

Censorship, Indirect Translations and Non-translation

Censorship, Indirect Translations
and Non-translation:
The (Fateful) Adventures of Czech Literature
in 20th-century Portugal

By

Jaroslav Spirk

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

Censorship, Indirect Translations and Non-translation:
The (Fateful) Adventures of Czech Literature in 20th-century Portugal, by Jaroslav Spirk

This book first published 2014

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2014 by Jaroslav Spirk

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-6330-0, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-6330-8

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Introduction	ix
List of Abbreviations	xiii
Chapter One.....	1
Historical Context	
Czech-Portuguese Political and Cultural Relations	
Censorship in 20 th -century Portugal	
Legislation and Duration	
Structure and Personnel	
Causes and Objectives	2
Modi Operandi	3
Channels and Topics	
Foreign Literature and Translations	
Chapter Two.....	24
Obtaining and Processing the Material	
Collating the Corpus	
Handling the Data	
Jiří Levý (1926-67)	
Anton Popovič (1933-84)	
Chapter Three.....	40
Destiny of a Literature in a Dictatorship	
Translated Surreptitiously, Published Inconspicuously	
Books of Fiction Translated into Portuguese	
Jorge Listopad	
Milan Kundera	
Non-Fiction	

Muted, Mutated or Mutilated	
Analysis of Selected Censorship Files	
Censorship Files Concerning the Portuguese Translations	
Chapter Four	92
The Brave Yet Good Soldier	
The Choice of Text	
The Author	
The Original	
The Translations and the Mediating Text	
The Portuguese Translation	
Main Findings	
Chapter Five	128
Theoretical Implications: Borderline Phenomena?	
Medium-sized Lingua- and Socio-Cultures	
Indirect Translations	
Paratexts	
Censorship	
Non-Translation	
Ideology	
Conclusion.....	166
Bibliography.....	174
Archival Sources and Institutions Consulted	
Secondary and Reference Works	
Fiction Cited	
Index.....	189

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3-1. Books originally written in Czech or Slovak and translated into European Portuguese in 20th-century Portugal, correlated with their genre.....	41
Table 3-2. Source-text languages for the Portuguese translations of books originally written in Czech or Slovak	41
Table 3-3. Years of publication of Czech and Slovak books of fiction in Portuguese translation, correlated with their place of publication.....	42
Table 3-4. Books banned and authorised by the censorship boards in Lisbon and Oporto, by year	74
Table 3-5. Representation of source languages of books of Czech literature censored in Portugal in proportion to originals/translations and provenance.....	75

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present book is the product of over half a decade of research and writing on the reception of Czech literature in 20th-century Portugal. I became interested in the topic as early as 2006 when I moved to Lisbon to conduct my doctoral research there. During that period, my work was supported by a grant from the *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation*. Since then, I have had the opportunity to develop my ideas in a dissertation and several scholarly papers.

This book would not have come to life without the assistance, advice and aid of many people. I owe my deepest gratitude to Professors Jana Králová, Teresa Maria Menano Seruya and João Ferreira Duarte. I warmly thank all three of them for their valuable guidance, their interest in my work and their undiminished belief in me.

I am also deeply indebted to Robert Russell, who showed much patience and a meticulous attention to detail when proofreading and editing the original text, as well as the publisher for helping me produce the final version. Any remaining faults, errors of judgment or interpretation, oversights and infelicities are entirely and solely my own responsibility. Unless otherwise noted, all translations into English are my own.

Last but not least, I am indebted to my family and those closest to me for always keeping me on the right track, for making me never lose sight of the finishing line and for inspiring and motivating me throughout the work on this book.

INTRODUCTION

The present book deals with the (fateful) adventures of Czech literature in 20th-century Portugal. It does not investigate only what *has* been translated and how, but also what has *not* been translated, due to censorship, attempting to account for the invisible, yet fundamental phenomenon of *non-translation*, the motivations behind it and its repercussions. As a result, the issues examined here are novel in several ways.

To begin with, the book makes a case for research into cultural relations via translation between *medium-sized lingua- and socio-cultures*, a term used here to describe “non-dominant” or “(semi-)peripheral” cultures like the Czech or Portuguese in a neutral way. While it may be argued that Portuguese, with its more than 180 million native speakers around the world, is not a medium-sized language, but the eighth most widespread mother tongue in the world (Samuelsson-Brown 2010: 26), Portugal as a country does not occupy such a leading position in the European context. Much like the Czech Republic today, its place in Europe is one on the periphery, albeit for different reasons.

This study has no predecessors to draw upon. In Portugal, there is no department for Czech studies and Portuguese Translation Studies has not concentrated on Czech literature as a research subject. In the Czech Republic, neither the departments for Czech studies nor the departments for Portuguese and Lusophone studies have yet explored “the other side of the coin”, i.e. Czech literature in Portugal. While Portuguese culture and literature is studied both in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia, they have no counterpart in Portugal. Finally, none of the academic foundations, embassies, Czech centres or the *Instituto Camões*, have hitherto initiated or supported any research akin to this one.

However, comparing the effect of the two dictatorships, the Czechoslovak “socialism-wannabe-communism” and the Portuguese “fascism-turned-corporatism”, on literature makes sense both historically and from the vantage point of political science. M. Philpotts (in Rundle and Sturge 2010: 244), designating the later Portuguese regime as “post-fascist” by analogy with “post-Stalinist” socialist dictatorships, emphasises that “the Iberian dictatorships seem to be much more readily comparable [...] with the post-1953 Soviet-style dictatorships of the Eastern Bloc than with Nazi Germany.” While investigating two dictatorships, ideologically very

different, but strikingly alike in their censorial practices, this book throws into sharp relief how censorship and translation relate in general.

Returning to Translation Studies, Woods (2006: 185) observes:

Translation Studies has tended to focus on case studies of major world languages: English (in the anglocentric and ex-colonial world), French (in the francophone world), German, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Chinese and, to some extent, Russian. Case studies such as that of Kundera suggest that there needs to be an analysis of translations from so-called “minority languages”, and certainly one of the areas that has been ignored is ex-Eastern Europe: Central Europe and the Balkans, for instance.

The reception of “dominant” or “central” cultures in the “dominated” or smaller ones raises questions of colonialism, superiority and suchlike. These are doubtless important issues, but the field of Translation Studies is not exhausted by them.

Another key argument advanced by this book is the importance of moving beyond the linguistic approach in Translation Studies. As Álvarez and Vidal (1996: 3-4) put it:

The importance of the cultural milieu of each language is such that it could be argued that its significance cannot be found at a linguistic level (neither SL nor TL) but rather on a third level: in the cultural space that emerges from the clash (although, ideally, intersection) between the two cultures; a cultural space that is usually as complex as it is conflicting. Translation is “an integral part of the reading experience”.

Micro-textual contrastive analyses of the original and the translation are hopelessly inadequate in capturing the complexity and intricacies of the reception of Czech literature in 20th-century Portugal. When exploring the impact of ideology and censorship on translated literature, to examine only what *has* been translated (and how) is certain to result in a highly distorted picture of the area under investigation. Reliance on this type of case studies alone would have yielded too few – and hardly new – results. The cultural, historical and political situation in both countries, but particularly in the target culture, is therefore discussed in order to contextualise our study and to correlate relevant facts and phenomena.

Considering the above arguments, the book is of interest to a varied readership: Czech culture scholars (“bohemists”), Portuguese culture scholars (“lusitanists”), specialists from the academic disciplines of comparative literature, culture studies and reception studies, but first and foremost to translation scholars at large. Moreover, writing this book in English represents a deliberate and conscious break with the tradition of “splendid

isolation” of Czech and Slovak scholarly endeavours. Jeremiads regarding the scarcity of publications by Czech and Slovak literary and translation scholars in Western languages abound wherever we look (cf. Hermans 1999: 11, Doležel 2000, Jettmarová 2005, Králová 2006). This book hopes to redress this imbalance.

The topic has been approached with the following central research question in mind: *What was the presence of Czech literature on the book market in Portugal in the 20th century?* A subsidiary question was: What impression could the Portuguese reader with no knowledge of other languages gain of Czech literature in 20th-century Portugal?

Our hypothesis is that *the reception of Czech literature in Portugal*, substantialised in the translations into Portuguese, *was not arbitrary* – in one way or another filling a void in the target culture (Toury 1995: 27). The translations of Czech literature in 20th-century Portugal are thus hypothesised to exhibit a kind of structure, tendency, or pattern in their transposition into the target system.

Chapter 1 offers the historical, political and cultural setting for our research. It outlines mutual contacts and relations between Czechoslovakia (later the Czech Republic) and Portugal in the 20th century, then proceeds to describe how censorship under the Portuguese *New State* operated in general, and how it affected translated literature in particular.

Chapter 2 assesses the process of compiling the data and delimits our corpus. Subsequently, it introduces the most relevant methodological contributions by Jiří Levý and Anton Popovič, thereby constituting a necessary framework for interpreting the data obtained. This methodology is made available for the first time in English, allowing for proper contextualisation within, and comparisons with, today’s mainstream methodological approaches in Translation Studies.

Chapter 3 is the centrepiece of our study. It is dedicated to Czech literature in 20th-century Portugal, beginning with the corpus of Czech literary works translated into European Portuguese in 20th-century Portugal. Aiming to uncover a pattern in their transposition into the Portuguese culture, the translations are analysed from different angles: chronologically (according to their date of publication), geographically (place of publication), by genre (fiction, non-fiction, propaganda) and according to the languages of the mediating texts via which the Portuguese translations were made.

Following this is a list of books written by Czech and Slovak authors or otherwise concerning Czechoslovakia that were submitted to the Portuguese censorship boards. The censors’ reports concerning these books, seeing for the first time the light of day, are analysed in detail,

statistical correlations are established, and the resulting *non-translation* is discussed. By providing detailed data on the Czech originals and their translations censored upon arrival in Portugal, this book helps to reconstruct international book exchanges.

The chapter is concluded with a *micro-textual contrastive analysis* of the Czech original and the Portuguese translation of a canonical novel of Czech literature, *The Good Soldier Švejk* by Jaroslav Hašek, including the mediating French translation. Particular emphasis is placed on the attempt to uncover the interference of censorship and translation strategies betraying signs of self-censorship or manipulation.

Chapter 4 draws out the theoretical implications of the empirical data collected, exploring the concepts most pertinent to studying our subject matter: (1) medium-sized lingua- and socio-cultures within the paradigm of Translation Studies; (2) indirect translations as part of the broader phenomenon of *indirect reception*; (3) paratexts exposing “instructions for reception” from the publishers aimed both at the readers and at the censors; (4) censorship, as a typical yet specific instance of ideology, affecting the dissemination of literature; (5) non-translation as a result of censorship and the reverse side of the “choice of texts to be translated”; and finally (6) ideology as the overarching concept shaping the other ones. The chapter thus develops a theoretical framework for studying the reception of translated literature in a dictatorship, paying particular regard to (semi-) peripheral cultures.

There are two primary aims of this book: first, I show that research in Translation Studies moving beyond a one-dimensional exercise consisting in the contrastive analysis of two texts, the original and the translation, can be very fruitful indeed. Investigating the socio-cultural embedding of the two literary systems from a variety of angles gives us a better understanding of the phenomena under scrutiny. The other aim is to show how a study of two medium-sized lingua- and socio-cultures can substantially contribute to the theoretical and methodological edifice of Translation Studies in general.

I hope the book that follows will tempt readers to look at the role of translation in the reception of literature with new eyes.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- DGS – *Direcção-Geral de Segurança*, Directorate-General for Security (the “political police” from 1969 to 1974);
- DGSCI – *Direcção-Geral dos Serviços de Censura à Imprensa*, Directorate-General of the Press Censorship Services;
- DSC – *Direcção dos Serviços de Censura*, Directorate of Censorship Services;
- GNEL – *Grémio Nacional de Editores e Livreros*, National Trade Union of Publishers and Booksellers;
- GNR – *Guarda Nacional Republicana*, roughly: the military police;
- IANTT – *Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais – Torre do Tombo*, the National Archives in the Tower of the Tomb in Lisbon;
- MSLSCs – medium-sized lingua- and socio-cultures;
- NK Klementinum – *Česká národní knihovna*, the Czech National Library;
- PCP – *Partido Comunista Português*, the Portuguese Communist Party;
- PIDE – *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado*, International and State Defence Police (the “political police” from 1945 to 1969);
- PORBASE – *Base Nacional de Dados Bibliográficos*, The Portuguese National Bibliographic Database;
- PSP – *Polícia de Segurança Pública*, Public Security Police;
- PVDE – *Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado*, State Defence and Surveillance Police (the “political police” from 1933 to 1945);
- SEIT – *Secretaria de Estado da Informação e Turismo*, State Secretariat for Information and Tourism (1968-74);
- SNI – *Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo*, National Secretariat for Information, Popular Culture and Tourism (1945-68);
- SPN – *Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional*, National Propaganda Secretariat (1933-45).

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The 20th century saw the trials and tribulations of a country in Central Europe which had not existed ever before and had disappeared from the map when the century ended. Established in 1918, Czechoslovakia was torn apart by Hitler in 1939, resurrected in 1945, hijacked just three years later by a dictatorial regime acting on instructions from Moscow, crushed again in 1968 following an attempt to free itself from the shackles of subordination, and finally breaking free in 1989. The eventual triumph, however, was short-lived. Instead of celebrating the “diamond wedding anniversary” together, 1993 brought forth a peaceful divorce of Czechs and Slovaks.

In Portugal, the 20th century began, metaphorically speaking, with the establishment of the first republic in 1910. In 1926, a military *coup* put an end to the “old republic” and a military dictatorship ensued. Soon after that, António de Oliveira Salazar took up the reins of power to relinquish them only after a fatal accident in 1968.

In 1933 military rule formally ended with the coming into effect of the “Political Constitution of the Portuguese Republic”, drafted by a group of lawyers led by Salazar himself. Thus was promulgated the so-called *Estado Novo* (or “New State”), which was to last 41 years until the Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974.

Following almost two years of doubt and disorientation, Portugal finally settled on a course leading to pluralist democracy and its admission to the European Union in 1986. A period of growth, peace and democracy ensued.

Czech-Portuguese Political and Cultural Relations

The Czech-Portuguese cultural, literary and translational relations in the 20th century can be divided into the following five main periods:

(1) 1901-20, the period when the Portuguese republic was established in 1910 and Czechoslovakia in 1918. This was a time of no noteworthy

contacts. Czech newspapers, still under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, commented on the assassination of the Portuguese King and the Prince Royal in 1908 as well as on the establishment of the Portuguese Republic in 1910. Portuguese newspapers reported on the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 (Klíma 2007a: 510-511).

(2) 1920-37, roughly the interwar period, characterised by the first diplomatic relations and first instances of economic cooperation. A commercial treaty was signed in Lisbon on 11 December 1922.

Armando Luís Rodrigues published *A Tcheco-Slovaquia: sua exemplar administração económica, financeira e industrial* [Czechoslovakia: her Exemplary Economic, Financial and Industrial Administration] in 1924 (Lisbon: Liv. Rodrigues).

The Czechoslovak Republic established a consulate in Lisbon (1924-27), then an embassy (1927-37), with Miloš Kobr (1922-25), Adolf Berka (1925-27), Vlastimil Kybal (1927-36) and Robert Flieder (1936-37) as ambassadors or *chargés d'affaires* residing in Madrid (Klimek and Kubů 1995: 101). On 23 November 1927, three documents facilitating mutual diplomatic relations were signed between Portugal and Czechoslovakia (Klíma 2007a: 512).

António Ferro, later to become head of the Salazarist Propaganda Secretariat, visited an international congress of literary critics in Prague in 1930.

Bernard Freund, a Czechoslovak citizen of Jewish origin, known under the codename “René”, led the *Federação das Juventudes Comunistas Portuguesas* (Portuguese Communist Youth Federation) for two years from 1930 to 1932. Little is known about this enigmatic personality, but he seems to have been recruited for the job by the Communist International (Comintern). Bernard Freund and his wife were assassinated in 1938 (Kundráťová 2003: 6).

In 1932 Fidelino de Figueiredo (1888-1967), a Portuguese literary historian and philosopher, published *Iniciação Boémia* [Bohemian Initiation], an account of his visit to Czechoslovakia in 1929 (Coimbra: Imp. da Universidade).

In 1936, the military historian Henrique de Campos Ferreira Lima (1882-1949) published a monograph on the relations between Portugal and Czechoslovakia entitled *Relações entre Portugal e a Tchecoslovaquia* (Lisbon: H. C. F. Lima).

In the early 1930s, the Portuguese government ordered a substantial number of machine-guns from *Zbrojovka Brno*, a fire-arm and vehicle manufacturer in southern Moravia. However, the *Frente Popular Portuguesa* (Portuguese People’s Front), a subdivision of the *Liga*

Portuguesa contra a Guerra e contra o Fascismo (Portuguese League against the War and Fascism), wrote a letter to the then Czechoslovak Foreign Minister advising him that the weapons are intended for use by the fascists in the Spanish Civil War. This prompted the Czechoslovak government, invoking its non-interference principle, to stop the order from being fulfilled (Kundráťová 2003: 7-8). António de Oliveira Salazar, then Portugal's Prime Minister as well as Defence Minister, moved Costa Carneiro, the ambassador, from Prague to Vienna on 18 August 1937, and broke off all diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia the following day (Klíma 2007a: 513-514).

(3) 1938-1974, i.e. roughly from the beginning of the Second World War to the Portuguese Carnation Revolution, was a period of virtually no official contacts, save a few economic links. From 1938/39 to 1945, Czechoslovakia, castrated and split asunder, fell under the sway of Nazi Germany. Portugal beat against the wind with Salazar steering his country to and fro in order to escape the tempest of war. Towards the end of the war, *Diário de Notícias*, a daily loyal to the regime, commented on the liberation of Czechoslovakia (Klíma 2007a: 515).

Already in the Košice government programme of 1945, a decidedly leftist orientation of the future Czechoslovak government was proclaimed, thereby forestalling any official contacts with Salazar's Portugal. Salazar missed no opportunity to excoriate communism under whatever guise it might come. The entry of Portugal into NATO was the last straw, setting the two political systems implacably against each other.

The Czechoslovak conversion to communism in 1948 was widely commented on by the Portuguese press. Moreover, the Portuguese newspaper *República* serialised the memoirs of Edvard Beneš (Klíma 2007a: 515). The time was far from ripe for the reestablishment of diplomatic relations. Nonetheless, the Czechoslovak State Bank and the *Banco de Portugal* signed two agreements, on cooperation and on terms of payment, in 1956.

Official mutual relations were further aggravated by the education at the Czechoslovak "University of 17 November" (1961-74), in the International Union of Students (established in 1946 in Prague) and at the "Foreign Faculty of Antonín Zápotocký's Military Academy" of Portuguese communists and African (Angolan, Mozambican and Guinean) nationalist opposition activists, as well as by the broadcasting of Radio Prague in Portuguese.

On the other hand, opponents of Salazar's regime found Czechoslovakia a very attractive place. Portuguese communists José Gregório, Cândida Ventura, Georgette de Oliveira Ferreira, Mercedes Ferreira, António

Lopes, Flausino Torres and several others found a second home in Czechoslovakia (cf. Kundrátová 2003). For the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), Prague became the second most important exile centre for party meetings and congresses after Moscow (Klíma 2007a: 516). Álvaro Cunhal, a long-time secretary-general of the PCP (1961-1992), visited Czechoslovakia repeatedly. It has even been suggested that he lived in Prague, using “Duarte” as his codename, for a substantial part of his 14 years in exile (Kundrátová 2003: 11).

In early 1964, Dobříš near Prague hosted the second conference of the Portuguese *Frente Popular de Libertação Nacional* (People’s Front for National Liberation), led by the defeated opposition candidate in the 1958 presidential election, General Humberto Delgado. The objective was to form a *Junta Revolucionária Portuguesa* (Portuguese Revolutionary Board) of which Delgado had been elected president. However, Delgado had to be hospitalised and, following surgery for a double hernia, he was made to stay in the State Sanatorium in Prague until June. Here, he was visited, among others, by Mário Soares, leader of the Portuguese socialists, later Prime Minister and President of Portugal, on 13 April. Newly excavated documents have shown, however, that General Delgado had already visited Prague a year earlier, in May 1963, to meet with Álvaro Cunhal (Kundrátová 2003: 24-26).

António de Figueiredo, an active opponent of Salazar’s regime and a journalist for the BBC External Services, the *Guardian* and several British and American newspapers and magazines, wrote: “Delgado had never been more secure and comfortable than during the months he spent in the State Sanatorium in Prague” (in Klíma 2007a: 518).

The second half of the 1960s, however, was again marked by discord. Due to some “euro-communist” opinions in the PCP, the Czechoslovak Communist Party did not support their Portuguese comrades as ardently as before.

For the Portuguese living in Czechoslovakia, the invasion of the country by the armies of the Soviet Union and all members of the Warsaw Pact with the exception of Romania marked a turning point. Álvaro Cunhal first endorsed Czechoslovak reforms preceding the invasion, then undertook a volte-face, welcoming the “defence of the socialist community against counter-revolutionary forces and imperialism” (Kundrátová 2003: 12). That sparked an outrage amongst the Portuguese living in Czechoslovakia who, in their overwhelming majority, denounced the invasion.

Cunhal’s *realpolitik* soon bore fruit. Leaders of the PCP and the Czechoslovak Communist Party met already in December 1969 to discuss common concerns. The meeting was hosted by Gustáv Husák, later to

become the 8th President of Czechoslovakia (1975-89) and Vasil Biľak, one of the most prominent representatives of the Czechoslovak Communist Party of the time (Kundráťová 2003: 13). Yet, these contacts were not to last. Salazar had died and a storm was brewing in Portugal.

(4) 1974-89, the period after the Portuguese Carnation Revolution and before the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution. As Czechoslovakia had always criticised Salazar's colonial policy, the rapid decolonisation resulting from the Portuguese Revolution of 1974 strengthened mutual relations. The two countries exchanged diplomatic notes in Bonn as early as 27 June 1974, whereupon their ambassadors took up their duties – António Telo Moreira de Magalhães Colaço in Prague and Miloslav Hruža in Lisbon (from 1975 onward).

On 1 March 1975, Czechoslovakia and Portugal concluded a long-term commercial treaty. On 12 June 1976, a cultural treaty between the two countries was signed. In 1975, Presidents Gustáv Husák and Costa Gomes met in Helsinki during the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Álvaro Cunhal made further visits to Czechoslovakia in 1976 and 1978. The Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (ROH) and the Portuguese *Intersindical* established contacts.

From 1977 onwards, however, the influence of communists in Portugal gradually declined, Portugal embarked on a path leading to the European Union, and many of the Portuguese communists adopted a less doctrinaire “euro-communist” stance. As a result, the euphoria ebbed away. In 1982, the Czechoslovak ambassador, Ján Janík, was branded *persona non grata* for ideological interference in Portugal's internal affairs and asked to leave Portugal within five days. Czechoslovakia returned the gesture and diplomatic contacts were broken off again.

From 1978 to 1988, Czechoslovak diplomacy turned its attention back to Africa, although this time its foreign policy lagged far behind that of the Soviet Union and East Germany.

(5) 1989-2001, the period of a gradual meeting of the twain. The Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution was closely observed and welcome by the Portuguese press. The Portuguese President Mário Soares (1986-96) was the first head of state to visit, in December 1989, the first post-revolutionary Czechoslovak President, Václav Havel (1989-92). Mário Soares also prefaced the Portuguese translation of Havel's book of essays “Long-Distance Interrogation – an Interview with Karel Hvižďala” (Czech in 1986) published in Portuguese in 1990 (Lisbon: Inquérito). The translation, her only one, was made by none other than Zita Seabra, a

former communist who had left the PCP at the time of the Soviet *perestroika*.

Indeed, 1990 can be considered “the year of Czech literature in Portugal”, as a total of seven books by Czech authors were translated into Portuguese. The publication of translations of books by Czech authors in Portugal markedly clusters around the Czechoslovak political events of 1968-69 (Prague Spring) and 1989-90 (Velvet Revolution).

After the translation into Portuguese of another three books in 1991 and 1992, translations of books by Czech authors in Portugal came to an end for the remainder of the 20th century. The dissolution of Czechoslovakia into two sovereign countries in 1993 seemed to spark no further interest on the Portuguese side.

Mário Soares visited the Czech Republic again in November 1994, while Václav Klaus as the Czech Prime Minister visited Portugal in July 1995. Václav Havel, the then Czech President (1993-2003), bought a house in the southernmost region of Portugal, Algarve.¹

Censorship in 20th-century Portugal

Legislation and Duration

As early as 1910, the newly established Portuguese First Republic rescinded a previous regulation and a new Press Law introduced freedom of speech, allowing for criticism of the government. Before long, however, on 9 July 1912, new legislation permitted the impounding of “unsuitable” publications.

When in 1916 Germany declared war on Portugal, Decree No. 2270 of 12 March 1916 provided for the confiscation of writings which could be considered prejudicial to the military forces (Rodrigues 1980: 64). A few days later, the Portuguese government instituted *prior* censorship on war matters. As the Portuguese government regarded censorship as anti-constitutional *per se*, it justified its re-introduction as an exceptional measure in time of war. The law therefore stipulated that the workings of censorship were to be made known to the public in the form of “white spaces” (*espaços em branco*) occurring where the original text had been effaced.

¹ The Czech academic yearbook dedicated to issues regarding Spain, Portugal and Latin America has for long been the *Ibero-Americana Pragensia*, founded along with the Centre for Ibero-American Studies in 1967, of which an issue in Portuguese appears approximately every ten years. URL: <http://sias.ff.cuni.cz/SIAS-162.html> [retrieved on 2014-02-02].

Censorship was lifted again only after the First World War in 1918. However, shortly after the military *coup d'état* of 28 May 1926, Gomes da Costa re-introduced *prior* censorship on the grounds of the “abnormal situation” in the country. The censorship board took up residence in the Lisbon Carmelite Barracks (*Quartel do Carmo*) of the *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (GNR, the military police).

Although it was expressly abolished by Decree No. 11839 of 5 July 1926 and Decree No. 12008 of 29 July 1926, the latter being a fundamental document of Portuguese press legislation, neither the Military Dictatorship (1926-28) nor the National Dictatorship (1928-33) were able to dispense with censorship (Rodrigues 1980: 66). From 1926 on, newspapers had a stamp in their header reading “checked by the censorship board” (*visado pela comissão de censura*, Rosas and Brito 1996: 140, Gomes 2006: 179).

On 22 September 1928, the *Direcção-Geral dos Serviços de Censura à Imprensa* (DGSCI, Directorate-General of the Press Censorship Services) was established and artillery colonel Joaquim Augusto Prata Dias made Director-General. He was replaced by Lieutenant-Colonel João da Conceição Tomás Rodrigues in 1931, Major Álvaro Salvação Barreto in 1932 and Lieutenant-Colonel Armando das Neves Larcher in 1944 (Gomes 2006: 179-183).

The *Estado Novo* formally came into being when the new “political” Constitution of 1933 was approved in a controversial referendum. On 11 April 1933, when the Constitution became effective, Decree No. 22469 reinstated censorship. Interestingly, Article 6 of the decree stipulated that censorial boards should not introduce changes in the censored texts, but limit themselves to eliminating the questionable passages only (Azevedo 1997: 61).

As early as 1933, a report by Álvaro Salvação Barreto of the DGSCI entitled *Leituras imorais – propaganda política e social contrária ao Estado Novo – sua repressão* (Immoral Readings – Political and Social Propaganda against the New State – its Repression), commissioned by Salazar himself, marked the beginning of the censorship of non-periodical publications, including books (Gomes 2006: 67ff., 181). Having Salazar’s full support, the report resulted in the establishment of a Department for Books (*Secção de Livros*) within the Lisbon Censorship Board, allowing for both prior (i.e. pre-publication) and post-publication censorship.

In 1935, the DGSCI requested that the Post Office (C.T.T., *Administração-Geral dos Correios, Telégrafos e Telefones*) confiscate foreign newspapers and magazines prohibited from circulation in Portugal. Decree No. 26159 of 27 December 1935 renamed the DGSCI *Direcção dos Serviços de Censura* (DSC, Directorate of Censorship Services).

In 1936, Act No. 1941 established the National Education Board (*Junta Nacional de Educação*), of which the DSC came to form the first department – Moral and Civic Education (*Educação Moral e Cívica*).

Decree No. 26589 of 14 May 1936, never published in the government's official journal (*Diário do Governo*, Barreto and Mónica 1999: 276), provided for a most arbitrary mode of operation of the censorship boards. In Figueiredo's words (1975: 152): "Any collection of censors' decisions makes one feel as if one has entered the world of the absurd". Article 33 proscribed the "white spaces" known from the time of the First World War (Rodrigues 1980: 68).

A circular letter of 4 July 1939 on military issues strictly forbade any criticism of the armed forces, military officers and the Navy, or the publication of details of life in the barracks, military campaigns etc., especially should they be depicted in an anecdotal or picturesque manner (Azevedo 1997: 41). In 1965, another circular letter extended the suppression of such information to include the PIDE, the "political police" (Azevedo 1997: 45).

In 1940, Decree No. 30320 established the *Gabinete de Coordenação dos Serviços de Propaganda e Informação* (Coordination Office for Information and Propaganda Services), which incorporated the propaganda office (SPN), the Censorship Services and the *Comissão Administrativa da Emissora Nacional* (National Broadcasting Administration Board). The Censorship Board gradually began to lose its operational independence (Gomes 2006: 183).

Decree No. 33015 of 30 August 1943 extended the scope of Decree No. 26589 from 1936 to include the cooperation of book publishers (Gomes 2006: 183). In 1944, censorship became a body of propaganda and education, with the DSC having been integrated into the propaganda office (now renamed *Secretariado Nacional de Informação* or SNI). Coutinho (cf. Figueiredo 1975: 156) observes:

The relevance the present régime ascribes to censorship goes to the extreme of having given the Director of the Censorship Services an important role in the education of youth; according to the statute of the National Education Board, the Director of the Censorship Board, as a member of the civic and moral section of the Education Board, is empowered to examine the textbooks to be adopted in the teaching of moral and civic education, as well as family education.

Events leading to the end of the Second World War and the victory of the Allies, however, prompted the Portuguese opposition to demand freedom of expression again. Salazar relented and relaxed censorship on

the eve of parliamentary elections (although never quite lifting it) in a manoeuvre aimed at legitimising the *Estado Novo* in the eyes of foreign observers. For a while the opposition was even allowed to field candidates, though as it turned out this was no more than a trap set by the regime to ensnare any lingering opponents, providing the PIDE with a welcome opportunity to update its dossiers (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 280).

In this way Salazar was able to maintain the illusion that censorship was a temporary, transitional measure until his demise. Caetano's rise to power in 1968 brought about the last changes to the institution of censorship. Act No. 5/71 of 5 November 1971, the first press law since 1926, pretended to dispense with "prior censorship" (*censura prévia*) for appearance's sake only to rename it "prior examination" (*exame prévio*) (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 282). The stamp revealing censorial interference, which had previously been obligatory, was forbidden by Decree No. 150/72 of 5 May 1972. Apart from that, the "spring" of Marcello Caetano changed little in the daily execution of censorship, as it did in most other areas (Azevedo 1997: 58).

Following the Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974, freedom of the press was reinstated and guaranteed in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic of 1976.

Structure and Personnel

The territorial structure of the censorship apparatus hardly changed throughout the years. In principle, there were three main Censorship Boards (*comissões de censura*): in Oporto (Northern Zone), Coimbra (Central Zone) and Lisbon (Southern Zone), with Coimbra lagging far behind Lisbon and Oporto in activity and influence. The Northern Zone was further subdivided into 10 delegations, the Central Zone consisted of 6 delegations and the Southern Zone subsumed 13 delegations, a total of 29 delegations with the most important deployed in Beja, Évora, Aveiro, Braga and Funchal (Madeira). This structure, established in 1933, also applied to the Department for Books (Gomes 2006: 48, 89).

Censorship officials were mostly reservists such as majors and colonels, innocuously called "readers" (*leitores*). Civilians joined the Censorship Boards only in 1944 (Gomes 2006: 12), following the appointment of a new DSC director (Larcher replacing Barreto) when the DSC became part of the SNI.

We cannot say that 100% of them were Army officers because some reports do not mention any rank or name. Only five can be considered as members of the permanent body of censors throughout the decade. Other

members, however, had a regular activity for several years, while others had a reduced or occasional participation. In general terms, we can say that there was a regular group of about twenty censors. (Seruya and Moniz 2008: 9-10)

Censorship Services reported to the Minister of War (1926-27), to the Minister of the Interior (1927-44), and later to Salazar himself.

The agents exerting most influence upon the workings of censorship were thus Salazar, major Álvaro Salvação Barreto, the long-time head of the DGSCI (1932-44) and architect of the censorship apparatus of the *Estado Novo*, and finally António Ferro, head of the propaganda office (1933-50). His interference in the censorial apparatus was all the more ironic as Ferro's own theatre play *Mar Alto* (High Tide) had been banned by the censors under the First Republic (Klíma 2007a: 354). His "enthusiasm", however, was soon curbed by Salazar himself lest Ferro accumulate too much power in his hands (Gomes 2006: 129).

Other agents played some part as well: the Catholic Church (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 283); the *Inspecção-Geral dos Espectáculos* ("General Inspection of Performances"), established in 1933 and responsible for censoring theatres and cinemas (Gomes 2006: 54); various police bodies (GNR, PVDE/PIDE, PSP); the Post Office (C.T.T.) and the Customs Services,² which impounded books and other publications imported into the country; as well as the entire publishing industry (Gomes 2006: 53).

To complete the system of censorship and control of news and opinion, Article 149 of the Penal Code provided for a sentence of between two to eight years for "attacks against the prestige of the country abroad". [...] this law proved to be an effective form of exercising remote control over Portuguese abroad since, owing to family, social and professional connections, few of them were prepared to risk losing their passports or being prosecuted upon return to Portugal. (Figueiredo 1975: 157)

Causes and Objectives

Article 3 of Decree No. 22469 of 11 April 1933 staked out the objectives of censorship as follows (Figueiredo 1975: 149):

[...] to prevent the perversion of public opinion as a social force; it should be carried out in such a way as to defend public opinion from all factors that may misguide it against truth, justice, morality, efficient

² The Customs Services joined the censorial apparatus in 1953 (Seruya 2010: 131).

administration and the common good, and to prevent any attack on the basic principles of the organization of society.

Censorship had always been justified as an interim measure – first to restore order and calm after the “chaos” of the First Republic, then because of the war raging in neighbouring Spain, subsequently because of the Second World War, and finally due to the wars in the colonies (from 1961 onwards), when it suited both Salazar and Caetano to tighten the straitjacket of censorship even further.

Other reasons adduced for the institution of censorship were to “calm the spirits” (Gomes 2006: 40), to avoid “perturbing the minds” (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 279), and to “prevent the press from being used as a political weapon against the implementation of its [the dictatorship’s] national reconstruction programme, against republican institutions and against the nation’s well-being” (Azevedo 1997: 33). In Figueiredo’s words (1975: 151-152):

The overall aim of censorship was to present an image of a country with no national or local problems, functioning under the guidance of an infallible, wise and benevolent ruler. The public conscience was directed towards events taking place thousands of miles away, and preferably in the negative “communist world”.

In his discussions with António Ferro, Salazar had given three reasons for the existence of censorship: “the need to avoid ‘unjustified attacks’ on the work of the Government; the interest in ‘moralizing’ the Press as regards ‘personal attacks and verbal abuse’; and the objective to keep the debate doctrinal, especially in the political arena” (Azevedo 1997: 16).

In his speech inaugurating the propaganda office (SPN) in 1933, Salazar uttered these infamous words: “Politically there is only what the public knows to exist” (Rosa 2009: 136). This maxim was to be used both for what the public ought to know, the task of propaganda, and for what the public should *not* know, the task of censorship.

Modi Operandi

The basic mode of censorial activities consisted in preventive (prior, pre-publication) censorship (*censura prévia*), the power of which was considerable (Gomes 2006: 14, 100). It was aimed primarily at the press, but also – albeit to a much lesser extent – at books (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 276).

Reactive (repressive, post-publication) censorship (*censura repressiva*) was perceptibly weaker (Gomes 2006: 100) and was primarily aimed at books and other non-periodical publications. Of course, this led to a bizarre situation:

[...] book confiscation was such a complex procedure that, years after a particular book was banned, the police could still be looking for copies in bookshops. Booksellers would, additionally, always find a way to hide and keep banned or suspect books for special clients, so that private libraries were likely to evade censorship to a significant extent. (Seruya 2010: 138)

Prior censorship was later extended to cover “cables and phone-calls sent by foreign news agents”, while *repressive* censorship applied to “news sent from abroad, or magazines and newspapers sent for distribution in Portugal” (Figueiredo 1975: 151).

The rationale for maintaining both modes of censorship was twofold. First, it would have drastically increased the number of censors if they had been mandated to “read” everything before publication. Second, the two-edged sword of preventive and repressive censorship had the advantage, for the regime that is, of constantly keeping publishers on their guard.

The PIDE or any of its informers could denounce offending publishers, who would face fines, confiscation of books or the outright closure of their establishment, for a definite or indefinite period, potentially forcing them into bankruptcy (Azevedo 1997: 53). Incitement or propaganda against the *Estado Novo* or the Nation, i.e. accusations of “partisanship” (*partidarismo*), directly contravening the Nation’s unity, or of (the negatively conceived) “internationalism” (Azevedo 1999: 495) that jeopardized the Nation’s sovereignty and integrity, could incur penalties including “deportation to the colonies for periods up to twelve years, fines and jail sentences” (Figueiredo 1975: 150).

In the case of *prior* censorship, “the statutory three copies of printers’ proofs were submitted to the censors” (Figueiredo 1975: 152). The censors would then pass one of four judgements: “Censored or Deleted, Suspended (pending further decision), Authorized, or Authorized with Cuts” (Rosas and Brito 1996: 140, English in Figueiredo 1975: 149).

Already in 1948, at the behest of António Ferro, Act No. 2027 forbade the dubbing of foreign films (Santos 2007: 133). This prohibition facilitated censors’ work, as subtitling, often deliberately deficient, could be falsified more easily. The SNI also relied on wide-spread illiteracy and a general lack of knowledge of foreign languages (*ibid.*).

Unlike the press, books were subject to a selective form of censorship, both in the rather rare cases of preventive censorship and necessarily

resulting from the overwhelming mode of repressive censorship applied to non-periodical publications in general. Thus, each case was judged separately and no author's works were forbidden in their totality (Gomes 2006: 70).

The juggernaut of pervasive censorship, both preventive and repressive, led writers to adopt certain strategies of "writing between the lines". Thus, words like *aurora* or *amanhecer* (dawn, daybreak) came to mean "socialism", *primavera* (spring) became "revolution", *camarada* (companion, comrade) stood for "prisoner", *vampiro* (vampire) for "policeman", and *papoila* (poppy) for "people's victory" (Rodrigues 1980: 76), adding an unexpected poetic touch to covertly subversive texts. Summing up in the words of Leo Strauss (1988: 25, in Esteves 2005: 62):

Persecution, then, gives rise to a peculiar technique of writing, and therewith to a peculiar type of literature, in which the truth about all crucial things is presented exclusively between the lines. That literature is addressed, not to all readers, but to trustworthy and intelligent readers only.

Channels and Topics

Censorship in Portugal began as a means of supervising and "blue-pencilling" the press and theatre plays in a still predominantly rural and half illiterate country. Over the years, the tentacles of censorship reached out to smother telephones, telegrams, the radio (fewer than 40,000 receivers towards the end of 1935 as compared with 1,516,000 in 1974) and later the television (32,000 sets in 1958 against 675,000 in 1974) (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 283).

Censorship did not affect the domestic press only. Foreign periodicals were banned from circulating in Portugal, films, theatre plays and other shows and performances were proscribed or mutilated, songs were removed from repertoires, as were radio broadcasts from abroad that criticized the regime. In the education system, school readers (*livros de leitura*) and textbooks about "sensitive" subjects were the object of special censorial attention (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 276). To provide a general idea:

Here is a sample of what should *not* be published: attacks or criticism of the State, the government, its personalities and institutions; irreverent references to the authorities or public services; news that might cause alarm or public disquiet; writings which might offend creeds and religious practices; details of suicides and murders, as well as infanticides, when not followed by the news of the arrest of delinquents or their punishment by

the courts; articles of local reports or advertisements concerning astrologers, witches or clairvoyants; issues that might prejudice diplomatic relations with foreign countries. Figueiredo (1975: 150)

As might be inferred from the above, “obscene publications or those that contain attacks upon Portuguese sovereignty or give offence to the government or its representatives or might provoke crime or incite rebellion or disorder” (Figueiredo 1975: 151) were similarly outlawed. These “attacks” even included advocating “the disintegration or separation of any component part of the ‘Portuguese Colonial Empire’” (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, epidemics, accidents, even natural disasters were sometimes played down or concealed from the public. A mere reference, without the slightest political overtones, to suicides, juvenile delinquency, crimes of passion, labour conflicts, slums, famine, bare feet, drug misuse, homosexuality, nudism, prostitution, abortion, alcoholism, mental illnesses, infant mortality, etc. tended to be expurgated or suppressed (Barreto and Mónica 1999: 275).

Interestingly, the censors did not always have the last word. Regarding domestic authors, several works e.g. by António Sérgio, Ferreira de Castro or Alves Redol were approved by the Director of the Censorship Services against the censors’ judgments (Azevedo 1997: 73-79). Conversely, several titles by António Sérgio (again), Vergílio Ferreira, Urbano Tavares Rodrigues and Manuel da Fonseca were prohibited in contradiction to the censors’ recommendations (Azevedo 1997: 80-83). Finally, certain books, such as *O Arcanjo Negro* (The Black Archangel) by Aquilino Ribeiro or *A Cabra Cega* (The Blind Goat) by José Régio were prohibited at first only to be authorised several years later, either in their entirety or with cuts, against the initial censors’ verdicts (Azevedo 1997: 83-85).

The regime’s *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* included not only all communist propaganda, but many politically innocuous works, for instance those displaying too much “realism”. In Seruya’s words (2010: 136), “Authors such as Niven Busch, D. H. Lawrence, Jean Genet and John Dos Passos had some of their books banned because they described, in the censors’ view, how things ‘really are’.”³

³ One plausible explanation for this may consist in the fact that the most important anti-regime literature was that of “neo-realism, closely linked to the PCP” (Pinto 1991: 248). “Neo-realism aspired deeply and with conviction to socialist revolution and it was only out of fear of censorship that the movement adopted in Portugal the euphemistic name by which it is known,” (*ibid.*, 252). Links to “socialist realism” propagated by and produced in communist countries are more than obvious.

Yet ironically, “surrealism and its authors (Aragon, André Breton) were always firmly banned” (Seruya and Moniz 2008: 10) and topics “such as Darwinism and the death penalty” were also considered undesirable (*ibid.*, 19). Figueiredo (1975: 155) adds nuance to the picture:

In addition to all books by Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Mao Tse-tung [Mao Zedong] and the better-known socialist authors, all, or some, of the books of Tolstoy, Gogol, Gorky, Zola, Bernanos, Malraux, Camus, Faulkner, Steinbeck, John Dos Passos and Bertrand Russell were “indexed”. The “Index” was far more implacable towards Portuguese authors and at one stage more than sixty writers in Portugal had one or more books banned. (Figueiredo 1975: 155)

It is also worth asking what was *not* likely to be censored under the *Estado Novo*: “To write according to the regime’s *canon*, the novelist had to pretend to be unaware of all the great anxieties of contemporary man and to write conventional novels, disconnected from his time” (Azevedo 1997: 12).

“In 1947, the SNI published a list of what was to be regarded as the regime’s *canon*, ‘essential works’ of Portuguese literature, in which no reference was made to contemporary writers” (Seruya 2001: 220). This canon laid “emphasis on rural values and the cluster of values to be followed at all levels appeared in the concept of ‘regionalism’, the new key orientation for cultural policy” (Seruya 2010: 120). This regime-imposed production of books was intended to bolster the *Plano de Educação Popular* (People’s Education Programme), which was still under way in 1970. In the intervening two decades, almost 80 occasional collaborators produced only 111 works (Seruya 2006: 322). Instead, from the 1940s on, the regime’s official nationalist “regionalism” was constantly “undermined” by large book series of foreign or mixed literature published by various publishing houses (Seruya 2004: 39).

Foreign Literature and Translations

As Seruya (in Rundle and Sturge 2010: 131) says, “very little is known yet about the decisions to ban or approve foreign books, except for some lists of banned books (Azevedo 1999; *Comissão do Livro Negro* 1981) and an illustrated exhibition catalogue (*Livros Proibidos no Estado Novo* 2005).”

Moreover, “the percentage of literary works [i.e. fiction] among the foreign books submitted to the Censoring Commission is actually quite

low. It is therefore important to discuss all foreign books when assessing the situation of translation censorship in the *Estado Novo*" (*ibid.*).

Regarding foreign books, censorship mainly focused on the following key topics (Ferrão, Oliveira and Fonseca 2005, *passim*):

- political controversy and political prisoners (e.g. *La démocratie* by Georges Burdeau);
- colonialism and conflicts abroad (e.g. *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton; *Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism* by Perry Anderson; *Gesang vom lusitanischen Popanz* by Peter Weiss);
- political economy and land reform (e.g. *Die Agrarfrage* by Karl Kautsky);
- offences to religion (e.g. *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu* and *L'Âge de raison* by Jean-Paul Sartre);
- socialist ideology (e.g. *Sozialreform oder Revolution* by Rosa Luxemburg; *An Essay on Marxian Economics* by Joan Robinson);
- poverty and social disparities (e.g. *Cronache di poveri amanti* by Vasco Pratolini);
- emancipation of women, eroticism and sexuality (e.g. *Unser Geschlechtsleben* by Fritz Kahn, *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov).

The examples above, selected to include only books by foreign, i.e. non-Portuguese, authors, reveal that some books had already been translated and then either prevented from being published or subsequently sequestered. Other books arrived in Portugal, either in their original version or in a translation, and were either impounded by the Post Office (C.T.T.), Customs Services, PIDE or other agents of the censorial apparatus; or else they were submitted to the Censorship Services for evaluation, typically by a publisher intending to commission a translation into Portuguese and publish it.

The above topics on which most censorial effort was concentrated imply that foreign fiction did not constitute a large part of the censors' work unless, of course, the original author was known to be a "communist", a term of very broad scope indeed. The translation of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* was forbidden on 6 March 1946 for an unassailable reason: "As the translation of this novel implies its dissemination, I believe it is to be prohibited." The censor's actual justification, however, was the following: "Dostoevsky, apart from his mysticism and religious fervour, is known to have deformed the Russian people's minds in the preparation for bolshevism" (Azevedo 1997: 202).

Other "communists", real, supposed or temporary, included Bertolt Brecht, whose *Théâtre Complet* (in French!), volumes I, II, III, VI, VII and