



Lessons learned from fairy tales during the censorship of Franco and Salazar

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Abstract

Children's literature was initially despised at the beginning of the dictatorships in Spain and Portugal, but then went on to become the object of preferential attention from the 1950s and 1960s onwards. However, both regimes' degree of acceptance of fairy tales is unknown, because, although they presented identity concepts, such as family, religion, and capacity for sacrifice, the examples were not the most favourable for their socio-political ideology. Therefore, in this article, we are interested in three objectives: 1) to identify what contents were sanctioned in fairy tales; 2) to assess the differences in censorship styles between the two countries; 3) and to explore how censors judged the integration of Catholicism in fairy tales. The results of this exploratory qualitative study stem from the detailed inquiry and analysis of the files consulted in the General Archive of the Administration (Spain) and the Arquivo da Torre do Tombo (Portugal).


Keywords: Censorship; tales; fairy tales; children's literature; Portugal; Spain; 20th Century.

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Las enseñanzas de los cuentos de hadas durante las censuras de Franco y Salazar

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Resumen

La literatura infantojuvenil pasó de ser despreciada en los inicios de las dictaduras de España y Portugal a convertirse en objeto de atención preferente en los años cincuenta y sesenta. Sin embargo, se desconoce cuál fue la tolerancia de ambos regímenes hacia los cuentos de hadas, pues, aunque presentaban conceptos identitarios como: familia, religión, y capacidad de sacrificio, los ejemplos no eran los más favorables para su ideario sociopolítico. Por tanto, en este artículo nos interesamos por tres objetivos: 1) identificar qué contenidos se sancionaron en los cuentos de hadas; 2) valorar las diferencias censoras entre los dos países; 3) explorar cómo juzgaron los censores la integración del catolicismo en los cuentos de hadas. Los resultados de este estudio cualitativo de carácter exploratorio emanan del cotejo de los expedientes consultados en el Archivo General de la Administración y el Arquivo da Torre do Tombo (Portugal).

Palabras clave: Censura; cuentos; cuentos de hadas; literatura infantil y juvenil; Portugal; España; siglo XX.

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INTRODUCTION

In October 2022, the *Ley 20/2022, de Memoria Democrática* was passed in Spain, aiming at promoting cohesion and the constitutional values of freedom. The objective of this law is to recognise the persecution that took place in the country between 1936 and 1978 on the grounds of ideological, political, religious or sexual identity. More specifically, it identifies the need to recover the memory of the silenced voices and to repair their moral damage. In this sense, the intention to dignify the death of some writers has gained strength, among them the famous Federico García Lorca. The poet was murdered on the orders of the coup leader Queipo de Llano, who, when asked what should be done with him, said: “Dadle *café*, mucho *café*”, the short form for Camaradas: Arriba Falange Española. (Comrades: Long Life Falange Española¹). Since then his voice has been silenced and his body is still missing (Saiz, 2022).

One of the ways in which suppressed voices can be dignified is by rescuing the works, texts or concepts that the dictatorships vetoed through official censorship. This path in search of truth, justice and reparation can begin by rescuing from oblivion the literature that was taken from us and therefore forgotten in our present. In both Spain and Portugal, censorship was the most powerful and enduring institution of the dictatorial state, and yet the editor-in-chief of *Triunfo* acknowledges in *El País* the mutual ignorance that exists between the two countries. An illogical fact, given that these are countries that share a peninsula, are twinned in history and admire each other (Márquez, 1982). In the same vein, historians such as Andrade (2008) have also expressed the need to carry out comparative studies of the two dictatorships, given that, despite the fact that they coincide in time, are governed by fascist regimes and are borderlands, there is a lack of research that shows how they overlap.

The need is all the more pressing when it comes to censorship, where, then as now, everything seems to be hermetic. Whereas in Spain the evaluators were hired and signed their reports with a numerical pseudonym, their anonymity is still protected today, despite the fact that they are public servants of a ministry. In any case, this is nothing new, as Abellán (1980), the pioneer in accessing the censorship files, already discovered that more than sixty thousand files disappeared when they were transferred from the Ministry of Information and Tourism (MIT) to today's General Administration Archives (AGA).

The missing documents were dated between 1964 and 1969. That is, those who belonged to the last phase of Franco's regime. Therefore, in the event of accountability after the dictator's death, it would be possible to identify the signatories. We do not know if this was intentional, but we do know, thanks to Muñoz's doctoral thesis (2004), that on the night of Franco's death the same ministry that kept these files lit a bonfire in the courtyard of its facilities.

For Cornellá (2014), a researcher at the University of Glasgow, the situation is precarious because, in addition to the weaknesses already mentioned, there are others, such as the fact that works are currently being reprinted with the changes imposed by the censors. The situation has not been reversed by the recovery of the original librettos, and without this material we do not know the intention of those who have manipulated them, nor the concepts or ideas lost by the author.

The problem is that everything remains paralysed, and while Abellán (1980) complained that the only criterion used to order the files was the strict order in which they arrived at the administration, the same is true today. There is no public database that groups the reports by the censor who reviewed them, by subject, or by literary genre. Perhaps for this reason, Cornellá (2014) claims that although the censorship apparatus disappeared with the approval of the democratic Constitution in 1978, its effects continue to live on in Spanish intellectual life. Faced with this precarious access to documents, Abellán (1980) explains that there are only two research approaches: to guess the genre of the book from the title, or to randomly select a group of cards in order to compare the characteristics of the works.

In order to proceed with such research models, years of archiving are required so that sufficient records are available for comprehensive examination to establish relationships or understand the evolution of criteria. Despite this pitfall, we have studies such as Pascua's (2011), which looks at the manipulation

of translations, and [Cerrillo and Sotomayor's \(2016\)](#), which focuses on children's literature. In addition to these, there is the work of [Valls and Mainer \(1983\)](#) and [Lemus and Peña \(2018\)](#) on early Francoist propaganda, as well as the updated results of [Teresa Julio \(2019\)](#) for the *Boletín de la Real Academia Española* (Gazette of the Royal Spanish Academy).

On the same level, but on the other side of the border, we have the results of [Ana Margarida Ramos \(2021\)](#), [Ângela Balça \(2022\)](#) and [Sara Reis da Silva \(2023\)](#), albeit still in small numbers. The first deals with the censorship of children during the Estado Novo, the second with the various ways of evading fascist manipulation, and the last with the repressive development of this regime, focusing in most of its studies on key authors in the history of Portuguese literature, such as Luísa Ducla Soares, António Torrado and Manuel António Pina.

Although each focuses their research on a different area, all three agree on the particular vulnerability of children's publications and the denigration they have received in their evaluations. In Spain, Cisquella et al. (2002) come to the same conclusion, noting that repression in children's literature was even more phantasmagorical than in adult books.

For all these reasons, [Suárez \(2022\)](#), a researcher at the Cervantes Virtual Centre, wonders how it is possible that, with so many similarities, there is a lack of comparative studies offering an exegesis of the two models of literary censorship. This is the testimony that we are taking up today, respecting the methodology recommended by [Abellán \(1980\)](#), but dealing with children's literature because of its particular interest for the dictators, who implicitly recognised censorship as a powerful means of disseminating and validating worlds and ideologies, and therefore as an objective of necessary vigilance.

THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE MODELS OF CENSORSHIP

[Pena \(2017\)](#), one of the leading experts in the study of Iberian fascism, argues that Franco and Salazar behaved like Siamese twins. Portugal sought international recognition for Spain, and Spain reciprocated by guaranteeing the stability of fascism on the peninsula. For this reason, Portugal saw the Spanish war as its own and put its diplomatic and censorship services at the service of its dictator. To this end, a strong campaign was waged between the National Propaganda Secretariat and the Portuguese *Serviços de Censura*, with the aim of controlling all freedom of expression and establishing a homogeneous discourse in both countries.

Salazar, author of the mythical sentences “O que parece é” (What seems to be is) or “Só existe aquilo que o público sabe que existe” (Only what the public knows exists), was well aware that to consolidate his power he needed to dominate all the media, culture and publishing, and he realised this:

“A opinião pública é indispensável à vida de qualquer regime. Os governos, por mais apoio que tenham, não se mantem usando a força, mas tendo-a” (Public opinion is indispensable to the life of any regime. Governments, no matter how much support they have, don't stay in power by using force, but by having it) ([Pena, 2017, p. 17](#)).

Censorship, which hid things that did not 'fit' the nationalist 'mould', was clearly an instrument of the Salazar dictatorship.

In the same vein, [Peña \(2019\)](#) explains that these two countries, along with Germany and Italy, fostered censorship structures to protect each other. However, there are differences that need to be studied, as each nation has transferred these competences to different institutions, which have modified their objectives according to the sector managed by the leadership. It was not the same for these powers to be in the hands of the Falange (1941-1945) as it was for them to be in the hands of technocrats or Opus Dei. Each country also had its own model, with Italy and Germany applying post-sale censorship, Spain imposing a pre-publication assessment model and Portugal opting for a combination of the two, depending on the target audience and the subject of the book ([2019](#)).

Immediately after the end of the civil war, Salazar celebrated the victory as his own, because of his media work and because it “justified” the deaths of his six thousand soldiers in Spain. He delivered this message to the National Assembly, treating the issue as a matter of satisfaction for his country and also as official proof of Spain’s debt:

“Orgulha-me que tenham morrido bem e todos –vivos e mortos– tenham escrito pela sua valentia mais uma página heroica da nossa História. Não temos nada a pedir, nem contas a apresentar. Vencemos, eis tudo!” (I’m proud that they died well and that all of them, living and dead, have written another heroic page in our history with their bravery. We have nothing to ask for and we are not to be held accountable. We won, that’s all!) (Pena, 2017, p. 19).

As far as the children’s literature is concerned, the comparative analysis of Spanish and Portuguese censorship legislation reveals a twin development with strong links (Tena-Fernández et al., 2020). Both countries set up special commissions to monitor children’s books, in the same decade (the 1950s), and entrusted their composition to members of very similar professions and ideologies. The trigger that sparked this interest and turned an undervalued literature into one of primary attention was the impact of periodical productions (comics and magazines) on the children’s population, especially those of foreign origin.

There are three common factors in their official regulations: first, the prominence of moral issues; second, the effort of each regulation to achieve greater officialdom; and third, the continued reaffirmation of the mandate for mandatory pre-publication censorship. This obligation is maintained even in the years when works for adults were exempted from control. The regulations to which we refer are, in Spain, the *Orden acordada en Consejo de Ministros de 24 de junio de 1955 por la que se desarrolla el Decreto sobre ordenación de las publicaciones infantiles y juveniles*, and, in Portugal, the *Instruções sobre Literatura Infantil* published by the *Direcção dos Serviços de Censura*, in 1950.

Both documents, with their national specificities, have five main focuses for revision. The five points of assessment that the censors had to check particularly carefully before granting permission for publication were

- 1) morale,
- 2) literary quality
- 3) educational aspects
- 4) political affairs
- 5) religious issues.

Depending on the issues that the evaluators found on these topics, they could resolve the dossier in the following way:

- 1) full authorisation of the work
- 2) deletions
- 3) refusal of publication
- 4) prosecution of the perpetrator.

SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

A review of the legislation shows that Spain focused on banning content, while Portugal prioritised the formal and aesthetic component of publications. However, we do not know how they acted in practice, and this is what we want to analyse in this paper, in order to find out how the censorship of the children’s

literature of each country actually worked, and what the similarities and differences were between Spain and Portugal.

We will do this by selecting only those reports that focus on fairy tales, whose dossiers contain the complete work and whose evaluator's verdict is explicit. There are three reasons for this choice:

- 1) there was a particular rejection of imported works, most of which were of foreign origin;
- 2) these works were common to both dictatorships;
- 3) the re-editing assessments have been repeated, so it is possible to assess the trend.

Moreover, these literary texts are particularly valued by nationalist regimes, such as those of Portugal and Spain, because of their matrix and their recognised affiliation to popular culture. Access to the information sources was granted both in the Arquivo da Torre do Tombo in Lisbon and in the General Archive of the Administration in Alcalá de Henares, and as a result of a decade of work in these repositories, more than 700 censorship files have been consulted.

The objectives of this work are the following:

- 1) to identify the elements that are often criticised in fairy tales;
- 2) to assess whether the incidence was the same in both dictatorships;
- 3) to analyse if there were any slogans that incorporated elements of Catholicism.

In order to achieve these objectives, a qualitative methodology has been chosen, based on two research approaches: the interpretation of the files, the revision of the original texts, and the analysis of the excerpts, in order to assess how the political polysystem conditioned the literary polysystem of the Iberian peninsula.

THEMES REVISITED IN FAIRY TALES TRIED IN SPAIN

Tricks, deceptions and cunning of the characters

Lying, cunning and hypocrisy were listed in the Spanish regulations as reprehensible moral issues that would be sanctioned. However, it is a factor that has been little studied, as the focus has tended to be on content vetoed for patriotic or religious reasons (Tena-Fernández, 2023). However, in the genre in question, it was an issue that was frequently raised and that stood out above other issues. *Cuentos de hadas franceses* (Ex. 6436-54)² is an example, a compilation that includes many crossovers of all kinds, but where the focus is on *La princesita avispada* (The clever little princess). The censor considers it unethical that “un príncipe se introduzca en el castillo gracias a la frivolidad de las dos princesas mayores y luego las engañe” (a prince gets into the castle thanks to the frivolity of the two older princesses and then deceives them). Such quibbling leads to “aceptación con reparos” (qualified acceptance), but only because it considers fantasy to be greater than realism and therefore deplorable actions would not be taken seriously.

This work serves as an example of how censorship hardened as the regime's demise approached, finding incidents where it had not found them before. In April 1970, the publisher ordered the reprint, stating that “los realismos desagradables son improcedentes para niños” (unpleasant realism is unsuitable for children). Therefore, the specialist reader now makes corrections (Ex. 4513-70), But it is not carried out because his boss rejects the order and approves the authorisation without telling the publisher.

There are many examples of this. *Grimms' Fairy Tales* were also registered in 1970 (Ex. 4515-70). Of these, the assessor notes that they were approved in the 1950s, but now objects to the inclusion of *The Little Peasant*. He warns that it is an adaptation of *Nicolasín y Nicolásón* in which “triumfa la mentira y el engaño, se incluyen alusiones a infidelidades conyugales y aparece la muerte por ahogamiento de un

ambicioso” (lies and deceit triumph, allusions to marital infidelity are included, and the death by drowning of an ambitious man appears) (Ex. 4515-70). In view of this balance, it considers that the only way to achieve it is to adapt or delete the pages it has marked. This time, the Superior does not save the proposal because, although it is passed on to a second reviewer, he also signs the rejection.

The location of the 1950s report referred to by the first reviewer leads us to file 3797-57. In fact, it was registered under the title *The little peasant* and the Evaluator 30 also acknowledges that it is a version of the *Nicolasín y Nicolasón*, but he decides that since it is well adapted and a folk tale, it is accepted without any changes. In any case, we are not dealing with disparate criteria, the argument had a long history of reticence, and it did not matter who the censor, publisher or adaptor was. This work from the 1970s was part of a selection from the Grimms, but this title also appears in *HC Andersen Fairy Tales* (Ex. 116-55) and the verdict is even worse.

The compilation contains fourteen stories, but the one that receives the harshest judgement is *Nicolasín y Nicolasón*. It is said to be “cruel, de mal gusto y nada ejemplar, aunque las escenas escabrosas están soslayadas con ingenio” (cruel, tasteless and by no means exemplary, although the lurid scenes are skilfully avoided). However, considering the words of Reviriego (2023), who acknowledged that the MIT censorship was accustomed to sanctioning by stating causes that had nothing to do with the real reason, we sought out the original libretto to verify the content. The story is full of tricks, deceptions and lies, but there are also references that are inconvenient for the Church, and this content is not denounced, nor is it revealed to the publisher. On page 32 the narrator describes how a sexton visited a farmer’s wife when her husband was away.

This is important for three reasons: the story was judged by Isabel Niño, a censor of exaggerated religious fervour (Tena-Fernández & Soto-Vázquez, 2021), respect for Catholicism was an important point in the rubrics, and the Bishops Conference of Spain had urged priests not to share space alone with women. In this story, the clergy does not inspire admiration; on the contrary, it is clearly stated that the husband “no podía soportar la presencia de un sacristán. Y si, por azar, se le ponía uno por delante, era víctima de un verdadero ataque de rabia” (could not bear the presence of a sacristan. And should he come across one, he was the victim of a real fit of rage) (p. 32).

The farmer even went one step further and challenged one of the main characters to summon the devil. This is also relevant when we consider that the provisions of the *Decreto sobre ordenación de las publicaciones infantiles y juveniles* (1956), in its first block of vetoed issues, that “invocaciones al diablo” (invoking the devil) (Art. 14.c) and ridiculing church ministers (Art. 14.B) would be sanctioned. The line goes beyond all this and goes one step further by mentioning that it was the sacristan himself who had the face of the devil, and he was so ugly that the farmer who saw him cried out, “¡Qué cosa tan espantosa!” (What a terrible thing!) (p. 34).

References to deception were also constant in more popular works such as *Puss in boots*, where we find criticism both in the 1950s (Ex. 624-54) and the 1960s (Ex. 3644-67). The first report concludes that it is a story in which “triumfa la astucia y el engaño, pero por ser el protagonista un gato puede aceptarse” (unning and deceit triumph, but because the protagonist is a cat, it can be accepted), and in the second report the censor also sanctions “las crueldades inadmisibles” (unacceptable cruelty).

The interpretation of Catholicism as magic

With the above stories, we could foresee that the censorship would try to include religious content in children’s books, as if it were Catholic propaganda. Indeed, some publishers interpreted it in this way, and in the early years of the Franco regime we find works with direct references to God, praises of the Virgin and appeals to Christian resignation (Tena-Fernández, 2023). Nevertheless, the evaluators thought otherwise, especially in fairy tales, where they feared that miracles might be equated with magic, God with a magician and the Virgin with a fairy. If these figures were treated as namesakes, they would think that religion was an invented tale, and *The Bible* another fairy tale. This is reflected in the evaluation of *Cinderella* (Ex. 4236-55) which states that “debería quitarse el nombre de la virgen en boca de las hadas que

obran fantásticamente, porque dará lugar a confusiones” (the name of the Virgin should not be pronounced by the fairies who work fantastically, because it leads to confusion).

In the same five-year period, the Norbert publishing house presented *New German Fairy Tales* (Ex. 6438-54) and the censor argues that the image of an angel must be changed and replaced by that of a genie or a magician. Something similar happens with the Molino publishing house, which is trying to republish *Chinese Fairy Tales* (Ex. 6437-54), because of a favourable verdict ten years earlier. In addition to approving the book, the censor praised its good background of moral-philosophical teachings, its interest and literary value (Ex. 865). However, the 1954 proposal argues that there is a story that should not be read by children because it seems that a man, with the consent of his wife, cheats on her with another man and is then reincarnated as a girl who, when she grows up, remarries her first husband. They are all exotic in atmosphere and speak of reincarnation and immortality.

The same accusation is made in *The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf* integrado en los *HC Andersen Fairy Tales* (Ex. 116-55), where he complains that: “mezcla lo religioso y lo fantástico, con un alma condenada que se convierte en pájaro” (mixes the religious and the fantastic, with a damned soul transformed into a bird). The erasure conceals the fact that during the little girl’s metamorphosis, “brilló un rayo de luz en aquel abismo de destrucción” (array of light shone into this abyss of destruction), she disappeared and a little bird appeared. Probably to prevent children from understanding that the little bird was the dove of the Holy Spirit, the publisher changed the girl to be “dissolved” in the light, to become a bird, to “melt” into a cone of light.

Proof that these views were maintained until the end of the Franco regime is the 1970 version of the *Sleeping Beauty* (Ex. 1885-70), where reader 22 report that

“aunque no es aconsejable para niños por la presentación fatalista de poderes mágicos, puede autorizarse, si bien mezcla religión y fantasía de forma inconveniente” (although not recommended for children because of its fatalistic portrayal of magical powers, it can be allowed, although it mixes religion and fantasy in an uncomfortable way).

Although the permission to edit suggests that this content should be removed:

“Tan fervientes fueron las súplicas de los regios esposos que el cielo les concedió al final el don de una preciosa niña, bella y menuda como un delicado capullo de rosa” (the royal couple’s pleas were so fervent that heaven finally granted them the gift of a precious baby girl, as beautiful and delicate as a delicate rosebud).

The location of what was banned clearly shows that there was no hint of criticism of the Church; the censors simply did not want to associate its most representative concepts with fairy tales. This obsession with dissociating Christianity from magic was so great that the censorious Superiority had to admit it to its readers:

“no hallo inconveniente en que se diga que el cielo concedió una preciosa niña a los regios esposos. Puede autorizarse sin tachaduras” (I have no objection to saying that heaven has given the royal couple a beautiful baby girl. Can be authorised plainly) (Ex. 1885-70).

The concept of family

In fairy tales, gender roles were always clearly differentiated, and this pleased the regime because it served as a model for imitation, especially for young female readers (Tena-Fernández, 2023). However, there were three titles that were repeated because they broke with their archetypes. The first was *Sleeping Beauty*, and as suggested in the previous section, the motif was the sterility of the parents. It should be noted that the purpose of marriage was procreation, and that intercourse beyond this purpose was libidinous.

Therefore, to show that there were marriages that did not produce children was considered a failure and a reality to be hidden. Evidence of this can be found in file 3644-67, in which the censorship office states that: “no es adecuada la prolija explicación sobre un caso de esterilidad conyugal” (the long explanation of a case of marital sterility is inappropriate). The galley proofs show that this supposedly long and serious explanation was reduced to a few lines:

“había una vez un rey y una reina que estaban muy apenados por no tener hijos. Fueron a todos los balnearios del mundo, hacían promesas, peregrinaciones y frecuentes devociones, emplearon todos los medios y nada se lograba” (once upon a time there was a king and a queen who were very sad because they had no children. They went to all the spas in the world, they made promises, pilgrimages and frequent devotions, they used every means and nothing came of it).

Hanna Martens (2016) explains that the crossed-out fragment is important for censorship because fascism considered women to be superior beings, the “templo de la raza” (temple of the race). In other words, they were valued solely for their ability to give birth, and in this account, by not having children, the sexuality of marriage would have been in vain, since this act was considered a necessary evil for procreation.

The second example is the work of *Grisélidis*, where the prototype of women complementing men and making them better versions of themselves is broken. The story shows that there are men who do not crave the love of a woman and that for some it was the beginning of a desolate life. So much so that there are even hints of machismo and misogyny, a break with the “angel of the home” model promoted by the regime. For example, in the 1967 evaluation, the administration considered the text inappropriate because “se expone en él una idea detractora de la mujer y del matrimonio” (it contains an idea harmful to women and marriage) (Ex. 3644-67). In fact, the author expressed this idea very clearly:

“El príncipe veía en la mujer solamente infelicidad y mentira. En la que más brillase por el mérito más raro, él le reconocía un alma hipócrita, un espíritu lleno de orgullo, un implacable enemigo que aspiraba constantemente a imponer su imperio soberano en el desdichado varón que se entregara a ella”. (The prince saw only unhappiness and lies in the woman. In the one who shone the brightest with the rarest merit, he recognised a hypocritical soul, a spirit full of pride, an implacable enemy who constantly sought to impose his sovereign kingdom on the wretched man who would surrender to it) (p. 2).

The prince admitted to his vassals that the effects of women on men were very harmful, as he had noticed that husbands ended up being “dominados o traicionados” (dominated or betrayed). As a result, a deep hatred grew in him, which increased day by day, and kept him away from the idea of marriage, putting his personal happiness before that of obtaining a future queen for the country.

Marriage education through fairy tales was fundamental, and this is what Franco advocated when he inaugurated the first school of the Women’s Section of Falange in Castillo de la Mota. In his inaugural address, he set out what he considered to be the three eternal truths: the principles of God’s law, the need to serve the fatherland, and the common good of Spaniards (Franco, 1943, pp. 129-133). The adolescent girl educated in these schools found in marriage the symbiosis of the “three truths”.

Finally, the third title with the highest number of penalties is *Donkeyskin*. The reason is that it violates what is most sacred to the regime, “la santidad de la familia” (the holly nature of the family”, i.e., the most solid foundation of Christian society. Many dossiers accuse a father of wanting to marry off his daughter. For example, in the 1953 recording of Perrault’s version, the censor reports that:

“se ha soslayado el grave inconveniente de la versión original haciendo que el pretendiente de la joven rechazada no sea su propio padre, sino un príncipe poco atractivo de todos modos, como puede producir confusión con el auténtico debe rechazarse” (the serious drawback of the original

version has been avoided by making the suitor of the rejected girl not her own father, but an unattractive prince anyway, as this might lead to confusion with the real suitor) (Ex. 3485-53).

It is rare for a story to be censored when the censor acknowledges that incest has been removed, so it could be that the real motive was the description of the prince. If the intention was to encourage the reader's desire to find a husband who would provide happiness, financial stability and security, in this case it had the opposite effect. The proposal was made with

“un príncipe segundón, que, sin ser imbécil, lo parecía, pues estaba dominado por una holgazanería tan grande que jamás aspiraría a cargar con la pesada responsabilidad del gobierno (p. 10).

It is also acknowledged that the prince “no resaltaba por su belleza, pero como, en aquella época, no abundaban los príncipes hermosos y los feos llevan casi siempre las de perder” (he was not specially handsome, but as beautiful princes were rare in those days and ugly princes were almost always the losers), he was the best candidate (p. 10). The king believed that, being ugly and lazy, he would be manipulable at his father's command and would probably not demand much in the way of dowry as he would have no other marriage alternatives.

There is also another file from 1953, rescued by [Hanna Martens \(2016, p. 339\)](#), in which the censors again reject the story without any explanation. However, at the insistence of the editors, the regime declared that it was the

“nocivo cuento clásico de Andersen, que bien podría sustituirse por otro del mismo autor, con lo que la Colección ganaría mucho; pues hay padres que se retraerán de comprarla al ver este título incluido” (harmful classic Andersen tale, which could well be replaced by another by the same author, which would make the collection much more attractive, as there are parents who will be reluctant to buy it if they see this title included) (Ex. 4018-53).

Furthermore, as in previous cases, it is pointed out that the reissue is also untimely because it will arouse curiosity about the original version.

THEMES REVISITED IN FAIRY TALES TRIED IN PORTUGAL

In Portugal, fairy tales, especially those of Charles Perrault, were regularly published during the *Estado Novo* period, probably because they represented an appreciation of popular culture and traditions that was a hallmark of the political ideas of the time. In this sense, Bárbara's doctoral thesis (2014) invites us to focus on three specific titles, the result of their numerous reprints in Portugal, such as 1) *Puss in boots*, 2) *Sleeping Beauty* and 3) *Cinderella*.

The first, originally entitled *Le Maître Chat* or *Le Chat Botté*, was included in the collection *Contes de Ma Mère L'Oye* (1697) and went through 12 editions with the companies Majora, Civilização, Romano Torres, Editorial Globo and Figueirinhas. The second released 6 editions under the Romano Torres and Majora labels, to which Livrolândia was added. Finally, there is the story of *Cendrillon ou la petite pantoufle de verre*, known as *Cinderella* or *A Gata Borralheira*, with 8 editions supported by Minerva, Romano Torres, Majora and Barateira.

Reading these three texts will allow us to see the tolerance of the censorship towards their most representative contents, their adaptation to the Salazarist precepts and the strict rules imposed by the censorship services.

Religiosity and divine salvation

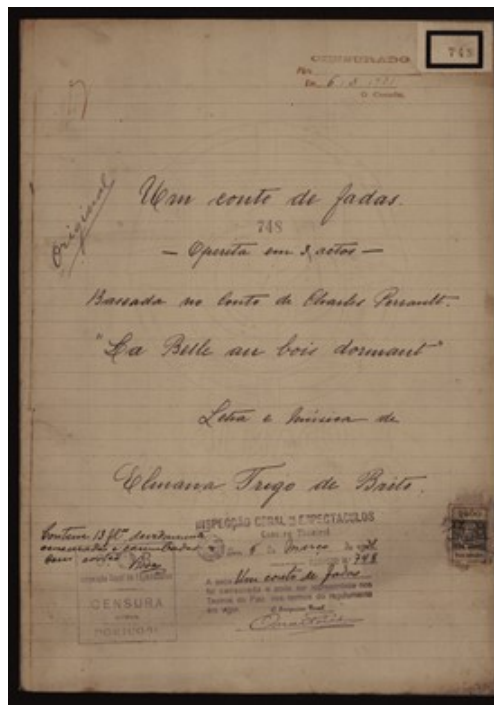
The text of *Um conto de fadas* (1931), based on Charles Perrault's play *Sleeping Beauty*, to be performed with words and music by Elmana Trigo de Brito, bears the seal of the Inspeção General de

Espectáculos and its registration reads: “Contem 13 páginas devidamente censuradas e carimbadas sem cortes” (it contains 13 pages, duly censored and stamped without cuts). It is worth noting that there are no erasures in this text, which testifies to its conformity with the ideological norms and rules of the time.

Its authorship is relevant, although there is little biobibliographical information: Elmana Trigo de Brito was a music teacher and partner in the League and Association for Feminist Propaganda of Ana de Castro Osório, an important Portuguese writer of children’s books. These specific data allow us to understand the author’s link with the world of children’s cultural production.

Picture 1

First page of the book by Elmana Trigo de Brito



Note: Salazarist censorship file alluding to the title *Um conto de fadas* (1931).

The appropriateness of the argument may be supported by the prevalence of the theme of religiosity, based on the angels of heaven and testifying to the praise of good overcoming and punishing evil (os “espíritos malfajezos”). The dichotomy between good (which is always rewarded) and evil (which is always punished) is one of the story’s structural strands.

In addition, the figuration of the fairies, representatives of good (“da Estrela Branca”), emphasises the fairy-tale nature of the story, which is deliberately distanced from any credible connection with reality and from socio-political connotations, which favours its positive evaluation. This is the opposite of the situation in Spain, where the presence of fairies has been interpreted as a counterpart to the Virgin Mary, causing confusion among children.

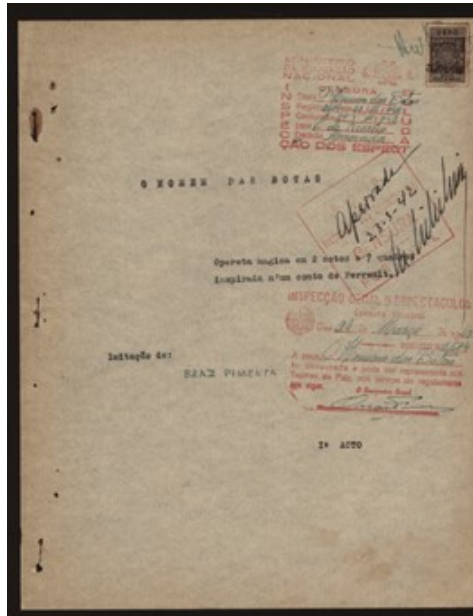
As for the second work, dated 1942, the Inspección de Espectáculos (PT-TT-SNI-DGE-1-2604) states that it refers to *O Homem das Botas* and that its content is inspired by Perrault’s fairy tale. It is a typewritten text of 93 pages in which the issues raised by his argument are easily identifiable and which the institution has authorised to be presented.

However, there is no indication of the cuts made, although the stamp indicates that the work was indeed censored and therefore in compliance. The final text is imbued with positive content for the Salazarist ideology, and one of the most clear examples is the undeniable religiosity of the characters, established in their lives as a means of salvation and expressed in expressions such as “dar a sua alma ao

Creator” (give your soul to the Creator). This is interesting because it differs from Spain, where in the 1950s and 1960s the same title was sanctioned for showing children the triumph of cunning and deception, rather than accepting life's adversities with Christian resignation (the greater the sacrifice, the greater the honour).

Picture 2

First page of the book “O homem das botas”



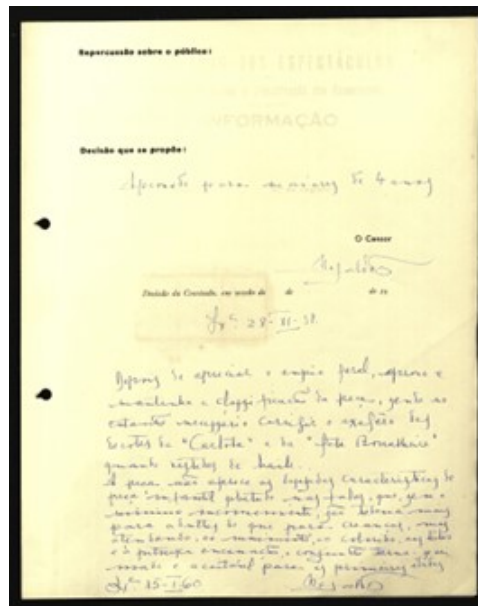
Note: File PT-TT-SNI-DGE-1-2604 censored in Portugal in 1942.

Finally, in 1959, we find a children's comedy with the play *Cinderela - A Gata Borracheira* by Tomás Ribas (PT-TT- SIN-DGE-1-5960). Like the previous books, this is a story of condemnation of evil and praise of good (“bondoso coração”), even suggesting the idea of retributive justice. In this particular case, the main character acts as a model of goodness, living in loneliness or helplessness, without any gesture of revolt. It is also an example of how the good and the righteous are rewarded.

If we delve deeper into this question, we see that the protagonist fulfils the canon of the perfect woman for the dictatorship: self-sacrificing, complacent and long-suffering. Cinderella was a good example of the feminism of the time, as she was concerned with the care of the home, respect for the family and physical beauty as an element of public display (she does not dare go to the ball until she has fancy clothes and an exuberant carriage). But even on this aspect, which could have been insignificant, Salazar was meticulous, as evidenced by the censorship report of 1960, which corrected the character’s neckline, considering it too generous and questioning its suitability for a child audience.

Picture 3

Relatório da censura



Note: File PT-TT- SIN-DGE-1-5960 of *A Gata Borralheira* dated 1960.

Glorification of work and poverty as a symptom of honesty

Other themes that the Portuguese dictatorship particularly valued in children's books were the premise that "work dignifies the individual", though not in a balanced sense, on the contrary: the greater the dedication to work and the worse the conditions, the greater the sacrifice and the greater the reward. Leaving aside the case of Cinderella, which is the most obvious, we find another example with *Puss in Boots*.

This story is a praise of hard work and the spirit of sacrifice, as well as a call for honourable poverty - a common expression in Portugal, the origin of which has been lost in time: "pobrezinhos, mas honrados" (poor but honourable). These lines emerge from the dialogue between the three brothers, the miller's sons, whose indirect characterisation allows us to foresee a certain stupidity, a trait that does not fail to configure a certain humorous tone that characterises a considerable part of the text, especially in the scenes concerning the monarch D. Comilão, his gluttony and his obesity.

In short, the text of *Puss in Boots* also seems to avoid any link to the empirical or historical-factual world by opting for anthroponyms far removed from the usual ones. This avoids the identification of certain characters and their features with real referents or figures, which would have meant their being condemned for ridiculing authority figures. Doubt is therefore justified: did the author of this book practice self-censorship?

As we have already mentioned, in the book starring Gata Borralheira, there is also an implicit praise for work, based on the imposed activities carried out by this character, without denying or opposing them. This submissive/obedient attitude is seen as a virtue that is ultimately rewarded with the greatest prize for a woman in those years: a good husband.

In short, what the reading of these three revised histories offers us is a kind of "axiological framework" of clear Salazarist affiliation. Firstly, because they are imbued with Catholicism and Christian symbolism; secondly, because there is no criticism of the nation; and thirdly, because the family is always

present and, even if their attitudes are deplorable, respect prevails. In short, it all boils down to God, nation and family, and submissive morality.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the study we have presented is exploratory in nature and the sample is very small, it helps to outline some conclusions that could guide future research. As far as Spain is concerned, we found that although each story had its own reticence, there were three common incidents.

Firstly, it is a rejection of the deceptions devised by some characters, however laudable their purpose. The censors were worried that readers would take these actions as an example to imitate. However, if the tricks were played by animals or fantastic creatures, there was more tolerance.

Secondly, Catholicism had a great influence on fairy tales. The Government feared that Christianity would be devalued as a result of children confusing religion with fantasy, drawing similarities between virgins and fairies, or equating God with a magician, for both were capable of producing supernatural events.

The third sanctioned area concerns the manifestation of family problems. In particular, it is not allowed to reveal that there are marriages that cannot produce biological children, that there are fathers with deplorable attitudes and that there are men who see marriage as the beginning of their unhappiness.

On the other hand, a comparison of the dossiers has shown that the reviewers were harsher than the censorship chiefs, and that the judgments were more severe as the end of the Franco regime approached. Sometimes some themes were sanctioned when in fact the disturbing content was something else, and there were problems in dealing with the re-editions of fairy tales that were approved in the 1940s and 1950s.

In the Portuguese case, the promulgation of the evaluation instructions in 1950 increased surveillance and led to a more precise attention or concentration, as in Spain, but from 1951 (with the creation of the Ministry of Information and Tourism). However, there are some differences:

- far less deletions were made;
- corrections focused on the aesthetics of the characters;
- use of comedy to confront sensitive issues;
- the bulk of the evaluations focused on plays.

Finally, it is striking how in Spain the fake religiosity of the characters becomes an element of revision, while in Portugal the constant allusion to religiosity is praised, or at least not criticised.

In short, censorship in both regimes functioned as a powerful tool for homogenising mentalities. Both dictators justified their creation as a guarantor of state stability, when what they were trying to do was to forge a single way of thinking that would guarantee the survival of their ideology after their death.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

Ramón Tena-Fernández: Project administration; Formal Analysis; Conceptualization; Writing – original draft; Investigation; Methodology; Software; Supervision; Validation.

Sara Reis Da Silva: Formal Analysis; Data curation; Writing – review & editing; Investigation; Resources; Supervision; Validation; Visualization.

NOTES

¹ The sole legal party of the Francoist regime

² Franco's censors catalogued the reports using the File (Ex.), the registration number (the first digits before the script) and finally the year in which the work was submitted for evaluation.

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Appendix 1. List of censored works under study

File	Title	Author	Box	Date of censorship registration
Ex. 6436-54	<i>Cuentos de hadas franceses</i>	Anonymous	21/10886	04/11/1954
Ex. 4236- 55	<i>Cinderella</i>	Juan Sabatés	21/11178	12/08/1955
Ex. 4513- 70	<i>Cuentos de hadas franceses</i>	Several authors	66/5615	08/04/1970
Ex. 4515-70	<i>Grimms' Fairy Tales</i>	Brothers Grimm	66/5615	08/04/1970
Ex. 116-55	<i>HC Andersen Fairy Tales</i>	Andersen	21/10951	11/01/1955
Ex. 3644-67	<i>The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault</i>	Perrault	21/18115	05/05/1967
Ex. 6438-54	<i>New German Fairy Tales</i>	Norbert Lebermann	21/10886	04/11/1954
Ex. 6437-54	<i>Chinese Fairy Tales</i>	Anonymous	21/10886	04/11/1954
Ex. 865	<i>Chinese Fairy Tales</i>	Undetermined	865	1941
Ex. 2719- 68	<i>Peter Pan</i>	Walt Disney	21/18858	29/03/1968
Ex. 3485-53	<i>Donkeyskin</i>	Perrault	21/10337	02/06/1953
PT-TT-SIN- DGE-1-748	<i>Um conto de fadas</i>	Elmana Trigo de Brito	-	06/03/1931
PT-TT-SIN- DGE-1-2604	<i>O Homem das Botas</i>	Braz Pimenta	-	23/03/1942
PT-TT-SIN- DGE-1-5960-15- 1-1960	<i>Cinderella A Gata Borracheira</i>	Tomás Ribas	-	15/01/1960