This type of economic policy is still in use in many countries where the economic situation is no good. The only made programme of a certain subject is gone for ever.

SELECTION POLICY OR HIDDEN CENSORSHIP?

When I was studying for my degree in librarianship about 42 years ago at the Norwegian Parliament Library in Oslo, my mentor the Head librarian Olaf Chr. Torp made this interesting statement:

“... Due to the fact that the selection of new books for the library is made by me in cooperation with the staff, nobody could complain about the content of collection with reference to my private and personal opinions in different matters or in religious and political issues...”. He was right in his attitude even if he is a very religious man still active at the age of 80. There was no censorship at the Norwegian Parliament Library.

Selection of books was an important part of the curriculum for library students a century ago.

The work of selection was also introduced to radio and television archives as a part of the job.

-We cannot keep all the programmes transmitted – too much and too many and too bad – We keep only the best programmes produced within a subject. This policy has not been a good one when you wanted to make historical programmes. Even a no good programme could be reused partly in new productions.

The number of copies printed to make the costs break-even –was 3000 copies. This means that you might find the published and wanted book somewhere in one or another library. This was not the situation for production of radio and television programmes and movies too. One

copy of the programme was forwarded the archive after the transmission date. Chief librarians

were actually acting like “ CULTURAL GODS” so to speak. Did we talk about censorship or a personal attitude to what might be good for you to read and not good for you ?

The feeling of power is intoxicating. Not everyone was thinking like my former mentor Olaf Chr. Torp.

A REPORT AND EXPERIENCE FROM LATIN AMERICA CHILE: SANTIAGO DE CHILE. YEAR 1973



The year is not 1933 . We are not viewing a book burning action in Germany but in Chile in the capital: Santiago de Chile and the year is 1973.

If you want to view the shots of the soldiers burning books in Chile, search this address: <http://www.ina.fr/archivespourtout> (make a click on: Explorer (first headline on the left of the screen/ theme/ histoire/ coup d'etai au Chile/ les consequences/ la repression/ la censure.

It is the second item)

Or you may search this email: dosaintville@ina.fr

“...The facilities of the station were occupied by the military forces. ...we observed that in a corner of the complex of buildings, documents and filmic material were burned ...”.

The quotation is from a lecture given by Amira Arratia in October 2006. The title of her paper “Our Audiovisual Patrimony: Recovering the Memory “. Amira Arratia is working as Jefe Centro de Documentacion Television Nacional de Chile. The paper was presented at FIAT/IFTA Conference in Madrid 2006.

In 1973 President Salvador Allende was killed in action and the dictatorship of Pinochet was introduced. The soldiers were acting with licence to burn books disliked by the new head of the state. Political censorship of published material made the content of the National Archive and television and radio archives less important for political studies and research work because the correct facts were not to be found in the libraries or archives.

The official policy of censorship was not approved by Amira Arratia . Therefore films and video shots archived were hidden by using different titles or non titles at all. A detailed content description could not be done due to the fact that the information might be given to those who disliked the shots and the result was wiping of the programmes.



Amira Arratia, to the left in the picture.

MOVIES: POLITICAL BOYCOTT AND BANNING OF MOVIES Censorship of films.

For nearly the entire history of film production, certain movies have been boycotted by political groups or literally banned by a regime for political reasons.

Finland did ban the movie called: “The Manchurian Candidate “. The film was produced in year 1962. The movie is about the son of a prominent political family who has been brainwashed into becoming an unwilling assassin for the Communist Party.

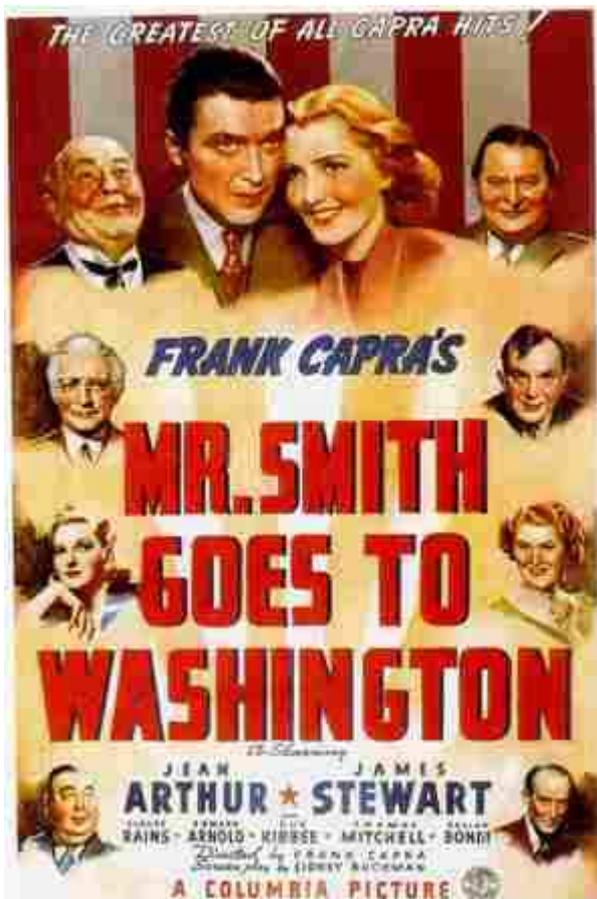
Finland banned the film from 1964 – 1987.

The film is based on the novel “The Manchurian Candidate “written by Richard Condon, 1959. The novel has been banned in communist states for political reasons and by the American Legion.



Germany banned the famous film: “ The Great Dictator” made by Charles Chaplin in 1940. The film is a satire on Nazi Germany. A parody of the Hitler regime. The film was banned from 1940- 1998. Spain also banned the film from 1940 till 1976 for its portrayal of Fascism.

Germany banned from 1939 – 1945 also this movie: “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington”. due to the political content. The film was produced in 1939. The film is about a naïve man appointed to fill a vacancy in US Senate. The content is also about political corruption



THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION – A DANGEROUS FIGHT

Since year 2003 about 125 journalists and 49 support workers have been killed in Iraq only

In year 2007 at least 65 journalists were killed around the world on duty. Half of the casualties died in Iraq.

We are facing a struggle for correct information about political events and a struggle to keep up the standard of the audiovisual archives – the information banks – too.

SOME REASONS FOR GETTING ACCESS TO AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES WORLDWIDE

- Footage that is used as a substitute for going out and shooting it yourself
- Footage that is used for its historical content
- Footage is used for economic reasons reducing the costs of the production
- Footage is used to re-create historical scenes
- Footage is used to tell you about the year of the events of the film
- Footage is used as a creative decision

NEWSREEL FOOTAGE – REUSED IN MOVIES

For certain reasons old newsreels have been used in movies to tell you about the correct time of the events. Movies about the Second World War are still produced. Realistic fighting scenes have been used in a hidden way. The plane is shot down. It is not made in the studio by a professional filmmaker. He has used the newsreel from the time of the event- from the battle. It is the shots that are important – not the sound or the political comments or report. German newsreels from WWII are very much used. Footage is used to tell you about the years of the events like in the film called: A bridge too Far. The film begins with a montage of actual archival footage and narrated by a Dutch woman Kate Ter Holst (Liv Ullmann).

What do these films have in common apart from being combat films containing political messages?

-CONTACT (1956)

-THE DESERT FOX (1951)

-CASABLANCA (1941)

-THE YOUNG LIONS (1958)

-A BRIDGE TOO FAR (1977)

-THE REWARD (BELØNNINGEN) (1980)

-L'ACCOMPAGNATICE (1992)



NORSKE KLASSIKERE

Med 2 filmer: KONTAKT! (1938) og OLUF REED (1939)

KONTAKT!

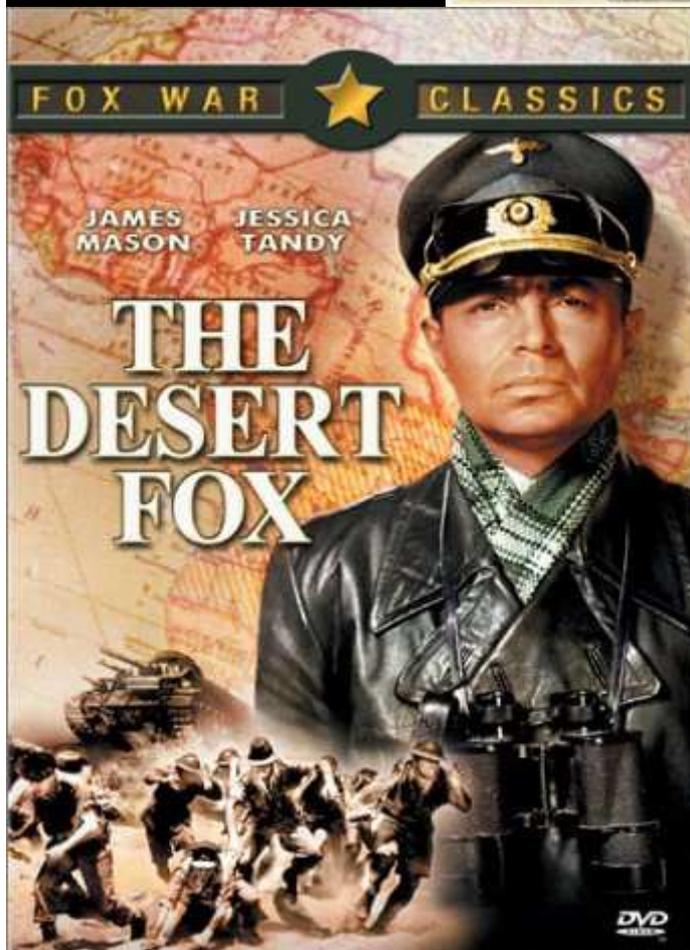
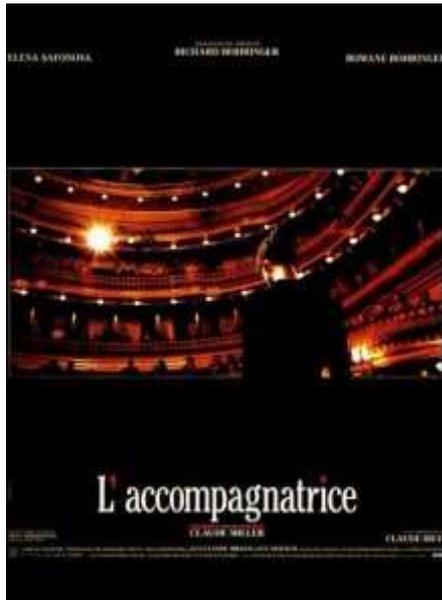


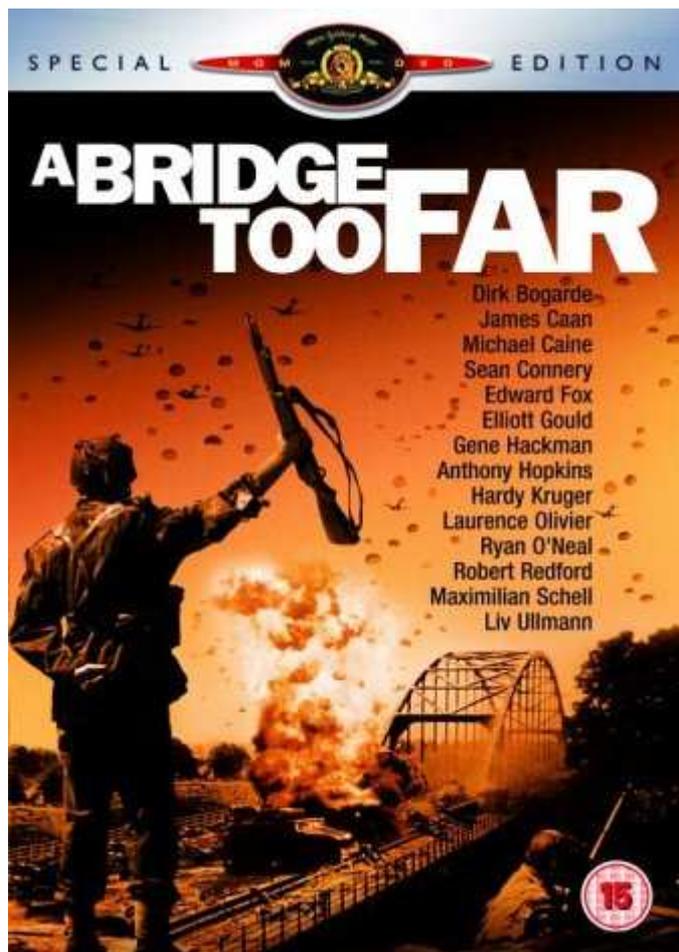
OLUF REED OLSEN
HJELM BASSBERG - OTTOMAR ELUGERS
MORTEN HANCKE - LARS LARSEN - JAN TENYIS

REGISET AV OLUF REED
1938
1939



DVD





Old German newsreels are used in all of the movies. Therefore do not destroy old films because even movies have made use of the products.

CONCLUSION – RECOMMENDATIONS

- The value of the audiovisual archives is depending on the official policy of the freedom of the press and the freedom of speech and the freedom of expression
- Books about the history of your country are based on access to different archives, libraries, private collections of documents, films, video and photos. Those sources mentioned must be correct and not up-dated due to political changes of your country.
- An open access to national archives is a must for researchers
- The introduction of a legal deposit law dealing with all published material is an important act
to make it possible to report about the past. This means that at least one or two copies of all
transmitted radio and television programmes and all movies produced during a year must
be
forwarded the national archive for eternal storage.

-A policy for selection of non transmitted films and video shots- copies of a shot – must take place in television companies. This means that a new department must be established where

people who have worked for the company must be get a new job. A detailed content description of the shots is a must: Who, Where, What , Why and so on.

Worldwide few if any television corporations have yet introduced this type of policy.

-The historical television department must work close to different universities where Students and professors are working with issues dealt with in the films.

-Radio and sound archives do also wipe too much non transmitted recordings to-day. In close cooperation with universities, the forgotten recordings must be evaluated for future storage.

-Controversial statements – not popular statements – must be kept even if the shots are not Transmitted or used in a production.

-Television and radio corporations must introduce a “Senior Policy “for the archives.

Avoid early pension among the staff because the company may use the information known About the programmes only by those few left.

My friend in Australia , Ray Edmondson OAM, B.A. Dip Lib , established his own company Called : “Archive Associates Pty Ltd” after his retirement from office. He found it immoral not to inform audiovisual libraries worldwide about his knowledge in the field. His attitude to work and pension is appreciated by me. You may all contact him:

<http://www.archival.com.au>

Ray Edmondson has presented papers on different international conferences and seminars.

Reports of his activities are to be found on the web sites of : FIAT/IFTA and AMIA.



Photo: Tedd Urnes. Ray Edmondson to the right ,in Paris.

MOVIE BANNING

-Film banning is a vast of time due to the new technology: The use of Internet has hindered groups or government, banning films. High-speed Internet access and better File compression give more people access to digital copies of movies that might Not be available for viewing in theatres.

Take care of your collections. Good luck and thank you for your attention.



Photo: Tedd Urnes. Library, Valdemosa, Mallorca, 2004

Tedd Urnes
Teddview Audiovisual Archival Management (TAAM)
August 21, 2008

