

BANNED FOR BEING INCONVENIENT



Censorship materials from
the Ephemera Archive

EXHIBITION

07—27 April 2022

CENSORSHIP AND THE SAFEGUARDING OF RESPECT

“All that exists is what the public knows to exist”
Salazar

The greatest accomplishment of the Censorship that persisted in the country for 48 years was to leave as a legacy, to this day, the nostalgic notion of a Portugal where everyone got along, where there was “consensus”, where everyone worked towards the “common good”, with no acts of corruption other than the odd pilfering of bread by the neediest, where “respect” and good manners abounded. In other words, a perverse nostalgia for Portugal under dictatorship.

I am well acquainted with the Censorship that lasted for 48 years, not least through my own personal experience. The country that could not be made public, the “real” country, as people say, was very different from what was allowed to be published in the papers and in books, even in the underground press. One of the Censorship’s greatest achievements was to establish an image of Portugal as a country that was pacified, inert, conflict- and violence-averse, with good rather than bad morals – an image that was efficiently conveyed even among those who fought against the dictatorship. And which remains efficient when one reads what is written today about the evils of democracy, particularly corruption, suggesting – and sometimes explicitly stating – that none of it existed on this scale before the 25th of April. One of the recurring tactics used by those who criticize the “system” is to emphasize the level of corruption within democracy, inevitably implying that it is inherently attached to the regime; therefore, fighting corruption means fighting against the “system” of corrupt parties and politicians.

Don’t people question why, throughout the 48 years of dictatorship, nothing like the “Marquês operation” [a major corruption scandal involving former prime minister of Portugal José Sócrates] ever took place? Were there no corrupt politicians among the highest government ranks? Were there no corrupt politicians in the União Nacional (National Union)? Did no general,

Trata-se, assim, de um livro de propaganda susceptível de grande difusão e efeitos

Sem ser um livro pornográfico, como o título faria supor, não é um livro de moral sã

É um libelo contra a ditadura, cheio de ódio e má fé

A sua publicação é perniciosa e grave, pelo que sou de parecer que não deve ser autorizada

Adivinha-se, por detraz de todos os conceitos, de todas as afirmações e, até, de todas as dúvidas do autor, a crítica injusta e mordaz à obra do Sr. Presidente do Conselho

Em termos da maior inconveniência política, impõem a proibição

Imoral. Contos de misérias sociais e em que o aspecto sexual se revela indecorosamente

Serie de contos, todos eles imorais, sendo opinião minha que não deve ser permitida a sua divulgação

Reputo por isso como perniciosa a divulgação deste romance

Trata-se de um verdadeiro panfleto político, de ataque fero às bases sociológicas da Igreja Católica e a instituições que servem o Estado Novo Corporativo

É um livro pornográfico e politicamente inconveniente. É de proibir sem dúvida

Como todos os romances do autor, este tresanda a imoralidade

Livro de leitura pouco interessante e escrito em termos grosseiros e com palavras indecentes

ambassador, deputy of the National Assembly, minister or secretary of state, Legion commander or leader of Mocidade Portuguesa, colonial governor or bishop ever pocket funds? Or, instead, were there corruption cases that the Censorship did not want us to be aware of? No doubt there were, judging by the Censorship redactions, in the same way that there was paedophilia, violence against women, rape, theft and suicide.

But the real answer is even grimmer: there was no corruption because there was no justice for most powerful within the regime, and what little there was remained reserved for the intermediate-to-low ranks. Therefore, whenever there were cases of corruption among the most powerful men in the regime – whether they were politicians, with the extremely frequent interchangeability between politics and business, nearly always decided by Salazar himself, or the regime’s bankers and entrepreneurs –, they were evidently protected because no one would even dare to open an investigation. The exception observed with the “ballet roses” case was a matter of morals, and even then it was strongly covered up by the Censorship.

In this regard, the Censorship was perhaps the most effective among the dictatorship’s weapons, and its consequences remain imbued in our daily lives to this day. Much more than subverting the “political”, the Censorship protected power and all the hierarchies that stemmed from it, by demanding not just respect, but deferential respect. Throughout the 48 years during which there was not a single day without censorship, this was its legacy.

This exhibition about Censorship, which the EPHEMERA ARCHIVE is organizing together with Lisbon Municipal Council as part of the commemorations of 25 April 2022, therefore contains what we might call a pedagogical intention: to show what Freedom is by showing what its denial looks like.

José Pacheco Pereira

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT CENSORSHIP DURING THE ESTADO NOVO

Shortly after the military coup of 28 May 1926, and following some initial hesitation, on 22 June, prior censorship was imposed on Lisbon newspapers, which began to display the notice This issue has been validated by the Censorship Committee; at the same time, newspapers were forbidden from publishing blank spaces signalling redacted pieces.

Censorship, which was presented as a temporary measure, was rapidly extended across the country, and two committees were promptly established, one in Lisbon and one in Porto, with delegations in various other locations. From then on, officers, council administrators and civil governors began practicing censorship. In 1927, press censorship ceased to be under the tutelage of the Ministry of War, and was transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, within which the Directorate-General of Press Censorship Services (DGSCI) was established the following year. However, its military component was reinforced, although it only operated in locations with military garrisons. The presence of military officers would be a distinct feature of these services right up until the 25th of April.

Between 1930 and 1933, the censorship apparatus became more complex, with regulations and guidelines that sought to harmonize the criteria used. The bureaucratic machinery had been launched. On 20 March 1932, the DGSCI began publishing an internal document, “Weekly Redaction Bulletin”, which contained the main redactions imposed on the press.

On the same day as the new Constitution came into force, on 11 April 1933, press censorship became institutionalized by Decree-Law number 22 469, and the intermediate structure, under the tutelage of the director-general, became based on three committees (Porto - Northern Region, Coimbra - Centre Region, Lisbon - Southern Region), which in turn were responsible for delegations in several other locations.

That same year, the Directorate-General expanded the bureaucratic apparatus and began publishing three weekly bulletins, pertaining to each of the three censorship committees. In January 1935, the Southern Region bulletin became a daily publication, and was named “Record and justification of redactions bulletin”. The following year, a weekly, internal and confidential bulletin was introduced, containing recommendations for censors, a list of books, pamphlets, banned international magazines, newsletters, service orders, etc.

Until World War II, there was an expansion of competences and a consolidation of the censorial machinery, which becomes legally established in 1936, with the introduction of Decree-Law number 26 589. This decree confirmed the ample powers already exercised by the DGSCI, such as the repression of the press without the need for court intervention, whereby censorship services were responsible for the direct enforcement of sanctions such as seizing, suppressing, suspending and fining. This entity’s intervention also included other forms of coercion, such as banning certain newspapers from publishing official announcements.

During the Spanish Civil War, the Censorship Services Regulation, dating from November 1936, provided instructions to censors regarding targeted subject matters, admitting the obligation to act not only with regards to text, but even on “intentions that were not expressed in writing, illustrations, captions and titles, composition and typesetting.”

The DGSCI was responsible for exercising prior censorship over all periodical press, such as newspapers, magazines, illustrations and similar publications, as well as one-off issues, manifestos, loose pages, leaflets, posters, bulletins, reports, newsletters, and even over “the original versions of telegrams and phone calls abroad that pertained to matters that were political or social in nature”. This Directorate was also responsible for enforcing so-called repressive censorship, carried out a posteriori, over any national books and

publications that had not been subject to prior censorship, as well as all foreign newspapers, magazines, illustrations and books.

Book censorship, on the other hand, was on somewhat shakier ground. Until 1933, this type of censorship was the purview of the international police, who seized books upon government instructions. But control over books was also reinforced that year: they, too, became subject to prior censorship whenever they contained any political or social content, and it was the responsibility of the author, publisher or translator to send them to the DGSCI. From then on, the Lisbon Censorship Committee included a book section, charged with the prior censorship and repression of books. In practice, as far as foreign books and publications were concerned, there were two coexisting types of censorship, prior and repressive, and the owners and managers of publishers, bookshops, distributors, warehouses and points of sale were held accountable for sending all works to the censorship offices.

In addition, written press control also benefited from the intense activity carried out by the National Propaganda Secretariat, established in 1933. Among other initiatives, it was charged with conducting discrete action, by way of regular contact with newspaper chief editors or the most renowned journalists, but also by writing monthly reports about all published press, thus assessing the work performed by the DGSCI.

Despite its name, the DGSCI did not exhaust the censorial bureaucratic apparatus

established by Portuguese authoritarianism. From 1929 onwards, the National Board of Entertainment, which at first was part of the Ministry of Education, was charged with censoring films, theatre plays and all public performances, and had the right to apply fines, suspend and ban shows. It interfered in the contracts between companies, entrepreneurs, artists and athletes, granting licenses and taxing all entertainment venues, recreational clubs, associations and guilds. It also compiled records on entrepreneurs, athletes, theatre, bullfighting and musical artists, etc.

Radio censorship occurred later and was less centralized. During the military dictatorship, the small number of radio receivers and the weak territorial coverage by the small existing broadcasters kept this new form of media under the tutelage of the Electric-Radio Services, which in turn answered to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Public Works and Communications; these were responsible, even if informally, for its contents. During the 1930s, the appearance of three large broadcasters, one state-owned, Emissora Nacional, and two privately-owned and close to the regime, Rádio Clube Português and Rádio Renascença, did not alter the existing framework, and relied on internal censorship.

During World War II, the Estado Novo's information policy was met with difficulties resulting from the position of neutrality adopted by the Portuguese government and the presence of belligerent

propaganda apparatuses. There was a clear need for greater coordination between the propaganda and censorship services. Towards the end of the war, the likely allied victory forced a review of the terminology used to describe these institutions. Therefore, in 1944, not only was the term "propaganda" abandoned, but there was a centralization of the various censorship services into a single institution, the National Secretariat for Information, Popular Culture and Tourism, under the direct tutelage of the Presidency of the Council. From then on, the SNI, as it later became known, included the Directorate-General for Censorship and the General Inspection for Entertainment; in sum, all censorial activity pertaining to the press, cinema, entertainment and radio.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the expansion of radio, together with the appearance, in the 1960s, of a new, more politicized generation, led to reinforced censorship over programmes, news bulletins and advertising. It is worth mentioning the case of music records which, although they had been subject to being seized since 1926, became more closely monitored, with the compilation of banned song lists and, after 1973, the enforcement of prior censorship.

Cinema and entertainment shows also became more heavily censored, with the creation of a specific entity for cinema, the Censorship Committee, in 1945, which, in 1952, became the Entertainment Censorship Committee; in 1957, it underwent a final change, with the creation of the

Entertainment Assessment and Classification Committee, which operated until 1974. Film censorship included pictures, captions and even advertising.

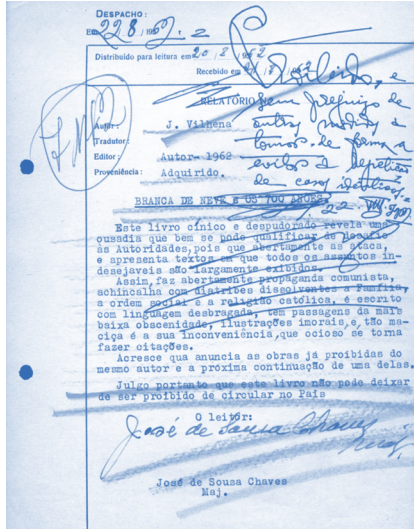
When Rádio Televisão Portuguesa was founded in 1958, it appeared to combine the two models followed by radio and cinema, and its contents were censored by internal inspectors and a programme classification committee.

However, it would be a mistake to think that the censorship carried out by the Estado Novo was limited to the institutions mentioned here. Censorship services worked closely with multiple entities and institutions, among which were the state police, the Ministries of Education and the Military, and the Catholic Church. In addition, the Portuguese Communist Party, a prominent element in the opposition to the regime for its organizational capacity and continued activity, was joined, from the 1960s onwards, by growing criticism, denouncement and resistance on the part of countless segments of Portuguese society, including the student movement and progressive Catholic channels.



1 CENSORSHIP OVER ALL THINGS, AT ALL TIMES, IN ALL PLACES: A COUNTRY GAGGED

Censorship was one of the main political weapons used by the Portuguese authoritarian regime. Established immediately after the coup of 28 May 1926, it remained active until 25 April 1974 over every form of media and artistic expression. It was responsible for banning advocacy for freedom of conscience, expression, association, and assembly from the public space. It was responsible for hiding the repression exercised by the Estado Novo. It contributed to celebrating the regime and its leader. Throughout 48 years, it redacted opinions and news pieces, narrowed the debate, limited thought and the expression of ideas, fostered silencing and concealing practices, encouraged depoliticization and a lack of interest in civic engagement. Its actions affected the entirety of Portuguese society, by imposing a particular perspective of reality. Censorship was the first instrument of propaganda and ideological framework. It operated outside the courts, and it banned, fined, suspended and ordered arrests. Censorship was exercised over all things, at all times, in all places. The Ephemera Archive contains testimonies of the extent of and actions perpetrated by this powerful instrument of the regime, of which some materials are presented here.



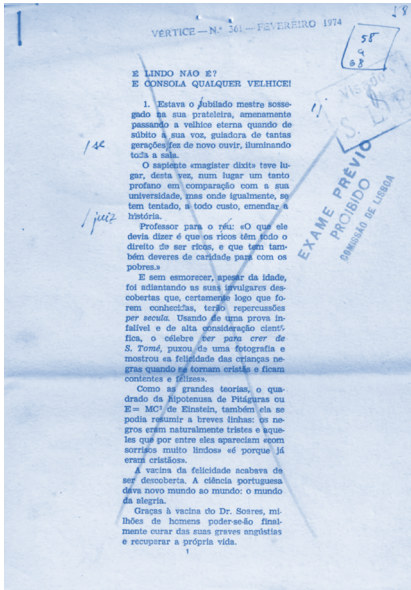
2 CENSORSHIP OF NEWSPAPERS: ALL THAT EXISTS IS WHAT IS KNOWN TO EXIST

The censorship of the press set up a permanent bureaucratic apparatus that covered the entire country and remained active until the 25th of April. Reports of redactions, which began as early as 1932, instructions issued to censors and newspaper records are all evidence of the extent and thoroughness of this censorial activity. The scope of the redactions, total or partial, of news, opinions, comments, images, captions, advertising, was far from limited to the political struggle. Not only were news pieces and accounts of events banned, but action was also taken against authors’ “intentions” and the subversive “potential” of news pieces. The image of a strong, orderly and authoritative State was preserved, while “inventing” a country free from misery, corruption, social conflict, moral inconveniences, criticism against the rulers, and without a shadow of subversion or resistance. In 1934, the year used here as an example, at a time when self-censorship had not yet become a current precaution, a country idealized by Catholic conservative authoritarianism was already taking shape.

3 CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS, 48 YEARS OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

While censorship of newspapers concealed the country from itself and built a parallel reality, censorship of books was the battleground of the great ideological combat, as it sought to prevent the circulation of ideas, critical debate, the expression of alternative thinking, as well as dismissing aesthetic innovations and diverse forms of living within society. The censorship of books (around 3500 titles banned and several thousand with partial redactions) is a clear testimony of the defence of the values of authority, hierarchy

and order through the great pillars of the regime: God (the Catholic Church and its activities), Homeland (the corporate regime and its nationalist organs and leaders), Family (which extended to conservative moral values and the idea of a “natural order” of society); these were joined by anti-communism (this ranged from anything connected to the PCP and other Marxist organizations, to anarcho-syndicalism and democratic Republicanism – in short, anything that was considered *communizing*, to use the language of censorship).



4 CENSORSHIP AND ELITISM: ONE, OR FEW, LOOK AFTER THE NATION

The censorship of the Estado Novo betrayed an elitist vision of society, one which impacted on every punitive action. Politics was reserved for a single elite, the masses were always viewed as being easily influenced and made up of “weak spirits” that had to be shielded from negative and “corruptible” ideas. Censorship was a thorough, inflexible instrument, with educational pretensions and constantly vigilant. Authoritarianism fostered paternalism, and its “good intentions” were supposed to justify these repressive practices.

6 THE VARIOUS CENSORSHIP SERVICES IN ACTION

Censorship was not centralized within a single organization; instead, it resulted from the articulation of various diligence and surveillance organs. Control was directly exerted by successive entities, or entities that overlapped, working in specialized fields, such as the Censorship Services Department, the National Propaganda Secretariat (later called SNI), and most recently the Directorate-General of Information. But other government services actively participated in censorial actions, such as the Ministries of National Education and the Army, the state police (PVDE, then PIDE, and most recently DGS) and other police forces (GNR, PSP, Guarda Fiscal), and various regime institutions and organic forces, such as Mocidade Portuguesa (Portuguese Youth), the Legion, CTT (postal services), customs services and the Catholic Church itself. Often, censorship interventions came about as a result of reports made by zealous regime supporters, who thus contributed to expanding the network of surveillance and repression.

7 CENSORIAL INTERVENTIONS, A FEW EXAMPLES

A permanently provocative author José Vilhena (1927–2015) was one of the most persecuted, and popular authors of the 1960s and 1970s, having had dozens of his works seized, and having been arrested and taken to PIDE prisons on three occasions. His vulgar style of humour was immediately censored as being *obscene and immoral*, but the points which most incensed censorship were the provocative insolence and the satirical verve with which he, in his prolific output, pulled apart and exposed a society of “public virtues”, while striking out against the conservative morals and the figures who were supposedly owed deferential respect: magistrates, company directors, figures of the clergy, high-ranking officers, the dominant “proper bourgeoisie”.

Tomás da Fonseca and anti-clericalism
A prestigious figure of Republicanism, a free thinker and fundamentally anti-authoritarian, Tomás da Fonseca (1877–1968) devoted most of his life to teaching and education (professor, legislator, founder of the Free University). Although he was persecuted and arrested for opposing both dictatorial regimes, first the one of Sidónio Pais, then the Estado Novo, he was mostly targeted by censorship for his anti-clerical militancy and his fight against the influence of the Catholic Church. The Ephemera Archive contains several censorship reports about his books, including the one that is most well-known today, *Na Cova dos Leões*, which denounces the so-called Miracle of Fátima.

A woman should always be a lady
Relatively few works were written by women during those years. However, generally speaking (and except for primarily ideological texts or those that were political in nature), female authors were especially targeted by censorship, according to moral criteria. Any literary incursion with erotic themes or sexual connotations would immediately label them as “indecent”, “immoral”, “pornographic”. In sum, anything considered improper regarding what a *lady* ought to be, in the eyes of the censors.



8
CENSORSHIP SHOULD
BE INVISIBLE

One of the first censorship actions taken against newspapers by the military dictatorship was to ban the publication of blank columns, or other empty spaces, in lieu of the redacted pieces, as had often been the case until then. Censorship tried to conceal the evidence of its censorial activity, preventing the publication of news pieces about itself, for example, and the advertising of banned works, or, in the case of cinema, of films whose showing had not yet been authorized. In this way, they denied the public space any possibility of controlling the intervention of censorship, as readers did not have any way of realizing whether resistance was more or less active, which publications supported or opposed the regime's official line, or even of suspecting what sort of subject matters might have been subjected to banning or redacting. One of the rare exceptions to this invisibility is the copy of the *Reader's Digest* magazine issue held at the Ephemera Archive, which contains the redacted title of the article whose pages had been guillotined.

9
RESISTING CENSORSHIP:
INSISTING, NEGOTIATING,
DECEIVING

Despite their repressive power, the censorship's actions were often met with resistance and opposition, even in mainstream editorial or artistic circles. Albeit with little chance of success, informal and formal complaints were filed, as well as requests for reviewing censorship decisions, petitions, and negotiations for basic publication conditions or the staging of shows. These initiatives came from publishers, cinema owners, more or less politically engaged intellectuals, or merely those who were reacting against the constraints imposed by censorship. In addition, there were many different attempts made to evade censorial surveillance. Pseudonyms were used, suspects' names were omitted, publishers insisted on publishing

previously banned works under different editions, or publishing redacted newspaper articles in book form. There were also attempts to lead censors to accept the promotion of a particular work by advertising it before it had been submitted for censorship.



10
RESISTING CENSORSHIP:
FREEDOM GOES UNDERGROUND

The political work of opposing dictatorship included the clandestine publication of ideological pieces and banned works, but also the publication of news bulletins that intended to circumvent newspaper censorship. These bulletins disseminated existing social struggles and denounced ongoing political repression, together with the pamphlets and announcements circulated illegally. Political party press, which in some cases was published for decades (such as the *Avante*, whose last underground edition is shown here), and which in other cases followed the appearance of new political struggle organizations, both in Portugal and among the exiled communities, sought to act as ideological educators and keep resistance against the regime alive, until the day when it might finally be published Freely.

Carlos Simões Nuno
Júlia Leitão de Barros

“A liberdade é o maior dos bens e o fundamento de todos os outros.” Corte total

Corte parcial quando se refere em termos doentios à miséria em que vivem os pobres da cidade

Corte total por ser propaganda bolchevista

Descrições de certos hábitos de homossexualidade e prostituição que são característicos dessas tribos. O livro é absolutamente inconveniente

Parece que o autor esteve em qualquer vila, ou aldeia, e escolheu para protagonista do seu romance a família mais asquerosa do povoado

Olhando às futuras gerações, eu consideraria de alto interesse nacional libertá-las desta pedagogia dissolvente

O livro em epígrafe é todo ele uma diatribe contra o Governo da Nação

Livro altamente prejudicial e inconveniente sob o ponto de vista político

Considera-se inoportuna a publicação deste trabalho pelo que fica proibido de circular

Não deve ser autorizada a publicação deste romance por deletério e contrário à nossa acção colonial

As obras deste autor não devem ser consentidas em agremiações operárias, por razões óbvias

O referido livro, além de ser de indole imoral contém marcada ofensiva contra a política do Estado

Trata-se de um livro intrinsecamente mau, isto é: de uma obra escrita e publicada com o único fim ou a intenção evidente de ataque às ideias basilares e à ética fundamental do actual Estado Português

PROGRAMMING

APRIL 9 — 5 PM

“WHAT COULD NOT EVEN BE SEEN”

Censorship in cinema

APRIL 21 — 6 PM

“WHAT COULD NOT EVEN BE HEARD”

Censorship in music

APRIL 27 — 5:30 PM

Presentation of the book “Censorship, the building a political weapon do Estado Novo”, by the curator of the Exhibition, Júlia Leitão de Barros. The book is edited by Tinta-da-China and will be presented by Adelino Gomes.

APRIL 27 — 6:30 PM

“WHAT COULD NOT EVEN BE THOUGHT”

The censorship of thought and taste

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APRIL 2022

This exhibition is a part of
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