

MEMORY AND OBLIVION: CENSORSHIP IN PORTUGAL UNDER ESTADO NOVO IN THE LIGHT OF THREE SPANISH THEATER PLAYS

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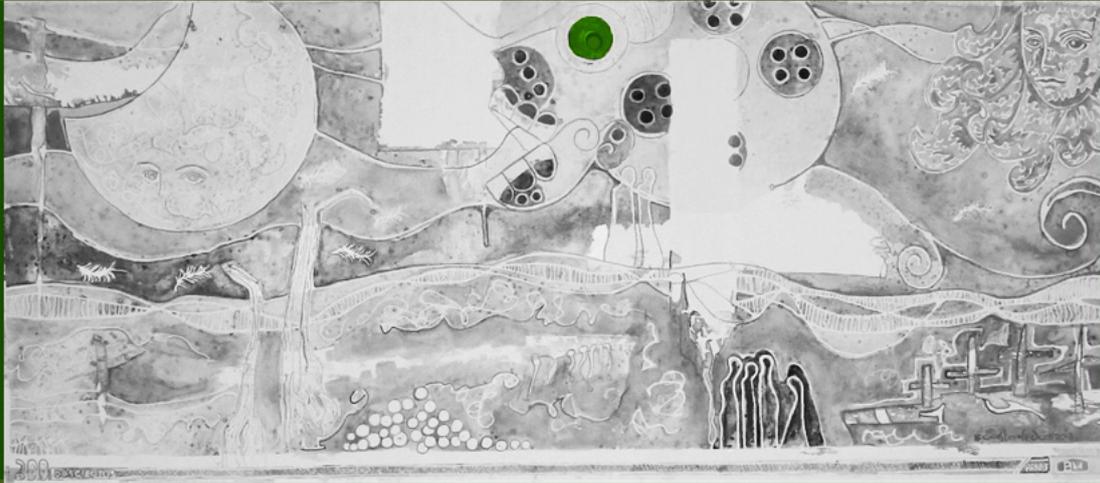
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Abstract || The goal of this article is to analyze the functioning of theater censorship in Portugal based on the analysis of three theatrical plays: *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*, by Federico García Lorca (presented in 1947); *Las Quinas de Portugal*, by Tirso de Molina (presented in 1968), and *El Triciclo*, by Fernando Arrabal (presented in 1968). The study focuses on two distinct periods of the Estado Novo: the final years of the 1940s, when censorship apparatus underwent a period of reorganization, and the 1960s, when censorship grew stronger once again as a result of Salazar regime's increasing rigidity. Relying on archival evidence, we attempt to reveal the representation of censorship processes and their effects on Portuguese society and culture.

Keywords || Estado Novo | Theatre Censorship | History | Memory.

Estamos em 1971, e Mirek diz: a luta do homem contra o poder é a luta da memória contra o esquecimento
(Kundera, 1986:11).

0. Presentation

Authoritarian or totalitarian political regimes selectively conceal reality in order to promote the official ideology. New values, ideas and concessions must fit the level “onde se inscrevem a concatenação dos atos” (Leroi-Gouhan, 1964-65), and have an effect most especially on the field of ‘ethnic memory’, where the behavior of a society is based.

In Salazar’s political regime, collective memory was manipulated by means of new objects that occupied the place of older ones: it invented a notion of the ‘people’, with its folk dances, regional dresses, songs and religion, and advocated a model of patriarchal family. Estado Novo’s notion of the Portuguese people was associated with simplicity, ignorance and illiteracy, the values of the Motherland. Historical characters were elevated to the category of myths in order to provide role models. The endorsement of the “heroes of the Motherland” was constituted on another manipulation: a factual and positivist official history, based on individuals from the elites who were presented as ancestors and models of the people.

Thus, the city of Guimarães was turned into the cradle of the Motherland, Alfonso Henriques became the founder of the nation, and prince Dom Henrique, an example of chastity, became the ideologue of the School of Sagres—which never really existed—where the heroic discoverers of maritime conquest were trained. The process of ideological indoctrination targeted a seemingly receptive and accommodative people.

What we find is thus a political-ideological regime that aims at conceal collective memory by instilling other canons. Cultural production, supported and directed by the Secretariado Nacional de Propaganda (1933), led by António Ferro,¹ tried to create an image of Portugal that fitted the ideology of Estado Novo.

Back to Kundera’s sentence opening this article: dictatorships delete faces from photographs in order to condemn politically sensible characters to oblivion, erasing them from collective memory and thus turning the struggle against power into a battle of memory against oblivion.

There are other ways to erase memory: prohibitions, bans, and repression. Estado Novo used them all to reconfigure collective

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1 | António Ferro (1895-1956) was a journalist, writer and politician, initially connected to the modernist movement as editor of the journal *Orpheu*. He became mentor of “Política do Espírito” by means of different initiatives, particularly through the Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional (1933), later the Secretariado da Informação Nacional, which he directed until 1949. He was an admirer of Benito Mussolini, to whom he repeatedly referred in his different interviews to Salazar.

memory, and, in addition, created a governmental mechanism of control, the PVDE, in 1933 (in 1945 it changed to PIDE, and in 1969, to DGS). PVDE was a political police created to control, arrest and kill dissidents. Censorship, working as State Secretary, was organized into different departments and it controlled the press and all cultural production of Portugal, as well as foreign works (theater, film, books, and songs).

Estado Novo also established structures of indoctrination: National Unions, Mocidade Portuguesa and Federação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho (FNAT), among others. The most important pillars of the regime, though, were without a doubt the political police and censors. This article is structured under two notions: on the one hand, the identification of theater censorship in the context of Estado Novo's policies, and secondly, the mechanisms of said censorship as an instrument of repression of creativity, diversity, originality, difference and independence.

In addition, we pretend to show discontinuities in theater censorship. We do not want to draw limits—which, as Michel Foucault (1989) noted, would be arbitrary—but rather, and based in the analysis of documents, find mutations in the structure of censorship that had an effect in its actuation. As Jacques Le Goff points out, “a periodization is the main instrument of intelligibility of significant changes” (Le Goff, 1992).

In the context of censorship in Portugal, we will analyze three plays by Spanish authors that were censored in two moments of the regime: Federico García Lorca's *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* (1947), *Las quinas de Portugal*, by Tirso de Molina (1968), and *El Triciclo*, by Fernando Arrabal (1968). All these works are very different but share the fact that their authors are all important Spanish writers. Their cases allow us to see the ideological mechanisms of Estado Novo. The analysis of the prohibitions, the rationale of the censors—what was considered dangerous, undesirable, or immoral—constitutes a key to understand the extensive action of censorship.

The reason behind the choice of works is the need to understand whether the ideological proximity between the two Iberian States diminish the censors zeal, or rather, whether there existed a number of preconceptions based in a common history of wars and occupations.

On the one hand, relationships between the two States were strained because of their different paths in 1947 and 1968: since 1950s, Spain entered a spiral of development, joined the UN, and supported the process of decolonization, while Portugal, choosing to maintain its colonies, became growingly isolated from the rest of the world.

Moreover, these three works were written by different authors in different historical periods, and they faced different situations in terms of censorship. While Arrabal's *El Triciclo* and Tirso de Molina's *Las quinas de Portugal* were banned, *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*—contrary to what might have been expected, as Federico García Lorca, a notorious republican and sympathizer of the Left, which for Estado Novo equated to be a Communist—was unlimitedly approved, greatly surprising actors and producers. With our current knowledge of the practices, moral codes and restrictions of the censors, it is interesting to inquire on the reasons that motivated this decision.

For this research, we have examined documents of different types and sources: firstly, legal regulations for theater and film during the period under study; secondly, documents from the archive of the National Secretariat of Information and Tourism,² which hold the documents of the Commission for the Examination and Classification of Shows (*Comissão de Exame e Classificação de Espectáculos*) of the Estado Novo period. This information is distributed in two locations: most of it is held at the National Archive in Torre do Tombo, and a smaller section, in the Archive of the Museum of Theater.

We have also analyzed *Processos da Direcção Geral de Censura* and the *Actas das Comissões de Censura*. The first, besides documents pertaining the different applications for authorization of plays, include the opinions of the censors. The second offer reports of the weekly sessions of the Censorship Commission.

1. The end of the war and the establishment of Secretariado Nacional de Informação e Cultura Popular

In 1944, in anticipation of the end of the war and the Ally victory, 'propaganda' turned into 'information' in the name of the National Secretariat, SPN changing into SNI (*Secretariado Nacional de Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo*).

This operation supposed a structural change, but the SNI did not decentralize any of its sectors, which continued under direct supervision of Salazar, and a unique body gathered a number of services with their own statutes.

António Ferro continued to direct the SNI until 1949, when a period of transition was granted until 1947: "Até à integração efectiva da Inspeção dos Espectáculos no Secretariado haverá delegados deste junto dela, a fim de estabelecerem a necessária coordenação entre os dois organismos, designadamente, no que se refere à censura teatral e cinematográfica".³

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2 | This documentary collection is held at the National Archive in Torre do Tombo (ANTT) and contains information about the actuation of censors, their reports on plays, notes on dress rehearsals, opinions on court appeals and the minutes of the censorship commission.

3 | Order in council num. 34133, November 24, 1944, Art., 5, §3.

The attributions of the SNI “no campo da cultura popular são, a orientação, o estímulo e a coordenação de todas as actividades que se destinem a elevar o nível moral e intelectual do povo português e a exaltar e valorizar a sua individualidade nacional”.⁴

Indeed, Art. 3 of order in council num. 34590 from May 11, 1945, established that censorship of theater plays and films would be undertaken after application from the interested parties. The same decree stipulated that: “A Comissão de Censura é constituída pelo Secretário-Geral do Ministério, pelo Inspector dos Espectáculos, que serão respectivamente o presidente e vice-presidente, e por mais nove vogais e um secretário, nomeados pelo Ministro da Educação Nacional”.⁵ In addition, the Commission for Censorship of Theater and Film had three delegates appointed by SIN.

All shows were subject to previous censorship. Censors read theater plays and approved, failed or approved them with cuts. Any performance of a failed play was forbidden throughout the national territory. Approved plays had to undergo a second examination during dress rehearsal by the same censors who had read the play. They would check that cuts were implemented, that all elements on stage, props and wardrobe were appropriate and respected “morality and decency”. During these rehearsals, though, what was really supervised was the creativity of directors and actors to give a different meaning to the text, so as to bypass the ban of the censors.

Censors thus rapidly confronted the necessity to have a clear set of rules to apply to theater and film. Judge Dr. Sacramento Monteiro was asked to elaborate the film regulation, while the Commission approved theater regulations:

Primeiro) – Durante os ensaios de censura só poderão permanecer na sala de espectáculos, além dos censores, os autores e componentes da empresa. Estes ensaios devem realizar-se com os mesmos cenários, caracterizações e indumentária que hão-de figurar nas representações públicas. É vedado aos censores, em caso de não observância destas regras, autorizarem o ensaio.

Segundo) – A Comissão designará os censores que devem assistir a cada ensaio de censura, mas o seu número será de dois, pelo menos, quando se trate de ensaios de revista.

Terceiro) – Os pedidos de censura de peças serão acompanhados dos respectivos poemas dactilografados, em duplicado e apresentados com uma antecedência de quinze dias. Os aditamentos nas revistas podem ser apresentados até quarenta e oito horas antes da primeira representação. É vedado aos censores receberem directamente das empresas as peças ou os aditamentos.

Quarto) – O texto aprovado pela Comissão de Censura será rigorosamente observado durante a representação. As infracções podem levar à suspensão temporária ou definitiva do espectáculo.

Quinto) – As peças, depois de entregues, serão distribuídas na primeira reunião da Comissão e por esta apreciadas na reunião seguinte

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4 | Order in council num. 34134, November 24, 1944, “Regulamento dos Serviços do Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo”. II, 1) Generalidades. Art. 2nd.

5 | Order in council num. 34590, May 11, 1945, Art. 15.

mediante parecer escrito do respectivo censor. A Comissão reunirá em todas as terças feiras⁶.

These regulations show, first of all, the need to train new judges with clear directions. They respond to the implementation of censorship under the Inspeção Geral de Espectáculos, which in many occasion was permissive and yield under the pressure of impresarios. Secondly, the integration of the Inspeção Geral dos Espectáculos in the Secretariado⁷ was probably a complex process and Coronel Óscar de Freitas, who became second in command in the institution, did not make things easier.

As a consequence, there were some promiscuity between judges and impresarios. Chairperson Martins Lage introduced the following proposal, which was immediately approved:

Primeira – Que as emprêças teatrais sejam notificadas de que devem submeter à apreciação da Comissão de Censura os títulos das peças que projectem representar, antes de as mesmas serem objecto de qualquer publicidade. A aprovação dos títulos, precedendo a censura do texto das peças, será de carácter provisório.

Segunda – Que os vogais da Comissão de Censura quando impedidos, por motivo justificado, de efectivar o cumprimento das suas funções nos trabalhos que lhes tenham sido distribuídos, os devolvam sem prejuízo de tempo para os interessados, ao Inspector dos Espectáculos, que imediatamente procederá à sua redistribuição dentro da referida escala⁸.

It is easy to detect a strong concern about the efficiency of Censorship Commissions. With the objective that each of the censors would rigorously fulfill their task, the next meeting revolved around the strictness and uniformity of the regulations, with the Secretário Nacional da Informação redacting the following:

Primeira – Os cortes parciais no texto das peças incidirão essencialmente sôbre palavras, frases, cenas ou rubricas de expressão, sentido ou efeito atentatório da correcção e higiene da linguagem, da moral e dos costumes sãos, e ainda do bom doutrinário social, político e religioso do ambiente nacional.

Segunda – A proibição integral das peças poderá verificar-se quando o assunto de natureza imoral ou amoral fôr desenvolvido com intenção apologética, e o seu desfecho seja favorável ao triunfo dos factos, ideias ou doutrinas condenáveis expostas. Neste caso, porém, a resolução será previamente submetida à apreciação do Secretário Nacional da Informação, antes de ser comunicado pela Inspeção dos Espectáculos ao interessado⁹.

1947 was a fundamental year in the organization of the services and the establishment of censorship regulations, procedures and personal relationships between censors and impresarios. The former were asked to separate their functions from those of the latter. In *Actas da Comissão de Censura*, we find different recommendations in that sense. A bureaucratic mechanism was created to put a

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6 | Book num. 1, *Actas da Comissão de Censura dos Espectáculos*, minutes of March 20, 1945, 3. SNI-IGE/ANTT

7 | Book num. 1, *Actas da Comissão de Censura dos Espectáculos*, minutes of July 8, 1947 – 122. Integration was a very slow process, which was not effective until 1947. SNI-IGE/ANTT

8 | Book num. 1, *Actas da Comissão de Censura dos Espectáculos*, minutes of April 15, 1947 – 110. SNI-IGE/ANTT

9 | Book num. 1 *Actas da Comissão de Censura dos Espectáculos*, minutes of August 12, 1947 – 127. SNI-IGE/ANTT

distance between censors and impresarios, actors, and directors, so as to reduce pressures.

2. *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*, or the rebellion against authoritarianism

In a context characterized by the disorganization of censorship due to the transition defined by the judges, Amélia Rey Colaço¹⁰ staged Federico García Lorca's *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*.

Lorca wrote the play in 1936 and never saw it on stage, as on that same year Fascist militias murdered him in Alfacar, a village eight kilometers away from Granada. The play portrays the political and social context of rural Spain and the powerful and conservative familiar casts of landlords in turn controlled by the Church.

The play is set in a very traditional Andalusia. Bernarda Alba, with her voice and her walking stick, acts as the matriarch of a family of women in which a fundamentalist Catholic morality prevails: they all have to mourn Bernarda's passed husband for eight years, which confines her daughters in the house. The matriarch does not understand the devastating effect of the appearance of a young Pepe Romano, the boyfriend of the older and sole heir, Angustias, triggering disputes and desires among all the sisters. Adela, the younger daughter, opposes mourning and prohibitions:

Adela: Pienso que este luto me ha cogido en la peor época de mi vida para pasarlo.

Magdalena: Ya te acostumbrarás.

Adela: (Rompiendo a llorar con ira) ¡No, no me acostumbraré! Yo no quiero estar encerrada. No quiero que se me pongan las carnes como a vosotras. ¡No quiero perder mi blancura en estas habitaciones! ¡Mañana me pondré mi vestido verde y me echaré a pasear por la calle! ¡Yo quiero salir!¹¹

Adela confronts her mother's power and reaffirms her independence, personality, will, and free use of her body:

Adela: (Fuerte.) ¡Déjame ya! ¡Durmiendo o velando, no tienes por qué meterte en lo mío! ¡Yo hago con mi cuerpo lo que me parece!

Martirio: ¡Sólo es interés por ti!

Adela: Interés o inquisición. ¿No estabais cosiendo? Pues seguir. ¡Quisiera ser invisible, pasar por las habitaciones sin que me preguntarais dónde voy! [...]

Adela: Me sigue a todos lados. A veces se asoma a mi cuarto para ver si duermo. No me deja respirar. Y siempre: «¡Qué lástima de cara! ¡Qué lástima de cuerpo, que no va a ser para nadie!» ¡Y eso no! Mi cuerpo será de quien yo quiera!¹²

Adela falls in love with Pepe Romano. Her revolution and frustration

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10 | Amélia Rey Colaço, one of the most prominent women in Portuguese theater in the 20th century, had a strong influence on theater productions, as well as in the training and promotion of young actors. In 1921, along with her husband she founded the theatrical company Rey Colaço-Robles Monteiro, based in the National Theater Dña. María II. The company was discontinued in 1988.

11 | Lorca, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, p. 24.

12 | *Ibid.* p. 34

explode when her sister tells her that Pepe is going to propose to Angustias. She is brave enough to reject the honorability code that dictates modesty to women. Instead, she affirms her sexuality and openly confronts the power of her mother, symbolized in her breaking the walking stick of Bernarda's authority:

Adela: (Haciéndole frente.) ¡Aquí se acabaron las voces de presidio! (Adela arrebató un bastón a su madre y lo parte en dos.) Esto hago yo con la vara de la dominadora. No dé usted un paso más. ¡En mí no manda nadie más que Pepe!¹³

A sore Bernarda exits and a shot is heard. Adela asks her if she has killed Pepe, and Bernarda answers: "It was my fault. Women don't have good aim".¹⁴ After Pepe's death, Adela hangs herself.

It is a very powerful story. A great energy stems from the family nucleus that overcomes individual will and the dreams of young Adela. Another association, with the political power of dictator Franco, was established after the play was written. The values of the Francoist regime, based on tradition, family, religion and a violent patriarchal authority, was alluded in the play's by fear of confrontation: those contrary to the regime were imprisoned, tortured and murdered. In a society dominated by fear and dictatorship, power relationships had an influence in subordinated groups.

In Portugal, the play was not censored even though it fulfilled many criteria for censorship: it had been written by Lorca, considered a communist by Estado Novo; there was an case of suicide, which sole reference was forbidden; and the plot was full of subversive political connotations.

At the time, these aspects were moved to the background, and the censors prioritized a more straightforward reading of the play in which the authority of the mother, tradition, honorability, morality and religion were seen in accord of the values of Estado Novo.

As previously mentioned, though, censorship commissions were reorganizing, and, in a way, ordering their activity, so that the role of censors could be fenced off from the pressures of impresarios. The theater company that staged the play, Amélia Rey Colaço-Robles Barroso,¹⁵ was one of the most reputed and respected in the whole country, a fact that assuaged censors. María Barroso, the actress who played Adela, is positive that the censors did not understand the scope of the play, nor its social and political criticism to authoritarianism.¹⁶

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13 | Ibid. p. 73

14 | Ibid. p. 74

15 | Maria Barroso was a film and theater actress, director of Colegio Moderno and First Lady of Portugal as wife of Mário Soares.

16 | Testimony of Maria Barroso, June 3, 2013.

3. Censorship in Portugal during the 1960s

The regime of Salazar started to decline in the 1960s for a number of reasons. The presidential elections of 1958 had a great impact in the political life of the country, as up to that moment there had been no direct opposition to Salazar. Humberto Delgado managed to gather the opposition, attracted an overwhelming popular support, pronounced public discourses of clear meaning and went around the country in a campaign that disconcerted the regime. A farce of election gave the presidency to Américo Tomaz, but it caused the termination of presidential elections, altering to this effect the Constitution (Rosas, 1994: 199).

The beginning of colonial war attacked directly the pillars of Salazar regime. Even though in December 1961 the Union of India invaded Goa, Daman and Diu, Salazar never acknowledged Indian sovereignty over these territories, which continued to be represented in Portugal's National Assembly. Portugal remained indifferent to the international offensive against Portuguese colonialism and the decisions of the UN.

After rebellion in the north of Angola in March 15, 1961, war extended to Guinea and Mozambique. Salazar reacted rapidly and was forced to send reinforcements, recruiting all males over 18. This war turned into a slow agony for the regime, which extended until April 25, 1974.

Different events revealed the weakness of the regime, which was also conspired against from inside: the hijack of the cruise liner *Santa María*,¹⁷ April's coup,¹⁸ the assault to Beja¹⁹ and the beginning, in March 1962, of different academic crisis that would be recurrent during the decade and that unite different ideologies, protests and leaders. Social unrest grew and reached different productive sectors.

This context helps to explain the toughening of repressive measures of the regime. PIDE reinforced its services, searched for the leaders of the protests, and multiplied the supervision of Portuguese people by all kinds of repressive mechanisms: imprisonment, torture and court summary executions. Censorship over theater plays, films, books, music and translations refined its procedures. Theater was penalized with a more violent and systematic censorship.

The actuations of censors increased in rigor. The analysis of texts, props, choreography and wardrobe, all elements related to the staging of a play, endured a tightening in the censorship criteria (Cabrera, 2013, 2010, 2009, 2008). Censorship changed greatly between 1960 and 1968.

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17 | The *Santa María* was boarded at dawn in January 22, 1961 in the Caribbean. Twenty operators led by Henrique Galvão took command of the boat and hijack the passengers until February 2.

18 | Between April 11 and 13, 1961, Júlio Botelho Moniz, minister of Defense and an important figure in the military led a coup to depose Salazar, and free and modernize the country.

19 | A coup led by captain Varela Gomez and Manuel Serra (civilian commander) in the night of December 31, 1961. It was planned with General Humberto Delgado, who was exiled after the 1958 elections but managed to enter the country to join this failed coup.

One of the first measures in that regard was the change of the president of the Commission, Eurico Serra. The new president, Quesada Pastor, described his directives as follows: “Em resumo e respondendo directamente: a ‘bitola’ tem de ser reduzida”.²⁰

In this phase, censors paid a special attention to the treatment of historical figures. Judge Caetano Carbaho alerted over the play *Dña. Leonor Teles* and recommended the following:

convinha efectuar alguns cortes e suprimir certos gestos menos correctos que porventura possam diminuir aos olhos do público o facto histórico ou as figuras de que se ocupa essa obra de teatro. Julgo mesmo que deverá ser motivo de preocupação da Comissão evitar a todo o transe que representações de peças desse género possam induzir os espectadores em interpretações erróneas²¹.

The president also established a system by which three judges met everyday weekday except Wednesdays, when the Commission met for plenary sessions. Moreover, judges had to introduce the plays to the president, who would evaluate the appropriateness of further exams.²²

Different elements show the harshness of theater censorship: the direct intervention of the president and vice-president of the Commission; intimidating conversations with impresarios and actors; constant attendance of censors in the most polemical performances; the presence of the president and vice-president in theaters; the suppression of scenes; the increased number of cuts and bans; the fact that some plays could only be staged in Lisbon and Porto, etc. All plays which referred to the war and its outcomes were banned, as well as those with pacifist messages.

War at the colonies affected censorship with regards the perceived morality of the plays (length of skirts, make-up, visibility of bodies, references to illicit love and sexual matters), the references to religion, to social aspects (unrest, protest, clashes) and to historical figures. Censors would propose alterations in the texts, change the titles, or eliminate particular characters; they would correct dialogues and intervene in the stage design: they would change the choreography, wardrobe, make-up, even the gestures and voice of the actors and actresses.

Quesada Pastor did not doubt that “uma peça que é de um autor comunista, nunca pode ser uma peça inocente, porque o autor não fará arte pela arte, mas terá sempre certamente em vista outros fins—o que implica a necessidade de redobrada atenção para tais casos”.²³

Thus the Commission entered in a repressive delirium and zeal.

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20 | Book num.10, *Actas da Comissão de Censura*, minutes of March 29, 1960. SNI-IGE/ ANTT

21 | Book num.10, *Actas da Comissão de Censura*, minutes of March 5, 1960. SNI-IGE/ ANTT.

22 | Book num.10, *Actas da Comissão de Censura*, minutes of March 29 and April 5, 1961.

23 | Book num.12, *Actas da Comissão de Censura*, minutes of February 17, 1965. SNI-IGE/ ANTT.

Plays like Chejov's *Cherry Orchard* were successively reevaluated by a growing number of censors; Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Jacques Deval's three-act comedy *O Comprador de Horas*, or Tennessee Williams' *Suddenly, Last Summer* were banned "por não ser possível extirpar-lhe os inconvenientes fundamentais com vista à aprovação".²⁴

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24 | Book num.12, *Actas da Comissão de Censura*, minutes of March 24, 1965. SNI-IGE/ ANTT.

4. *El Triciclo*, by Fernando Arrabal

Arrabal (Melilla, 1932) start to write theater plays in 1952. With *El Triciclo* (first titled *Los hombres del triciclo*) won the Ciudad de Barcelona award. In 1953, he also finished the second and third year of Law school. In 1954, he hitchhiked to Paris to attend a performance of *Mother Courage* and sneaked in Sarah Bernhardt's theater. He stayed in Paris in an exile that was physiological (as he got TB) moral, and aesthetical, as he reacted against the Spanish literature of the time (Berenguer: 1994). His long period of convalescence did not prevent him to write.

Los Hombres del Triciclo was first performed in 1958 in the Teatro de Bellas Artes in Madrid, in a unique session organized by the group Dido, directed by Josefina Sánchez Pedreño. The play is set in an undetermined space that alludes to Francoist postwar Spain. Arrabal rupture with the Francoist regime

produce también una forma paulatina irreversible, un tipo específico de consciencia de exilio. Este exilio es inevitable porque el sistema es impenetrable, intransformable y niega todo el futuro al sector social de los marginados. Su discurso es comprensible para los no adictos, por eso surge la respuesta literaria de los marginados fuera de España. (Berenguer, 1994: 39).

The main characters of the play are Apal, Climando, Mita and Viejo de la Flauta. Climando, the leader, pretends to use a tricycle to survive, but the need to pay the rent pushes him to commit murder. He gets crazy and does not realize that the police arrive. Mita tries to commit suicide, but recovers upon finding the money. Apal sleeps all the time, is resourceful yet incapable to argue and reach an agreement. Viejo de la Flauta assumes his marginal role, but mediates between the two worlds and apposes Climando's radicalism. This group of outcasts shows that the alternative to an oppressive regime as Franco's demands to break free from the system.

According to Berenguer (1994), Arrabal showed the impossibility to communicate with an ideological power that acted by means of weird and inaccessible policies. His strategy was to turn all forms of communication (gestures, words, attitudes) incomprehensible. Berenguer terms this continuous act of failed communication as "la

Ceremonia” [the Ceremony] (Berenguer, 1994: 40):

Esta mediación estética funciona como estructura significativa para materializar la falta de perspectiva de una comunidad, que en última instancia recurre a la utilización de un sistema repetitivo e inadecuado para expresar la falta total de futuro en su relación con el universo que parece incomprensible porque condena a la desaparición. (Berenguer, 1994: 41).

Starting in March 29, 1968, Portuguese censorship paid attention to *El Triciclo* as three different theater groups applied for a license to stage it: Teatro Universitário do Porto, Grupo Cultural e Desportivo da Companhia Nacional de Navegação, and Colégio Universitário Pio XII.

The final evaluation was published in April 16, 1968. The report reads:

Há poucas semanas apreciei esta peça para ser representada no texto original, por uma companhia de teatro de universitários espanhóis em representação única, num festival promovido para universitários pelo Colégio Pio XII. Fora deste contexto, entendo reprovar a peça²⁵.

El Triciclo was banned in Portugal, except for one representation by Teatro Universitario from Valladolid in the context of a festival.

The reasons to ban the play have to do with the political ideas of the author as well as the content of the play. According to the censors, the play was absurd and incomprehensible, and advocated anarchy and opposition to society. The characters were thieves and outcasts with no fear of authority. In addition to a homicide, it included an attempt of suicide. All together, it went against the values of Estado Novo: the play did not respect order or obedience, did not show fear of God and showed contempt of authority.

5. *Las quinas de Portugal*, by Tirso de Molina

Las quinas de Portugal is a comedy by the Spanish 17th century author Tirso de Molina, written in three acts in 1638, two years before the restoration of Portuguese independence. The comedy is set during the Christian Reconquista and relates battles alternatively won by Christians and Muslims. It narrates the adventures of Alfonso Enríquez, Egas Muñiz, Giraldo sin Miedo, Gonzalo Méndez de Amaya, Pedro Alfonso, Ismael (symbolizing Muslim power) and the comedian Brito, always present and changing personality as the play advances: first a rude shepherd, later an hilarious moor, and finally, a funny soldier under the victorious army of Alfonso Enríquez (Roig, 2006). Brito symbolizes the process of Christian Reconquista.

NOTES

25 | Process Num. 18653, *Processos de Censura*. SNI-DGE/ANTT.

In March 8, 1968, four days after the application, Inspeção dos Espectáculos forbid its performance in Rádio Televisão Portuguesa (RTP).²⁶ Censor António Batalha Ribeiro was appointed to manage the process of the play. According to the first and second reports:

Relatório 1 – Li a peça. Deve ser lida por outro vogal. Julgo resultar num espectáculo na TV sem o mínimo de decoro que envolve figuras da história pátria [António Batalha Ribeiro].

Relatório 2 – Julgo que não é de autorizar esta peça para televisão. Além dos receios manifestados pelo Exmo vogal que me antecedeu na leitura, certos aspectos serão completamente ininteligíveis pelo grande público e outros chocantes no plano moral. Por outro lado não me pareceu oportuno, neste momento, fazer reviver nos termos em que se faz na peça, a luta contra os mouros [Assinatura ilegível]²⁷.

The lack of ‘*decoro*’ referred by spokesperson Batalha Reis, referring to composure, restraint, and even honesty, was crucial in dealing with the “figures of the history of the motherland”. Estado Novo always instrumentalized historical figures as symbols and idealized models, as sources of identity, character, strength, race and tenacity of the Portuguese. They served to display an idealized Portuguese man and a model of virtue for the youth. Estado Novo favored a history of Portugal based in heroes, famous events, great characters and gesticulations, an ideologically constructed history that have to legitimize the regime, signal the road to the future and educate the Portuguese youth. Contempt for historical figures was thus intolerable.

In the second evaluation, the censor confirmed his colleague’s report, and added that the TV audiences would not be able to understand the play, and that some aspects—probably Brito’s alternating roles as shepherd, moor, and Alfonso Enríquez soldier—were morally shocking: it showed lack of faith, in a period in which constant and recurrent changes in the Iberian frontiers forced peasants to seek refuge with new masters.

The following passage shows the attitude of Alfonso Enríquez’s companions in front of the dangers awaiting them in what will be the battle of Ourique:

(Fala Gonzalo (Mendes da Maia) a Afonso Henriques)

Gran señor: temeridades
Que traen consigo imposibles
Causan desaires terribles
Y anuncian adversidades.
Cinco ejércitos están
a nuestra vista de infieles;
contra tantos, ¿qué laureles
trece mil conseguirán?
De doscientos y cincuenta
mil moros consta el blasfemo
campo que, de extremo a extremo,

NOTES

26 | Process Num. 18629, *Processos de Censura*. SNI-DGE/ANTT.

27 | Process Num.18629, *Processos de Censura*. SNI-DGE/ANTT.

sumas que agotan su cuenta
cubren valles y collados,
como nosotros nacidos
en nuestra España, escogidos
y en guerra experimentados²⁸.

NOTES

28 | *Las Quinas de Portugal*,
Ato III 1580-1620.

This passage refers the advice of Gonzalo Méndez de Amaya, known as “el Lidiador”, given to one of Alfonso Enríquez’s most important soldiers. Gonzao warns him of the great perils awaiting the Portuguese fighting the vast and well-armed Muslim army. The smallness of the Portuguese army is taken by the second censor as a metaphor of the present predicament of Portugal in the colonial war. Salazar, as Alfonso Enríquez, was alone, but the outcome of the colonial war was not the same as the battle of Ourique. In the same year 1968 when the play was banned, the PAIGC (the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, in English) had secured its power and strengthened its organization, and Portugal was losing the war in Guinea.

Therefore, the situation of colonial war in 1968 added rigor to censorship of theater and film: even the word ‘war’, in addition to pacifist plays and films, was banned.

Another aspect that influenced the decision of the censors was the relationship between Portugal and Spain. Apparently, the two countries were ideologically close, but there was a big distance with regards the colonial issue. Spain’s accession in the UN in 1963 turned Portugal’s support unnecessary. Moreover, between 1955 and 1957, Spain’s economy began to develop, motivating stronger international relationships. Contrarily, Portugal was growingly isolated, especially after the beginning of the colonial war (Sardica, 2013: 209-210).

For these reasons, a Spanish classic author, and one that referred the independence of Portugal in a comical and provocative way, was not welcomed in Portuguese TV.

6. Conclusions

Censorship was kept in place in Portugal during the whole span of Estado Novo, and enhanced its organizational methods, especially since 1947 and throughout the 1950s.

New laws and regulations, more restrictive and exacting, were then implemented, while new and better prepared censors were recruited. *Actas da Comissão de Censura* confirm these objectives.

Censors approached the three plays by Spanish authors in different

ways. *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* was approved in 1947 to be staged in the National Theater by the group Rey Colaço-Robles Monteiro. Even though García Lorca was, according to the State, a republican close to communism, and had been murdered by the Francoists, it was not banned. The censors probably read the play from the perspective of Bernarda, taking at face value her despotism with her daughters, her religious zeal, rituals and morality, her defense of tradition and religion, all values of Estado Novo.

In contrast, both Arrabal's *El Triciclo* and Tirso de Molina's *Las quinas de Portugal* were banned. The author of *El Triciclo* enjoyed a bad reputation among the censors and the play celebrated lawless and apparently absurd behaviors which criticized capitalism and the exploitation of mankind.

The wars between Christians and Muslims in *Las quinas de Portugal* echoed sensible topics such as the war at the colonies. Being a comedy, its ridicule of national heroes and of "Ourique's miracle", one of the founding myths of Portugal, was also an obstacle to approve the play.

Dictatorships are confined regimes, in which sense of humor, criticism and condemnations are fenced off. The certainty of their own truths prevents other voices to be heard, and advocate a forced and false unanimity by means of repressive institutions.

Censorship, examined in this paper in its relationship with theater, became one of the pillars of Salazar and Caetano's regime. Portuguese authors were the main victims of it, as Estado Novo feared the proximity, empathy and complicity of Portuguese drama with its audience, and its role in raising awareness in the population.

Foreign authors, such as Bertold Brecht, were also banned, and in other cases texts were mutilated to the point that they lost their meaning and their authors renounced to stage them.

A first objective of this paper is to recover these processes from oblivion, and criticize those who, during most of the 20th century, defined what the Portuguese could see, hear and read.

Censorship had a profound impact in the cultural sphere, in the education, thought and actions of the Portuguese, but most of it, it mutilated creativity and destroyed diversity, the value of which depends on freedom of expression and thought, and its artistic expression. In Salazar and Caetano's time, unique models and stereotypes were imposed in public and private life, in companies as well as in the State. Institutions were created to avoid deviation from these models and contamination from oppositional ideas. The

dictatorship destroyed a sum of diversity impossible to replace, it is a definitive loss. Those whose freedom of expression and creativity were stolen will not have a second chance, as their creativity only could acquire meaning at that particular place and moment.

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