

## The Claws of Ideology Censorship and Subtitling of War Films during the *Estado Novo* in Portugal

Katrin Pieper  
University of Coimbra

Received: 08/05/2018

Accepted: 03/07/2018

### *Abstract*

By analysing the context of censorship, fascism under the *Estado Novo* in Portugal and the institutionalised processes a film was subjected to before reaching the audience, some historical events, which resulted in a tightening of the censors' reigns, will be explored. The *Guerra Colonial* [Colonial War] was one of the life-changing events that had a direct impact on the censorship of war films. Three films from different eras, the censorship measures – cuts, omitted subtitles and manipulation of the text – and their contents will be examined. The extent to which censorship was able to change the substance of a film will become apparent.

### *Keywords*

Censorship, Subtitling, Manipulation, Dictatorship, Portugal



### *Introduction*

It is a characteristic of dictatorships to fear that uncontrolled ideas, creativity and artistic freedom could possibly threaten a nation's peace and order. Retaining the State's power, authorities tend to control and restrict public opinion – in fact, censorship has a long tradition all over the world.

During the so-called *Estado Novo* [New State] (1933-1974), governed by the dictator António de Oliveira Salazar from 1933 to 1968, the Portuguese government took direct control over all types of media in the country. Influences

from abroad were monitored, restricted and often adapted to the *Estado Novo's* political and moral values. This included films that brought in their wake a foreign reality and ideology in the form of images, sound and speech.

Many films never arrived in fascist Portugal and the majority that were exhibited, were not only mutilated by cutting scenes, but also through the omission and manipulation of subtitles. In many cases a sanitised version of the original reached the audience.

Portuguese censorship, always defending the State's ideology, exerted influence on foreign films from the initial translation stage and ended with the approval or rejection of a film for the Portuguese cinema. The aim was to keep the nation "free" of foreign influences. This article will analyse the reach of the censorship, whether the message of a film could be changed, whether an anti-war film could be turned into a pro-war film (and vice-versa) and whether the influence of other ideologies could be avoided.

Like any other nation, Salazar's dictatorship was witness to life-changing events that had an impact on politics and society. This article seeks to highlight the relationship between historic events/social changes and the censor's reaction. There will be a specific focus on the start of the *Guerra Colonial* [Colonial War] – an emblematic event in Portugal's history – and its influence on the censorship of war films.

Although, as Teresa Seruya mentions in 2008, "censorship in Translation Studies (in general, as well as in Portugal) has not so far been assigned the importance it deserves" (Seruya/Lin Moniz 2008: xi), some significant research has been conducted into the censorship of literature and also of films, namely censorship processes like cutting scenes and manipulation of the text of a dubbed version, but very little is known about censoring subtitles. Another aim of this paper is to show that film censoring also worked in subtitling during the dictatorship in Portugal.

For this purpose, the subtitles of three war films, censored during the *Estado Novo*, were compared with the original film on DVD: *This Land Is Mine* (Jean Renoir, 1943), *Die Brücke* (Bernhard Wicki, 1959) and *The Dirty Dozen* (Robert Aldrich, 1967).

1. *Estado Novo: some aspects of its ideology*

The *Estado Novo*, viewed itself as an authoritarian, rather than a totalitarian State which protected the nation. The regime aimed to present itself as a strong, interventionist, paternal and anti-communist State, organised in the form of a corporative, unitary system. Even today, not only historians, but also public opinion remains divided on whether the *Estado Novo* political system can be defined as fascism, although the regime did have some clearly fascist characteristics. These included an institution in charge of propaganda and censorship<sup>1</sup>, which functioned from 1933 to 1974 (Reis Torgal, 2000: 64-65; Pieper, 2009: 414-415).

The dictator, António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970), saw himself as a shepherd entrusted with guarding and educating the people of Portugal, reflecting his “*Política do Espírito*” [politics of the spirit]. The famous aphorism “*Nada contra a Nação, tudo pela Nação*” [nothing against the nation, everything for the nation] still echoes in the Portuguese collective memory. The nation’s interests were set above individual concerns (Salazar himself never married), and attempts were made to eliminate conflicts before they gathered force (Ó, 1999: 22). Obedience, patriotism, traditionalism, conservatism and faith were seen as the prime virtues that would secure “*a paz social*” [the social peace] (Azevedo, 1999: 43). Even though the opposition was forcibly suppressed, the purpose of the *Estado Novo*’s propaganda and censorship was to defend this “peace” and keep people’s minds free of disruptive ideas. This was condensed into a general hatred of any kind of intellectual autonomy (Karimi, 1991: 135). An illiteracy rate of almost 68% in 1930, which still stood at 30% in 1960 (Candelas and Simões 1999: 170), underpins what Salazar himself said in 1933: “*politicamente só existe o que o público sabe que existe*” [politically speaking, there only exists what the public knows to exist] (cited in Assis Rosa, 2009: 132).

2. *A foreign film’s journey to the Portuguese cinema*

First of all, a film distributor had to be interested in importing a film. This initial step already reveals a form of self-censorship, since the distributors knew that

---

<sup>1</sup> 1933-1945: *Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional* [National Propaganda Office] (SPN), 1945-1974: *Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo* [National Information, Popular Culture and Tourism Office] (SNI).

films, for example with a sexual or political content that would not fit into the moral or political concepts of the *Estado Novo*, would never be allowed.

Before paying all the import taxes, a film could be submitted for preliminary analysis, a form of pre-censorship. This happened when the distributor was unsure whether a film would be approved by the censors in a regular censorship session. Paying for the preliminary analysis was cheaper than importing a film which might later be banned. It was therefore possible to import the film and then return it to the original distributor if it received a negative assessment from the censors (Sousa, 6th January 2017). Sometimes, some scenes were cut beforehand to increase the chances of a film getting through the censors. In most cases, films were already translated for the preliminary analysis and the subtitles were provided for the censors on paper as a list.

After a final decision was made to import a film, the distributor had to prepare for the first regular censorship session. It was now obligatory to submit the subtitles to the censors, who could subsequently order the text to be altered or cut. Subtitles were rarely stamped onto the footage at this stage, given that the censors could complain about their content. Providing the subtitles on paper was a way of avoiding cuts simply because of an unacceptable word in the text. In addition, the censors would use the printed subtitles as the basis for their instructions for cuts. They would write, for example:

Aprovo para maiores de 12 anos, com corte das imagens em que, na luta entre as legendas 293 e 294, um homem agarra duas garrafas, estilhaça-as para usar como arma de ataque [...].

*I approve for audiences aged 12 upwards, provided that the images of the fight between subtitles 293 and 294, in which a man grabs two bottles and smashes them in order to use them as a weapon, are cut [...].*

(SNI-IE-ECF, 1969)

If a film was rejected, the distributor could ask for a second viewing and the process would be repeated. The censoring session always involved two censors. If they were to disagree with each other, two other members of the committee would be asked to review the film. In the case of the film *Frühstück Im Doppelbett/Pequeno Almoço Em Cama De Casal (Breakfast In Bed)*, twelve censors signed the report.

In this kind of bargaining process, the distributor fought for film scenes and the censors for ideology. The distributors would, for example, not present a completely sanitised version of a film to the censors. Instead, they would ensure

that the latter still had some work to do so that they could agree to cut one scene but ask to keep others in return (Sousa, 6th January 2017).

After this, the distributor would cut the respective scenes, stamp subtitles onto the footage and resubmit it to the censors, who would check that everything had been done properly. A film, which had passed all these steps, was then authorised for audiences of a certain age group (António, 2011: 31-37; Pieper, 2009: 432-434).

### *3. Signs of the times and the censor's reactions*

The topics subject to censorship were not very clearly defined. Over the years, several decrees on cinema and films were issued, serving as guidelines, although in practice, if there were doubts, each film was discussed by various censors who brought their personal opinions or interpretations to bear on what was acceptable or not.

In general, the themes that were censored can be summarised as:

- \* Political conflicts (e.g. fascism, communism)
- \* Racial conflicts
- \* Criticism of military virtues (hierarchy)
- \* Social conflicts (e.g. strikes)
- \* Violence (e.g. crimes, murder)
- \* Sexuality (e.g. pornography)
- \* Religion (morality)
- \* Certain aesthetics (if not acceptable to the officially established arts).  
(António, 1978: 56-71)

However, laws, decrees and regulations reflected the times. Whenever, in one way or another, there was a life-changing event in Portuguese society or foreign affairs, the censors reacted with new decrees, directives, or even by restructuring the censorship board. The following are examples, of how historical circumstances influenced censorship:

*1 September 1939 – German invasion of Poland, beginning of World War II*

The board of censors informed all newspapers that they were not allowed to publish any kind of military news (Circular 4 Setembro 1939, cited in Azevedo, 1999: 427).

*1945 – End of World War II*

Anticipating the end of World War II, the regime started to work towards replacing the *Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional* [National Propaganda Office] (SPN), whose evident sympathy for fascist Germany and Italy appeared inappropriate. It was replaced by the *Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo* [National Information, Popular Culture and Tourism Office] (SNI). The “new” institution aimed to present a more positive image of the *Estado Novo* and, at the same time, work more efficiently in terms of propaganda after the war (Azevedo, 1999: 170).

Decree-Law no. 33545, issued on 23 February 1945, removed this office from the responsibility of the *Ministério do Interior* [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and placed it under Salazar’s direct influence (Instituto da Comunicação Social, 1999: 89). On 11 March 1945 the *Comissão de Censura* [Censorship Commission] was created and from this moment onwards, film censorship was fully institutionalised under the government’s control.

*10 May 1958 – Elections, Humberto Delgado*

The so-called *General Sem Medo* [fearless general] was the opposition candidate in the Presidential election. In preparation for the electoral campaign, the *Direcção dos Serviços de Censura* [Ministry’s Censorship Department] released a confidential circular letter on the 3 of October 1957. Items to be cut included:

as notícias relativas a manifestações, comícios ou comissões de trabalhadores ou operários

[...]

quaisquer referências a partidos ou organizações clandestinas [...] a palavra “partido” é assim eliminada das notícias e relatos da propaganda eleitoral

*News concerning demonstrations, rallies or workers’ committees*

[...]

*Any references to parties or clandestine organisations [...] the word “party” is therefore to be cut from news items and reports of election propaganda.*

(cited in Azevedo, 1999: 436-438)

*15 March 1961 – Beginning of the Guerra Colonial*

The attack on the Bakongo region in northern Angola, led by the *União das Populações de Angola* [Union of Angolan Populations] (UPA), is considered by many to have marked the start of the Colonial War. After this incident, Salazar reinforced the Portuguese troops in Angola and the conflict intensified. This also had an impact on the Censorship Commission's decisions on war films (see chapter 4.1).

*1960s and 1970s – Emigration and Crisis*

Emigration reached a peak between 1969 and 1971 (Pereira, 2009: 504). Gonçalo Correia de Oliveira, the Minister for the Economy (1965-1969) observed with concern on 17 April 1967:

Em muitas regiões vão, assim, ficando livres para o trabalho agrícola os diminuídos fisicamente e os que nunca prestaram para coisa nenhuma.

*In many regions, therefore, the agricultural workforce is going to consist of those who are physically unfit to work and the good-for-nothings.*

(cited in Pereira, 2009: 497).

The censors reacted purposefully. They ordered the elimination of the following issues:

Aliciantes para ida das famílias para junto dos emigrantes

[...]

Flutuação do valor do escudo

[...]

Despedimento de pessoal fabril

*Attraction for families leaving to join emigrants*

[...]

*Fluctuations in the value of the escudo*

[...]

*Dismissal of factory workers*

(Circular 323, 23 October 1970, cited in Almeida Rodrigues, 1980: 75-76)

*27 September 1968 – Marcello Caetano*

After Salazar suffered a stroke, he was incapable of governing the country. Marcello Caetano, the former President of the Executive Board *União Nacional* [National Union], was appointed by President Tomás to replace Salazar as Prime

Minister. The opposition hoped that Caetano would liberalise the country and some of his actions did, in fact, indicate some willingness to ease the strict policies. Caetano reformed the Censorship Commissions slightly. Consequently, 121 films were resubmitted to the censors – an explicit “aggiornamento” – and the censor’s criteria were, in general, less severe (António, 2011: 45).

#### 4. *War films*

In a broader sense, a war film, according to James Chapman (2008), is a film that is temporarily and locally set in a war and deals, either directly or indirectly, with the theme of war. This definition ignores purposely (and different to other authors) the quantity of combats or the issue of whether a combat is a central theme to the film or not. This means, a war film can be free of combat scenes and still being defined as a war film.

Most war films deal with 20<sup>th</sup> century wars, but this understanding of war films is actually open to all eras, even to fictional wars. Although pre-20<sup>th</sup> century war films are more likely to be defined as historical films and fictional war films wars, as science fiction, there is no doubt that many war films represent a mixture of film genres, such as a romance in times of war, for example.

The line between pro-war and anti-war films is very fine or even non-existent. Even though they are intended as a criticism of war, anti-war films deal with the topic of war, thus consolidating war as an inevitable fact of life (Hickethier, 1990: 224). As the perception of violence and war is individual, an anti-war film can be interpreted by some as an endorsement of war or even cause fascination. Nevertheless, there are some clear differences, as the German *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung* [Federal Agency for Civic Education] mentions: a pro-war film glorifies war and plays down its cruelty. Its heroes identify with the purpose of the war, to eliminate the enemy, and the meaning of the war is not questioned. In contrast, anti-war films condemn war. The devastating effects on people’s bodies and psyche are in the foreground (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2011). The question is whether an anti-war film can be turned into a pro-war film (and vice-versa) by censorship.

#### 4.1. *Censoring war films in Portugal*

As Teresa Seruya and Maria Lin Moniz state (2008: 17), during the *Estado Novo* “pacifism and antimilitarism are uncomfortable issues due both to the Cold War context and to the important role the Armed Forces played in the support of the regime”. More precisely, concerning war films, Lauro António has observed that, while films with military themes were authorised for relatively young audiences, pacifism became increasingly unacceptable:

Um outro caso curioso é o que diz respeito a filmes pacifistas que passaram a ser proibidos a partir de 1961. Com um país em guerra, o pacifismo era «inaceitável». E diversas obras de índole abertamente belicista eram aprovadas para públicos relativamente jovens, como preparação para a guerra.

*Another interesting case concerns pacifist films, which started to be banned from 1961 onwards. As the country was at war, pacifism was «unacceptable». Yet several openly pro-war productions were approved for relatively young audiences, to prepare them for war.*

(António, 2011: 57)

The *Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo* [Portuguese National Archive] (ANTI) where the censorship documentation is stored, provided a list of 4866 films containing information about the original and Portuguese titles according to genre, year censored and censor’s decision (film approved, approved with cuts or banned). This is not a complete list of all films ever censored in Portugal, but a list of the documents available in the archive. Among films from 26 countries, the list contains 129 German language and 1782 English language films that were approved with or without cuts. From these 1911 German and English language films of all genres, 44 war films could be extracted. There are probably more war films on this list – but if so – war was not indicated as the genre and it was not possible to determine this from the titles. Also, the choice of films pre-dating 1968 was limited as when Marcello Caetano took over the government, the censorship criteria changed.

On the basis of this selection, even though it involves a limited number of films, a trend can be observed: after 15 March 1961, the acceptance of war films by the Portuguese censors was different. Out of the total of 44 war films, 19 were censored before and 25 after 1961. Also, proportionally more war films were banned after this date:

19 films 1943 – March 1961 (8 German, 11 English language films)		25 films March 1961 – 1968 (5 German, 20 English language films)	
with cuts	banned	with cuts	banned
13 films	6 films	11 films	14 films
= 68%	= 32%	= 44%	= 56%

(Pieper, 2018)

It is also interesting to note that the number of German films presented to the censors increased after 1961. Prior to this, eight German and eleven English language films had been submitted. After the beginning of the *Guerra Colonial* there were only five German and 20 English language films.

In search of justifications for the German war crimes in World War II, but also serving as an argument for the remilitarisation of the German *Bundeswehr* [Federal Armed Forces], a particularly large number of anti-war films were produced in Germany in the 1950s (Hickethier, 1990: 223-226) which might explain why there were proportionally fewer German films after 1961. Also, these percentages are probably due to the fact that the distributors were aware of the pacifist trend and the struggle to overcome the past in German anti-war films was no longer – or never had been – in the *Estado Novo's* interest, so they did not even present German war films to the censors. English or American films did not bear such a burden of guilt and approached the theme of war in a different way, revealing the good (and maybe bad) aspects of a hero, the hard path to a glorious victory, the legitimate combat against the enemy, etc. Generally speaking, more English language films show characteristics of pro-war films, so the fact that more English language films passed censorship underlines Lauro António's observation concerning pacifist films.

On the other hand, certain issues were always censored, both before and after 1961, such as resistance to the prevailing regime. Examples include the film *Edge Of Darkness* (Lewis Milestone, 1943), first submitted to the censors in 1964, in which a Norwegian pastor opens fire on German soldiers, or the film *Die Letzte Brücke* (Helmut Kautner, 1954), which expresses sympathy for the Yugoslav partisans.

In addition, any kind of conspiracy aroused the suspicions of the censor, such as the German film *Der 20. Juli* (Falk Harnack, 1955) and the British film *The Night Of The Generals* (Anatole Litvak, 1967), which was submitted for censorship several times between 1967 and 1974. Both dealt with the assassination attempt on Adolf Hitler. All these four films were banned by the *Estado Novo* censors.

## 4.2. Examples

From the abovementioned list of 44 war films, three examples were chosen: the first and the last film on the list (before and after 1961), and one in the middle which was submitted to the censors shortly before the beginning of the *Guerra Colonial*.

### 4.2.1. First example – before 1961

*This Land Is Mine/Esta Terra É Minha*, from 1943 is one of the few American productions by the French film maker Jean Renoir. It is set in an unspecified country occupied by the Germans. The main character is Albert Lory, a schoolteacher, declared pacifist and actually a coward, who finds himself involved in resistance to the occupiers.

Since it is an anti-German propaganda film (anti-war film), it is astonishing that it was permitted during the *Estado Novo*. However, it caused the censors a huge amount of work. The film was first submitted for censorship on 28 June 1944 and was rejected on 22 July 1944. After viewing the film on 14 July 1944, a censor wrote:

Somos de parecer que o presente filme não pode ser autorizado visto que os oficiais são tratados de maneira a poder ser o filme considerado como ultrajante para essa nação [alemã] e o seu exército.

*We conclude that the present film cannot be approved since the officers are treated in such a way that the film can be considered offensive to this [German] nation and its army.*

(SPN-CF, 1944)

After the rejection, the distributor wrote a letter asking for a second viewing, stating that some cuts had been made in the meantime. This letter is undated, and no response can be found in the documentation, but the final decision remained: it was banned.

On 18 July 1953, almost eight years after the end of World War II, the distributor Rádio Filmes Limitada made a second attempt. Interestingly, a second list of subtitles was produced. The film was approved on 25 July, surprisingly without any restrictions. After this positive ruling, a new copy was imported, which was sent to the censors on 4 January 1954. The censors viewed the film again on 9 February 1954 and surprisingly announced that it was banned on 11 February

1954. On 15 February, J. Allen Valle, the manager of Rádio Filmes wrote an angry letter to the censors:

Tal notícia foi recebida com o maior espanto e admiração porquanto, precisamente com este filme, usou a nossa Companhia de particular cuidado, tendo em vista que há alguns anos, quando o mesmo foi produzido, não foi considerado oportuna a sua apresentação, dada a posição neutral do nosso país.

[...]

Assim, encomendamos a referida cópia o que, como V. Ex<sup>a</sup>. deve avaliar, originou uma importante soma de gastos, com o próprio filme, transporte, despacho alfandegário, direitos, etc, etc...

*The news was received with great surprise and shock because our company had taken particular care with this film, given the fact that when it first came out a few years ago it was not considered suitable for screening here in view of our status as a neutral country.*

[...]

*Thus, we ordered the said copy which, as you may appreciate, involved spending considerable sums of money on the film itself, its delivery, customs clearance, rights, etc, etc...*

(SNI-IE-RCF, 1953)

In fact, the distributor had paid for the film, its delivery and import duty, had acquired the rights and had printed the subtitles on the copy. A date had also been set for the premiere, the advertising campaign had been launched (and paid for) and the newspapers had been informed. The manager complained that the censors had only banned the film on the eve of the premiere. He stated that this case was unprecedented in the history of his company and politely asked them to review the film urgently, because the company had to honour its commitments to a number of cinemas. He also argued that if they had been advised of the negative decision earlier, they would have scheduled other films for the respective dates.

After that, the film was reviewed on the 16 of March. One of the censors expressed concern over:

[...] a manifesta apologia, em certos momentos, de princípios políticos contrários aos que constituem a base ideológica do Estado português, a apologia da sabotagem da luta clandestina, aos atentados e do chamado “movimento de resistência” que proliferou em França durante a guerra 1939-45; a perturbação de factos históricos para servir a propaganda política de uma parte dos contendores da última guerra e a ofensas dirigidas especialmente a um país com quem Portugal mantém boas relações diplomáticas, culturais e económicas [...]

*[...] the clear incitement, at certain points, to political principles opposed to those which constitute the ideological basis of the Portuguese State; the incitement to sabotage by the underground fighters, attacks and the so-called resistance movement” that proliferated in France during the 1939-45 war;*

*the twisting of historical facts to serve the political propaganda of one of the parties fighting in the last war and the insults specifically directed towards a country with which Portugal maintains good diplomatic, cultural and economic relations [...]*

*(Ibidem)*

On 19 March 1954, the Censorship Committee informed the distributor of its new decision: the film would be approved for adults (over 18 years of age), but the distributor had to cut 14 sequences. All the alterations were hastily carried out and only four days later the shortened copy and the cut footage were sent back to the censors. Finally, on 5 April 1954, the distributor was given permission to screen the film.

All in all, it took almost ten years, from the very first request to the final decision to authorise the film. Finally, a mutilated version of an anti-German war film with a pacifist theme reached Portuguese cinemas.

#### 4.2.2. Second example – 1961

*Die Brücke/A Ponte (The Bridge)* is a West German film directed by Bernhard Wicki and released in 1959 which reached Portuguese cinemas in 1961. Based on a novel by Gregor Dorfmeister, who drew on his own childhood experiences, it tells the story of teenage soldiers who were ordered to defend a bridge in Germany from the approaching Americans. Only one of the boys survives and returns home traumatised. This plot, dealing with the traumata experienced by some individuals in times of war, is clearly an anti-war film.

In comparison to *This Land Is Mine*, *Die Brücke* caused very few problems. The standard censorship session was requested on 20 January 1961 and took place on 31 January, after which it was approved for adults (over 17 years of age) on condition that some subtitles and one scene were cut. The licence to screen the film was issued by the *Inspecção dos Espectáculos* [Film and Theatre Inspectorate] on 18 February 1961. The entire process took less than one month.

The film was then screened in Portuguese cinemas, where it was seen by another delegate from the Film and Theatre Inspectorate who wrote a confidential letter on 18 April 1961, in which he expressed his concerns about its content:

Trata-se de um filme de boa realização e bom desempenho, mas que visivelmente procura incutir nas novas gerações de jovem alemães uma mentalidade pacifista e a aversão à guerra sem qualquer restrição.

O efeito psicológico que, através deste filme, o realizador procurou alcançar, de modo sugestivo, sobre o espírito alemão tradicionalmente belicoso, afigura-se, neste

momento, pernicioso para a nossa juventude, chamada à defesa da integridade e perenidade da sua e nossa Pátria.

*It is a well-directed and well-acted film, but one which openly seeks to inculcate the younger generations of Germans with pacifist ideas and an unrestrained aversion to war.*

*The psychological effect which the director intends to achieve in this film by working suggestively on the traditionally bellicose German spirit would appear harmful at this point in time for our youth, who are called upon to defend the integrity and perpetuity of their, and our, fatherland.*

(SNI-IE-ECF, 1961)

“At this point in time” is a clear reference to the beginning of the *Guerra Colonial*. Fearing a “harmful” effect on young people, he recommended the immediate withdrawal of the film from Portuguese cinemas, but there was no support for his proposal. The Chief Inspector, Oscar de Freitas, replied in a short letter on 21 April:

Presente o referido ofício à sessão da Comissão de Exame e Classificação dos Espectáculos esta, após uma troca de impressões entre os vogais, manteve o seu parecer de aprovação do filme pois a interpretação dada pela Comissão foi precisamente a oposta à dada por V. Ex.<sup>a</sup>.

*The Commission for the Examination and Classification of Entertainment, having read the aforementioned letter and discussed its contents in a meeting, upholds its ruling that the film is approved, since its interpretation is exactly the opposite of the one you present.*

(*Ibidem*)

In the end, the film continued to be screened, but this exchange of opinions, and the simple fact that a delegate who was not involved in the case felt the need to express his concerns demonstrates the impact of the Colonial War on censorship, which had meanwhile begun.

#### 4.2.3. Third example – after 1961

The film *The Dirty Dozen/ Doze Indomáveis Patifes* (Robert Aldrich, 1967), approved under the *Estado Novo* in 1967, is the last war film on the list. The plot concerns twelve murderers, who have been chosen for a special mission during World War II. Before being sent to Germany, they are drilled and disciplined by a tough U.S. Army Major. The film shows the heroic fight and successful mission against the Germans and thus can be considered a pro-war film.

The distributor, Filmes Castello Lopes, sent the film to the censors on 3 November 1967 and received an answer on 13 November: the film would be approved for adults over 17 and four scenes had to be cut. On 21 November,

the distributor asked for permission to change the title from *Doze Patifes Indomáveis* to *Doze Indomáveis Patifes*, which was permitted on 21 November. On 28 December, the Censorship Commission sent the licence and the film had its premiere on 3 January 1968.

Eight years later, on 13 May 1976, two years after the *Revolução dos Cravos* [Carnation Revolution] in April 1974, which marked the end of the fascist regime, Filmes Lusomundo asked for a new age classification. The new commission, the *Comissão de Classificação de Espectáculo* [Film and Theatre Classification Commission], sent its reply on 31 May 1976 and made the announcement: “*não aconselhável para menores de 13 anos*” [not suitable for children under 13] (SNI-IE-ECF, 1967). Overall, this film did not face huge problems in passing censorship.

### 5. Alterations to the films

An analysis of the typed subtitles in the documents archived in the ANTT shows that the most common form of intervention by censors was a simple strike through unacceptable subtitles. The respective scenes would then either be removed (cuts) or else the images would remain but the subtitles would be eliminated (omitted subtitles). Interestingly, while conducting this research, no annotations suggesting alternative texts were found. The censors were probably unwilling to make this effort, although, theoretically, it was possible. It can therefore be assumed that manipulation of the text (multiplication, over-writing, elimination), in the majority of cases, was an act of self-censorship on the part of the translator. In addition, the note “sup” (*suprimida* = suppressed) can often be found in the printed subtitles instead of a subtitle, which means that the translator wanted to indicate that he or she did not translate the original text. This kind of omission may have been due to problems in understanding the original (poor sound quality, several characters talking at the same time, etc.) or technical issues, but also ideological reasons.

#### 5.1. Cuts

Cutting scenes is the main and best-known method of censorship. As previously noted, the censors would use the list of subtitles to guide them when they issued instructions for cutting an image or scene. After making the cuts, the distributor

had to resubmit the film to be checked by the censors. In many cases, the cut footage or images were also provided to the censors<sup>2</sup>.

*This Land Is Mine*

The last scene, from subtitle 484 onwards, was cut. It is the final scene in which the schoolteacher Albert Lory, who had been found not guilty after his courageous and rebellious speech, returns to his classroom and gives a lesson on human rights. The class is interrupted by German soldiers who take him away. Lory was, in fact, expecting to die, since the occupying forces would never have allowed anyone who defended human rights to live.

Cutting this last scene means that the Portuguese version closes with Lory found not guilty by the court – an act of justice – and his return to his class as a free man. The film ends just before he begins to talk. Any consideration of oppression and injustice on the part of the Germans, who would kill a man who stood up for freedom, is missing – thus altering the whole meaning of the film.

*Die Brücke*

There was only one specific order to cut a scene from this film, based on the censor's argument that it was too cruel:

Por volta da legenda 1081, suprimir, atendendo a excessiva crueza, os planos da morte do americano.

*Close to subtitle 1081, cut the shots of the death of the American, due to their excessive cruelty.*

(SNI-IE-ECF, 1961)

*The Dirty Dozen*

A large part of the first scene, which serves as an introduction, is missing. It consists of the hanging of a criminal sentenced to death, a brief discussion between Major Reimann and his superior about the execution, and the initial explanation of Major Reimann's mission. The film starts in the middle of this

---

<sup>2</sup> Most of these scenes are lost, but Margarida Sousa, a researcher at the *Arquivo Nacional de Imagens em Movimento* [Portuguese National Film Archive] (ANIM), is working to match all the archived scenes to the respective films. Despite this, director Manuel Mozos, in collaboration with ANIM, in 1999 edited the film *Censura: Alguns Cortes* and in 2015 the two short films: *Cinema – Alguns Cortes: Censura* part II and III, which consist of those cut scenes.

explanation: the emotional scene of a man being executed by the State was not considered acceptable.

### 5.2. Omitted subtitles

Often it was the words rather than the images that were considered suspect, so certain subtitles were simply omitted. This meant that the audience would see the images and hear the original language, in most cases without understanding it, and realise that the film had been censored. If scenes without subtitles lasted too long, the audience might whistle or shout in the cinema hall (Ribeiro, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016). In fact, the censors were not very concerned about the audience’s language skills. They simply assumed that people would not understand a single word of the original language – an attitude that would be unthinkable nowadays.

#### *This Land Is Mine*

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	PORTUGUESE SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
Burn these books.	Professor Sorel, deve queimar estes livros.	<i>Professor Sorel, you should burn these books.</i>
Is that your order, Mr. Mayor, or the enemy's? Juvenal, Voltaire... Plato: "The Republic".	Uma ordem sua, Snr. Governador, ou do inimigo? x	<i>Is that your order, Governor, or the enemy's?</i> x
My dear friend, we have to be careful about that word "republic".	x	x

Burning books is an act easily associated with the Nazis but it still escaped censorship (maybe because it would have meant cutting the whole scene). This is followed by references to philosophers, humanists and Plato’s work “The Republic”, at which point the dialogue becomes too political – these words were omitted.

#### *Die Brücke*

The next example is a dialogue between a local leader of the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* [National Socialist German Workers' Party] (NSDAP) who

cowardly leaves his son in town and pretends to have important meetings somewhere else, while the Americans are getting closer and closer. A man passes him in the street and the following conversation takes place:

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	TRANSLATION ORIGINAL TEXT	SUBTITLE
Na, Herr Obergruppenleiter, Sie wollen wohl verreisen?	<i>Mister Obergruppenleiter, it seems you want to go on a journey.</i>	x
Ach ne, Herr Renter. Sie wittern wohl Morgenluft. Mit Leuten, die das Vertrauen zur Partei untergraben, machen wir kurzen Prozess, merken Sie sich das, Herr Renter.	<i>Look at you, Mister Renter. Apparently, you see your chance coming. We make short sbrift of people who undermine confidence in the party, keep that in mind, Mister Renter.</i>	x

The local group leader is an unpleasant figure and he plans to run away from the enemy. The censors could not allow such a character to rebuke someone for his critical attitude towards the NSDAP Nazi party. The dialogue queries the one-party system in fascist Germany, a system from which the Portuguese audience could draw parallels with the Salazar dictatorship, thus making the scene political.

*The Dirty Dozen*

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	PORTUGUESE SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
We'll free the French and kill the Germans.	Libertar os franceses. x	<i>Free the French.</i> x
But the Krauts, they're the real master-race merchants.	x	x

The omission shows, how the negative depiction of the Germans is systematically toned down or omitted. Even in 1967, the image of the German Nazi regime was polished.

### 5.3. Manipulation

In order to distinguish between a legitimate deviation from the source text and an act of censorship, it is necessary to clarify the dividing line between translation and manipulation. Michael Schreiber's concept of delimitation and differentiation of the translation item (Schreiber, 1993) offers an approach to defining these limits, integrating the strategies for audiovisual translation.

The basic distinguishing feature is variance or invariance in the meaning of the text. What is important here is the intention underlying the modification. In the case of translation, invariance is required. For linguistic and cultural reasons, it is not always possible to achieve this goal. Processes such as transformation, modulation, expansion and substitution are standard procedures in translation. Moreover, in audiovisual translation, and in this case subtitling, the target text has to be adapted to the formal conditions of the film medium. Space for subtitles is limited, so the text has to be reduced or compressed. Jorge Diaz Cintas (2012) defines such processes as "technical manipulation". Here a more neutral term is adopted since this type of alteration is a legitimate strategy in subtitling: "technical-formal adaptation".

In the case of mistakes, invariance is required but not achieved and any variance is unintentional. The text is modified because of the translator's difficulties in understanding the source text or because a technical-formal adaptation was intended, but crossed the line between translation and error, for example. It is not always possible to identify the reasons for mistakes.

In the case of manipulation, variance is based on a demand for variance. This means that the target text is modified intentionally and for ideological reasons, a strategy that Diaz Cintas calls "ideological manipulation" (Diaz Cintas, 2012). Manipulation strategies can be defined as multiplication, over-writing and elimination.

	<b>Maximum <u>Invariance</u> in meaning of text</b>	<b><u>Variance</u> in meaning of text</b>
<b><u>Demand for Invariance</u></b>	<b>Translation</b> Transformation Modulation Expansion Substitution (e.g. of cultural specifics)	<b>Mistake</b> Misunderstandings (audio or linguistic) Unjustified reduction or compression Other

	<b>Technical-formal Adaptation</b> Reduction Compression	
<b>Demand of Variance</b>	×	<b>Manipulation</b> Over-writing Elimination Multiplication

(Pieper, 2009: 438-439)

The distinction between technical-formal adaptation, mistake and manipulation is not always easy to define. In some cases, it is only possible to speculate that an alteration may be a case of manipulation, but in many other cases, knowing the ideology and context in which the translation occurred, the manipulation becomes obvious.

The following examples reveal presumed intentional deviations from the original text. This kind of censorship is the most difficult to detect, since sometimes only one word has been changed. The audience in the cinemas might not even have suspected any censorship, since they could hear the characters speaking and most would not have understood the language enough to check the accuracy of the translation.

*This Land Is Mine*

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	PORTUGUESE SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
We [the Germans] prefer to give freedom to those we defeat on the battlefield. But freedom must be limited by the necessities of war.	Preferimos colaborar, que as nações vencidas vivam livremente. Embora com certos limites.	<i>We prefer to collaborate, so that the defeated nations live freely. Even though with certain limits.</i>
It's a very small sacrifice we ask of you when we are still sacrificing our lives.	Não pedimos muito, quando tudo damos pela felicidade do Mundo.	<i>We do not ask for much when we do everything for the happiness of the world.</i>

This is an extract from a dialogue between Lory and a German – an example of over-writing, especially in the second part. The first part could have been reduced for technical reasons (lack of space), but the eye catching “freedom”, which appears twice in the original, was transformed into the verb *colaborar* [collaborate] and the adverb *livremente* [freely].

In the second part, the translation bears no similarity to the original. In the original, the soldier talks about the German’s sacrifice, which is actually an affront to Lory, a citizen of the occupied nation. The original demonstration of German dominance has been substituted by an innocuous statement which eliminated, or at least softened, the hierarchical aspect and the context of occupation. In the Portuguese version, the Germans “collaborate”, they want to see everyone “happy” and “war” and supposed “sacrifices” do not exist.

*Die Brücke*

1st example:

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	TRANSLATION ORIGINAL TEXT	SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
Jetzt verheizen die uns noch, fünf Minuten vor zwölf.	<i>Now they sacrifice us, shortly before the end.</i>	Fazem-nos suar logo pela manhã.	<i>They make us sweat first thing in the morning.</i>

In this short sequence, the boys are spending their first day in the barracks. The situation is chaotic. They are collecting their kit when an older soldier turns to one of them and says everyone will be scarified, just as the war is about to end, since everything indicates that the war has already been lost. This criticism of a superior’s decision and of the fact that soldiers were unnecessarily sent to war (and certain death) has been overwritten.

But there is another aspect. The German text is a metaphor, it literally says: “Now they burn us, at five minutes to twelve”. Because of the linguistic difficulties in the original, there is some justification for suspecting that the translator may not have understood the meaning of the sentence (maybe the translator understood one or two words and pieced together a sentence that would make some sense), which would mean that this is an error rather than an act of censorship.

2nd example:

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	TRANSLATION ORIGINAL TEXT	SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
Ich kann nicht einsehen, dass diese Kinder jetzt zum Schluss noch sinnlos geopfert werden sollen.	<i>I cannot accept, that these children, now, at the end, still shall be senselessly sacrificed.</i>	Não posso aceitar o sacrifício dessas crianças.	<i>I cannot accept the sacrifice of these children.</i>

In this scene, the boys' former teacher talks to their captain, who had been a teacher himself before the war. He tries to protect the boys and points out that they are about to be killed for nothing. In the subtitled text "sacrifice of these children" it is not clear who sacrifices them, it could imply that they had chosen to sacrifice themselves and maybe only the teacher had problems in accepting this. Nevertheless, the criticism of the senselessness of the war has been eliminated and the message softened.

On the other hand, this elimination may have occurred for technical and formal reasons and is actually a legitimate reduction. This is unlikely, since the words *absurdo* [absurd] or *sem sentido* [senseless] could have been added to maintain the content of this statement.

*The Dirty Dozen*

1st example:

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	PORTUGUESE SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
I'd rather trust Hitler.	Eu preferia confiar no inimigo.	<i>I'd rather trust the enemy.</i>

The Dirty Dozen, criminals condemned to fight the Germans to the death, would naturally criticise the "enemy". In this ironic sentence, only one word is overwritten – Hitler himself was not named.

2nd example:

ORIGINAL SPOKEN TEXT	PORTUGUESE SUBTITLE	TRANSLATION SUBTITLE
----------------------	---------------------	----------------------

Killing generals could get to be a habit with me.	Não me importava de liquidar aí alguns da mesma patente dos outros.	<i>I wouldn't mind killing some more of their kind.</i>
---	---	---

“Killing generals” was overwritten since military virtues could not be questioned.

### 6. Conclusion

In these examples three general themes, typical of the war film genre, were censored: politics, military virtues and violence. This observation reflects the list of censored themes presented in Section 4, all of which were issues subjected to censorship during the four decades of the *Estado Novo's* existence.

Consequently, the image of the Germans remained untarnished. This reflects Portugal's position as a neutral but German-friendly country during World War II, a position which continued in the *Estado Novo's* ideology, even when Germany itself had moved away from its Nazi past. German productions dealt with pacifist themes, demonstrating a sharp break with the past – films from the country whose ideology the *Estado Novo* aimed to protect. Nevertheless, Salazar and his hidebound system still held firm to values superseded by most other European and transatlantic countries.

With regard to the impact of historical incidents on censorship, on the one hand, in all three films analysed, all kinds of censoring measures could be found (cuts, omitted subtitles and manipulated subtitles), across all decades. Interestingly, at a linguistic level, I could not identify significant differences in terms of translation or manipulation, which underlines the abovementioned assumption that certain themes were always manipulated during *Estado Novo*. On the other hand, the system reacted to certain events by issuing decrees and directives, and the statistics show that after 1961 fewer (German) war films with pacifist tendencies received the censor's stamp of approval.

It also became clear that pro-war and anti-war films were handled differently. The pro-war film *The Dirty Dozen* focuses on the disciplining of a group of criminals and later on their heroic combat against the Germans. It is not really surprising that relatively few alterations were made to this film. In contrast, 24 years earlier, the anti-war film *This Land Is Mine*, with its educational, pacifist and clearly anti-German message, was discussed and negotiated by the distributor and censors before a heavily mutilated version finally reached the cinemas.

*This Land Is Mine* is an example of where the message of a film can be changed by censorship. In this film, the message was altered radically with the uncompromising cut to the last scene. However, in general, small omissions and unremarkable examples of manipulation at a linguistic level, in some cases more than others, can also soften, polish and eliminate certain statements and alter the reception of a film.

The film *Die Brücke*, proved to be a surprise, since it suffered relatively little manipulation in terms of cut scenes. Moreover, on a linguistic level, most of the original content was conveyed in the target language. One explanation for this may lie in the Chief Inspector's answer to a confidential letter which had denounced the pacifist message of the film. It seems that the censors had focused on the boys' image as heroes in the battlefield and ignored the matter of their senseless death and the fact that they were fanatical, Nazi-brainwashed minors. The original film was intended as an anti-war film, but the censors interpreted it as a pro-war-film. This fact endorses the statement that the limit between pro- and anti-war films is not clearly definable and the way they are perceived is individual.

This observation also provides an answer to the question whether ideologies from other countries and cultures could be prevented from influencing the Portuguese audience. The censors apparently did not understand the message of *Die Brücke*, but the fact that another delegate from the Film and Theatre Inspectorate recommended the withdrawal of the film suggests that it was understandable. The reception of a film depends on personal factors, such as the level of education or individual expectations. Even a mutilated message of a film might be detected by an attentive spectator, although, in the case of *This Land Is Mine*, very little margin for interpretation remained. The censors did everything in their power to prevent certain issues from being understood by the audience.

#### References

- António, L. (2011) *Cinema e Censura em Portugal*. Lisboa: Biblioteca Museu República e Resistência, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1<sup>st</sup> in 1978).
- Assis Rosa, A. (2009) '«Politicamente só existe o que o público sabe que existe» Um Olhar Português Sobre a Censura: Levantamento Preliminar.' In Seruya, T. and Lin Moniz, M. and Assis Rosa, A. (eds.) *Traduzir em Portugal durante o Estado Novo*. Edited by. Lisboa: UCP. pp. 115-136.

- Azevedo, C. de (1999) *A censura de Salazar e Marcelo Caetano*. Lisboa: Caminho.
- Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung – Federal Agency for Civic Education (2011) 'Der Krieg im Film: Definition Kriegsfilm', *Dossier Krieg in den Medien*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/medien/krieg-in-den-medien/130650/definition-kriegsfilm> [Accessed 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018].
- Cabrera, A. (2013) *Censura nunca mais! A Censura ao teatro e ao cinema no Estado Novo*. Lisboa: Aletheia.
- Candelas, A. and Simões, E. (1999) 'Alfabetização e escola em Portugal no século XX: Censos Nacionais e estudos de caso.' *Análise Psicológica 1 (XVII)*: pp. 163-194.
- Chapman, J. (2008) *War and Film*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Díaz Cintas, J. (2012) 'Clearing the Smoke to See the Screen: Ideological Manipulation in Audiovisual Translation.' *Meta: journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal 57 n° 2*, pp. 279-293.
- Hickethier, K. (1990) 'Militär und Krieg: 08/15 (1954).' In Faulstich, W. and Korte, H. (eds.): *Fischer Filmgeschichte. Auf der Suche nach Werten 1945-1960*, vol 3. Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.
- Instituto da Comunicação Social (1999) *Imprensa, Censura e Liberdade: 5 séculos de história*. Porto: Instituto da Comunicação Social e Museu Nacional da Imprensa.
- Karimi, K.-H. (1991) *Das portugiesische Gegenwartsdrama unter der politischen Zensur (1960-1974)*. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang Verlag.
- Ó, J. Ramos do (1999) *Os Anos de Ferro – O dispositivo cultural durante a "Política do Espírito" 1933-1949*. Lisboa: Editorial Estampa.
- Pereira, V. (2009) 'Emigração e desenvolvimento da previdência social em Portugal.' *Análise Social*, vol. XLIV (192), 2009, pp. 471-510.
- Pieper, K. (2009) 'Zensur und Untertitelung in Portugal.' In Nagel, S., Hezel, S., Hinderer, K. and Pieper, K.: *Audiovisuelle Übersetzung*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, pp. 333-476.
- Reis Torgal, L. (2000) 'Propaganda, ideologia e cinema no *Estado Novo*. A «conversão dos descrentes».' In Luís Reis Torgal (ed.), *O Cinema sob o olhar de Salazar*. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, pp. 64-91.
- Rodrigues, G. Almeida (1980) *Breve História da censura literária em Portugal*. Lisboa: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa, Ministério da Educação e Ciência.

Seruya, T. and Lin Moniz, M. (eds.) (2008) *Translation and Censorship in Different Times and Landscapes*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

*Personal communications:*

Sousa, Margarida. Researcher at ANIM. (Personal communication, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017).

Ribeiro, António Sousa. Professor at Coimbra University. (Personal communication, 16<sup>th</sup> Dezember 2016).

*Films:*

*This Land Is Mine*, 1943 [DVD]. Directed by Jean Renoir. USA: Warner Archive Collection.

*Die Brücke*, 1959 [DVD]. Directed by Bernhard Wicki. Germany: Kinowelt Home Entertainment.

*The Dirty Dozen*, 1967 [DVD]. Directed by Robert Aldrich. USA: Warner Home Video.

*Archive:*

SPN-CF (1944). *This land is mine/Esta terra é minha*, n° 352, 30.6.1944. ANTT.

SNI-IE-RCF (1953). *This land is mine/Esta terra é minha*, n° 1024 – 4.1.1953

SNI-IE-ECF (1961). *Die Brücke/A ponte*, n° 175 – 18.2.1961. ANTT.

SNI-IE-ECF (1967). *The dirty dozen/Doze indomáveis patifes*, n° 1059 – 3.11.1967. ANTT

SNI-IE-ECF (1969). *Sie nannten ihn Gringo/Um homem chamado Gringo*, n° BU/3052 – 15.1.1969. ANTT.

*Abbreviations:*

SNI-IE-ECF = *Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo – Inspeção dos Espectáculos – Exame e Classificação de Filmes* [National Information, Popular Culture and Tourism Office – Film and Theatre Inspectorate – Analysis and Classification of Films] (1957-1968)

SNI-IE-RCF = *Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo – Inspeção dos Espectáculos – Registo de Censura de Filmes* [National Information,

The claws of Ideology

---

Popular Culture and Tourism Office – Film and Theatre Inspectorate Film  
Censor Registry] (1945-1957)

SPN-CF = *Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional – Censura de Filmes* [National  
Propaganda Office – Film Censorship] (1940-1945)