

Narrations for the fascistization of childhood in the book 'Brazil is Good' (1938): pinocchiate in a Brazilian way?

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ABSTRACT. This study aims to analyze the content of the book *Brazil is Good*, published in 1938 by the Propaganda National Department (P.N.D.). The methodology is based on Content Analysis, applied in conjunction with theoretical and methodological references dedicated to research on fascism and aspects of literary production aimed at children. The results show similarities between the textual aspect of *Brazil is Good*, created as a propaganda tool in the context of the Estado Novo dictatorship, and the *pinocchiate* produced in the environment of Italian fascism. It appears that if the plots in which the doll Pinocchio was involved in the name of fascist propaganda are filled with messages for Italian childhood, which appeal to a foundation amalgamated by violence and prejudices of different types in relation to the enemies of the Mussolinian regime, in several sections of the Brazilian book that were examined, it is understood that the concepts, explanations, as well as warnings and orders regarding the fundamentals of human action suggested to the Brazilian boy, are constituted by equally fascist narratives.

Keywords: fascism; childhood; literature; education; dictatorship.

Narrações para a fascistização da infância no livro 'O Brasil É Bom' (1938): Pinocchiate à brasileira?

RESUMO. O objetivo do estudo é analisar o teor do livro *O Brasil é Bom*, edição de 1938 do Departamento Nacional de Propaganda (D.N.P.). A metodologia está embasada na Análise de Conteúdo, aplicada em conjugação com referenciais teórico-metodológicos dedicados à investigação sobre o fascismo e a aspectos da produção literária destinada à infância. Os resultados evidenciam similaridades entre a textualidade de *O Brasil é bom*, gerado como ferramenta de propaganda no contexto da ditadura do Estado Novo, e as *pinocchiate* produzidas no ambiente do fascismo italiano. Verifica-se que se as tramas em que o boneco Pinóquio foi envolvido em nome da propaganda fascista são recheadas de mensagens para a infância italiana, que apelam para um embasamento amalgamado por violências e preconceitos de diversos tipos em relação aos inimigos do regime mussoliniano, em diversas das seções do livro brasileiro examinado se compreende que os conceitos, as explicações, assim como os alertas e as ordens em relação aos fundamentos da ação humana sugeridos ao menino brasileiro são constituídas por narrações igualmente fascistizantes.

Palavras-chave: fascismo; infância; literatura; educação; ditadura.

Narraciones para la fascistización de la infancia en el libro 'Brasil es Bueno' (1938): ¿pinocchiate a la brasileira?

RESUMEN. El objetivo de este estudio es analizar el contenido del libro *Brasil es Bueno*, publicado en 1938 por el Departamento Nacional de Propaganda (D.N.P.). La metodología se basa en el Análisis de Contenido, aplicado en conjunto con referentes teóricos y metodológicos dedicados a la investigación sobre el fascismo y aspectos de la producción literaria dirigida a los niños. Los resultados muestran similitudes entre el aspecto textual de *Brasil es bien*, creado como herramienta de propaganda en el contexto de la dictadura del Estado Novo, y las *pinocchiate* producidas en el entorno del fascismo italiano. Parece que si las tramas en las que se ve envuelto el muñeco Pinocchio en nombre de la propaganda fascista están llenas de mensajes para la infancia italiana, que apelan a un fundamento amalgamado por violencias y prejuicios de diversa índole en relación con los enemigos del régimen mussoliniano, en diversas de las secciones del libro brasileño examinadas, se comprende que los conceptos, explicaciones, así como advertencias y órdenes sobre los fundamentos de la acción humana sugeridos al niño brasileño

están constituidos por narrativas igualmente fascistas.

Palabras clave: fascismo; infancia; literatura; educación; dictadura.

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Introduction

Conceived as one of the richest narratives in universal literature, *The Adventures of Pinocchio: Story of a Puppet* (Collodi, 2011) was initially published in the weekly periodical *Il Giornale per i Bambini*, in 1881, under the title *Storia di um burattino*. Linked to the historical moment when Italy aimed to be a unified nation, it presents us with a character beloved by both children and adults globally: a nonconformist and transgressive puppet who pays dearly for his actions.

Considering the primordial text — a novel in which the central character ends up hanging from a giant tree —and the modifications introduced in later versions, the narrations about Pinocchio's trajectory have been the subject of different studies. According to Meira (2018), for example, the comparison between the plural formats of the story of Pinocchio makes it possible to understand that its plot alludes to both humanization and education because it highlights processes of transformation and awareness, as it combines some of the good or bad values that one should nurture throughout life; still, on the other hand, it is necessary to discuss the effects of this literary production, when taking into account the historical engendering of its reception, appropriation, and transformation in different contexts, as well as in the search to interrogate the ideologized content and the possible perverse effects of the texts intended for childhood in the social and cultural order:

[...] with the story of Pinocchio, Collodi wanted to describe a process of humanization through the development of morality, autonomy, and otherness - responsibility towards others. The humanization process is similar to the educational process and can occur through education. But [...] this process can also reverse, primarily through the educational process, 'puppetizing' children (Meira, 2018, p. 390, emphasis added).

In this sense, I add as one of the basic references investigations that highlight how the authoritarian environment of Italian fascism, chronologically restricted between 1922 and 1943, adopted literary production for children as one of the propaganda instruments of the dictatorial regime, which used it for materializing and reproducing fascist ideology. Of particular interest is the type of literary production that served to equip the educational system insofar as it aimed to induce fascist symbolic thought in school environments associated with academic practices. The fact that Pinocchio inspired many writers dedicated to producing books for children comes to light as it continues the story or recreates arguments present in the Collodian plot, which gives rise to the so-called *pinocchiate*. Specifically, in the Italian fascist period, publications appeared in which the puppet was portrayed in its adherence to the dictatorial regime.

Pinocchio also did not escape the sight of fascism. During the period when Mussolini was in power, several versions of the puppet were published in a fascist way. His irreverence, which apparently does not fit the fascism model, served to combat the enemy. Pinocchio appears sometimes in a position to salute the Duce, sometimes wearing the *black shirt* of the regime's supporters and subduing a bearded communist (Netto, 2019, p. 134).

This literature comprises four books circulated to enlist children, as they used the well-known Pinocchio puppet as the protagonist.

The books *Avventure e spedizioni punitive di Pinocchio fascista*, *Pinocchio fra i balilla*, *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus*, and *Viaggio di Pinocchio* are part of a series currently known as *pinocchiate*, that is, the vast set of brief plots that reinterpreted the work *Pinocchio* [...] Fascist *pinocchiate* were produced to reach school-age children, particularly males, to form a contingent of actual *balilla*, boys between 8 and 15 years old trained according to the precepts of fascist discipline. The publications aimed to condition little Italians so that they saw themselves as representatives of an epic crusade in favor of rebuilding the country along fascist lines (Netto, 2022, p. 316).

Pari passu, as another theoretical-methodological element, I establish connections with Bellatalla's (2010) analysis regarding the everydayness and concreteness of the Italian elementary school during fascism, brought in an investigation that highlights how the school system was transformed into a powerful and effective means of transmitting the current ideology, by overcoming the dimensions of a formal and eventually ineffective rituality. This attempt uses a methodology based on testimonies and memoirs constructed through the testimonies of teachers who were active during the period of Italian fascism, which

introduce into their narrations how they dealt with the didactic guidelines and manuals prescribed at the time and establish some parameters so that one can understand the scope of the educational change advocated at the time.

To answer this question, it is necessary, also in the case of the elementary school, to compare how much our privileged witnesses relied on the images of school evoked from other testimonies offered by the notebooks, the 'school manuals,' the teaching guides that circulated among the benches and between the hands of teachers in the twentieth anniversary of the fascist dictatorship. (Bellatalla, 2010, p. 134, emphasis added, translated by us)¹.

Concomitantly, and also in connection with the analytical framework, I bring to the argumentative field the research of Santos (2010, 2012, 2014), which, through comparative studies, highlights how the process of fascistization of elementary (or primary) schools, based on the use of school materials as an ideological apparatus for the indoctrination of childhood, occurred both in Italy, under the Mussolini regime, and in the Brazilian Estado Novo led by Getúlio Vargas between 1937 and 1945.

Given these components, my objective is to analyze the content of the book *Brazil is good (Brazil is good)*, a 1938 edition by the National Propaganda Department (Departamento Nacional de Propaganda, D.N.P.). The methodology is based on Content Analysis (Bardin, 1977), whose application implies the construction of analytical categories that represent the content of a text by bringing together its discursive propositions, considering that the terminology used can either present a significant numerical frequency or a similar semantic load, making it possible to understand and interpret the historical, social, and cultural elements present in the narrative.

The boy knows... The boy doesn't know... The boy wants to know...

The book examined is part of a private collection of objects of material culture that circulated in schools in southern Brazil in the 1930s and 1940s. It is one of the rare components of a collection that brings together books and school manuals, notebooks, photographs, educational press, desks, and blackboards. Dating from 1938, *O Brasil é Bom* was part of the documentary set produced by the National Department of Propaganda. This body was created that same year to disseminate the policies and ideological propositions of the Estado Novo (New State), a dictatorial period headed by Getúlio Vargas. It is a 39-page brochure, with no pagination, measuring 12 cm x 18 cm, whose printed types are framed, in each one, by a thin red rectangular border. Two metal clips hold the spine together, and it is without a cover, which is estimated to have been lost or deteriorated due to continuous handling over more than 80 years.

The text presents content subdivided into 30 numbered sections. After the title page containing identification data, we have a small preamble with a warning to the reader. But who is the desired recipient of *Brazil is good*? When leafing through it, it becomes clear that he is generically identified as a 'Boy.'

'Boy':

Read this little book carefully. Learn these teachings. If your father and your siblings know how to read, make them read it with you. If they do not know how to read, you will serve your Brazil by reading it aloud so they can hear it and learn what it teaches (Departamento Nacional de Propaganda [D.N.P.], 1938, section 1, emphasis added).

Even so, although there is a generic subject to whom the messages are aimed, I find that content is presented through direct prescriptions using the imperative verbal mode throughout the narration. As a result, I recommend elaborating a list of desirable teachings, which would not only be learned through the *boy's* careful reading, but which should then be read together with family members or aloud by the child, if his relatives did not know how to read. Therefore, the verbal tense used in the narratives guarantees the presence, from the beginning of the book, not just of requests, suggestions, or simple advice but of actual orders.

Given the arguments being prepared, it is worth adding a warning regarding the analytical-methodological perspectives used. This is because I take a precisely dated children's book as the object of content analysis, with a historical-cultural and even affective bias. Although I am not an expert in the theory of children's literature, I constitute myself one of those "[...] interested and involved in the training of child readers" (Soares, 2015, p. 33). Therefore, to a certain extent, I am aligned with scholars who attribute to written texts a potential for domination and imposition of models, which adds up to a certain capacity to construct a certain identity tone and to immobilize, that is, to draw.

¹ "Per rispondere a questa domanda, bisogna, anche nel caso della scuola elementare, confrontare quanto i nostri testimoni privilegiati hanno raccontato con le immagini di scuola evocate da altre testimonianze, offerte dai quaderni, dai manuali scolastici, dalle guide didattiche che circolavano tra i banchi e tra le mani degli insegnanti nel ventennio della dittatura fascista".

[...] attention to the fact that written language makes it possible to dominate from a distance, whether through the imposition of widely disseminated models or the edifying figure of a saint or that of a child discovering a love for the homeland, using writing to subject people to the force of a precept and trap them in the webs of a collective identity. From this perspective, learning how to read is often configured as an exercise that instills fear, subjects the body and spirit, and encourages each person to stay in their place, not to move (Soares, 2015, p. 25).

On the other hand, I consider the warnings that both the notions of literacy and those specific to literary experience are related to controversial understandings regarding the training of the child reader and the specificities of literary texts for children. However, the proposal is that the analysis of this text for Brazilian children can contribute to the necessary and continuous reflection on the paradigms with which it operates, which involves discussing the training of readers since initial schooling and the role of teaching:

Without a doubt, one of the many knots we encounter in training literature readers is found in the first grades of primary education: what type of child reader should we train? How does this reader's training process take place? Is it the same for everyone? What is the role of this first training in developing this reader? Does the teacher in the first grades of primary education master the necessary apparatus to deal with this type of text and reader? (Soares, 2015, p. 26).

Let us move forward under the aegis of such premises. The *Boy* represents the recipient of the words because through the localization procedure by frequency or enumeration proposed by content analysis, I verify that that term occurs 52 times among the lines of *Brazil is good*. I understand that there is no evidence of an address to 'childhood,' which is corroborated by the total absence of correlated terms such as *child* or even any use of the feminine, that is, that directs the content to a girl.

Therefore, I detect the first connections between the content of the book *Brazil is Good* and the fascist *pinocchiate*. My realization is in line with what Netto (2022, p. 318) emphasizes relative to the content of the *pinocchiate*, as they registered an explicit gender distinction: "[...] literature for children is crossed by gender issues, with differentiation between plots for girls and boys being common. In the case of *pinocchiate*, this is relevant: the plots are specifically aimed at fascist boys." As for the argument evoked, I consider the presence of fascist perspectives since the text acts as a stimulus for the Brazilian 'boy' to identify with the characteristics of a *balilla*. I mean that there is applied content, especially for boys, imbued with intentionality, similar to what drove the associative practices institutionalized in Italian schools, which were based on the meaning of becoming a *Balilla*, which combined an ultranationalist vision with the pride of belonging to the fascist work since childhood:

In primary and secondary schools, fascist practices begin at age four, when the boy is taken to participate in a group with the mythological name of 'The She-Wolf's Children,' a clear allusion to the mystique of the Roman Empire. At the age of eight, he became a *Balilla*, a name taken from the name of a young Genoese man, Giovanni Batista Perasso, nicknamed *Balilla*, who in 1746 gave the signal for the revolt against the Austrians who occupied the territory (Paulo, 1994, p. 15).

Given this, the content of the first section sets the tone for the following narrations of *Brazil*, which is good, restricted by an editorial concatenation that aligns a statement, a question, and the explanations necessary to indoctrinate the reader. Therefore, it operates through language that organizes a discourse full of adjectives applied to *Brazil* and demarcates its attributes: "*Brazil is good. Why is Brazil good? That's what 'the boy wants to know'.* It's easy (sic) to explain why *Brazil* is good because it's big and strong. Because it produces, because its soil is rich, because it has a prodigious nature [...]" (D.N.P., 1938, section 1, emphasis added). Constantly described as good, big, and strong, *Brazil* is presented as a prodigious place, with prosperity and wealth resulting from the work of Brazilians. In these terms, there is content that even defends the possibility of enriching workers, but as long as they act honestly and creatively.

Brazil is a rich country. The Constitution considers individual initiative the foundation and basis of national wealth and prosperity. Each Brazilian can freely exercise the profession they choose. A rich country, in *Brazil* any man can become rich through honest work, through his initiatives and creative capacity. Each person can earn profits based on their efforts. Therefore, *Brazil* is good (D.N.P., 1938, section 7).

In a consortium, references to the greatness of *Brazil* appear, initially in comparison with the geographical dimensions of other countries. But as such an argument could eventually sound insufficient, a new type of comparison appears, as in the case of the confrontation with *Canada*, which, although it was

larger in territorial extension, would be full of unusable regions, to which is added a characteristic that appears to be negative, that is, the fact of being a dependent colony.

In Brazilian territory, France, Argentina, Italy, England, Germany, Mexico, Poland, and Portugal would fit together, with room still remaining. Brazil is the third independent country in the world, in terms of territorial extension. Brazil is the largest independent nation in America, surpassing the United States by more than a thousand square kilometers. Only Canada is larger than Brazil in America in territorial extension. Still, Canada is not an independent nation. It is still an English colony. The Brazilian territory has an advantage over Canada: it lends itself to all sorts of crops and is all usable, from the extreme north to the extreme south, while Canada has regions that are nothing more than huge glaciers.

In Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico, Costa Rica, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and São Domingos, Honduras, Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Colombia would fit together, with room still remaining.

In turn, the content of sections 19 and 21 is centered on the discourse of 'Latinity': Brazil not only appears as the largest Latin nation, but there is an explanation as to why we are a population of 'Latinos' and, more than that, to enjoy the beauty of the Latin heritage in the field of arts, sciences, laws, and philosophy.

Brazil is 'the largest Latin nation in the world.' 'Part of the Latin nations are Italy, the homeland of the Romans, or Latins,' so called because they speak Latin, a language that is now dead, Romania, France, Spain, Portugal, and all Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking American nations. 'These countries are called Latin because they inherited the language, blood, and strength of the most beautiful and fertile civilization from the Romans.' French, like Spanish and Romanian, are languages that come from ancient Latin and have been modified over time, according to the peculiarities of each country. 'The most beautiful thing in the world, in art, science, laws, and philosophy, is the work of Latinity. Brazil is proud to be a Latin country and, more than that, to be the largest Latin nation in the world today, both due to its territorial extension and its population, which surpasses that of Italy, Spain, France, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, and any of the other Latin countries (D.N.P., 1938, section 19, emphasis added).

I understand that references to other nations and peoples, surrounded by a narrative in which Brazil is described as the greatest and as heir to a superior civilizational cultural heritage, reveal one of the common characteristics of the various historical phenomena of fascistization and which represent these different movements of the 20th century: racism. Even if we pay attention to the fact that the Italian regime did not flirt with racialization in its beginnings since it was only after ten years in power and to justify colonialist violence that this discourse was assimilated, the association between racism and fascism is unequivocal.

In 1939, the Italian colonial empire had around 12 million inhabitants distributed among Eritrea (a colony since 1883), part of Somalia (1886), Libya (1911), Ethiopia (1935), and Albania (1939), an area of four million square kilometers, more than ten times the size of Italy. Around 200 thousand Italian civilians lived in these lands, convinced of the superiority of white men and the insignificance of the attacked peoples (Fascismo III, 2023).

And although Brazil is good does not mention African nations, as it privileges a Eurocentric perspective over the mention of other countries understood as Latin, it is pertinent to examine the issue using the analytical foundation of Carsten (2008, p. 690, our translation), which in a study of the common characteristics of fascist movements, he highlights: "Part of the movements' ideology was made up of a powerful myth, that of the nation and race, which in general expressed in territorial expansionism [...] in addition, they glorified and venerated the past: the ancient Roman empire..."².

Faced with more or less tacit content relative to a fascist background, I recall another factor that, according to theorization linked to the understanding of fascism, was called *political effectiveness*. According to Konder (2009), one of the purposes of the group of artists and intellectuals seduced by the regime, in dialogue with the dominant classes that assumed power, was to perform the social function of preparing representations or interpretations capable of enriching, at each time and in each country, a certain self-awareness, which would enable subjects to recognize reality better; furthermore, such intellectuality needs to deal with a past cultural heritage and in relation to which it sees itself subordinated to the new demands of the present, requiring a critical re-elaboration of the ideological material inherited from previous generations. In line with this perspective, there is an understanding that the textuality of the book *Brazil is Good* can be read as a narrative with intrinsic relationships with some of the ideological bases of Italian fascism, which reached the Brazilian Estado Novo due to the historical process of circulation of authoritarian ideology of the period between the 1920s and 1940s. And how would such a phenomenon have

² "Una parte dell'ideologia dei movimenti era costituita da un mito potente, quello della nazione e della razza che in genere si esprimeva nell'espansionismo territoriale [...] inoltre glorificavano e veneravano il passato: l'impero romano dell'antichità [...]"

occurred? In the beginning, because in 1937 Royal Legislative Decree 880 was issued in Italy, later transformed into law, which, under the Nazi inspiration of the Nuremberg Laws, brought to the scene the first measures to defend the race. In this process, there was the participation of intellectuals in the proclamation of racism as an ingredient of fascism, as I highlight:

The discussion about racial laws refers to the Manifesto of Race or Manifesto of the Racial Scientists, although the original title is *Fascism and Racial Problems*. Published on the front page of *Giornale d'Italia* on July 15, 1938, the document was signed by a group of scientists, professors, and intellectuals at the request of the Ministry of Popular Culture. It was written: “[...] the population of current Italy is mainly of Aryan origin” and “It is time for the Italians to proclaim themselves frankly racist” (Fascismo III, 2023).

I reconcile this argument with the interpretative character that is possible through content analysis, as I find in section 4 a narration in which the foundation of racial theories in vogue appears, under the allegation that Brazil's goodness also resides in not nurturing prejudices and distinguish races, and ends with the argument that the country welcomes people of all races and from all continents. However, the text is interspersed with the conditions that would imply that no one would suffer prejudice: respect for the laws, dedication to work, goodwill, and love for Brazil above anything else.

Brazil is good because it doesn't make distinctions between races. Because it has no prejudices based on color or religion. Everyone can live in Brazil if they respect Brazilian laws. But no one can live in Brazil if they don't want to comply with its laws. Is the black man Brazilian? Yes, he is, and he is a good Brazilian if he works for the greatness of Brazil. Is the white man Brazilian? Yes, yes, and he is only a Brazilian when he works for the good of Brazil.

Son of Japanese man, — born in Brazil, is Brazilian. Son of a German man, — born in Brazil, he is Brazilian. Son of an Italian man, — born in Brazil, he is Brazilian. They are all Brazilians, with the same duties and rights. Everyone must respect the homeland of their parents, but they must want and love, above all, Brazil.

Those who do not do this are not good Brazilians. And Brazil does not want any more Brazilians on its land. Brazil welcomes people of all races and all continents (D.N.P., 1938, section 4).

As for the relationships between these contents of the book published by the National Department of Propaganda of the Brazilian Estado Novo and the narratives of the fascist *pinocchiate*, in which the background is clearly racist, I highlight an analysis of *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus* (translated, Pinocchio, instructor of Negus), a children's work in which Pinocchio turns black due to a chocolate bath, which even generates screams from his boss, who calls him an Abyssinian. More than that, the fantastic confusion due to the color change is presented to the child reader as so reliable that an English citizen takes the puppet to the African country, in a situation in which he would have to ally himself with the enemies of Italian military colonialism. Luckily, the Italians rescue the puppet due to his identification with the flag of his homeland!

The conquests in Africa were also present in the plots of fascist continuations. In *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus*, from 1939, the puppet is an assistant in a confectionery shop. After spilling a cauldron of chocolate on himself, he runs away while his boss shouts at him as an Abyssinian because of the color he has taken on. An Englishman who sees the scene believes that Pinocchio comes from an African country and ends up taking him to Abyssinia to train the soldiers of that country, then an ally of England, to overcome the Italian army. In the end, Pinocchio is located and saved by an Italian plane after drawing attention by vigorously waving the tricolor flag (Netto, 2019, p. 136).

According to Curreri (2008), the *pinocchiate* — four novels and a short novel — express the use of the puppet during the fascist twentieth anniversary as an aid to help reconstruct a history of literature by representing reruns or versions of Collodi's puppet in absolutely different contexts from the original and can be seen, in a way, as a kind of genre in itself in escapist and children's literature. He argues that *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus* is of great interest for several reasons, mainly because it presents events in Italian East Africa, specifically in Ethiopia, a symbolic place for imperialist dreams, but also for the fall of fascism. Thus, the book portrays another very recurrent figure in escapist literature of the period. That means the Englishman who is as foolish as he is naive, to the point of confusing a chocolate-stained Pinocchio with an Abyssinian. According to Curreri (2008), the text brings some of the typical characteristics of the colonial novel, including with regard to children's production, such as exoticism, paternalism, the incorrect and almost ridiculous language of the natives and, notably, racism, featuring *Negus*, the enemy of the Italian army, caricatured as unintelligent, as he is like the victim of a backward culture. Given such contextualization and racial references, it is feasible to associate such content in Brazil is good with a kind of Brazilian *pinocchiate* since the boy receiving the book is exposed to a narrative that he

deems necessary to state: "Is the black man Brazilian? Yes, he is, and he is a good Brazilian if he works for the greatness of Brazil" (D.N.P., 1938, section 4).

At the same time, the greatness of Brazil, expressed throughout the book *Brazil is good* with the use of the adjective 'great' on 45 occasions, is associated with maintaining order. Expansionism is approached, one of the hallmarks of the Vargas government in the so-called March to the West, through a discourse that talks about the increase in transport networks of various types, through which I detect a foundation that can also be seen as colored by ideology civilization and to march to conquer at any cost, towards aggrandizement. In short, it is a kind of internal colonizing process.

Brazil is a big country. Brazil just needs order to progress steadily. The duty of all patriots is the duty of order. A nation with a vast territory covering eight and a half thousand square kilometers, with 1,405 municipalities, including 1,010 cities and 295 villages, the great Brazilian homeland is the largest country in South America and the largest Latin nation in the world.

Given the vastness of its territory, Brazil is in great need of transport. Ships, railways, cars, and commercial and military planes serving air mail cross its immense territory. However, it's still not enough. Brazil needs railway lines penetrating towards the West.

[...] What about West? To the West, we have the vast regions of Minas, Goiás, and Mato Grosso. Regions where crops can constitute immense wealth for Brazil. But, there needs to be transport for this because there is no point in producing without product outflow.

The future of Brazil is on the march to the West. The epic march of the *Bandeirantes* to the West marked the beginning of Brazilian civilization. The march to the West will now crown this civilization. The President of Brazil wants to open up new lines of communication, increasing, towards the West, our thirty thousand kilometers of railway lines. The work of all Brazilians will build a greater Brazil. The feeling of order will mainly contribute to the country's greatness.

Brazilians: for law and order! (D.N.P., 1938, section 26).

In this indoctrinating result, it is necessary to highlight the parts of the text in which a definition of State sovereignty is listed to invoke what is intended to be advocated as the constitutionality of the government.

But Brazil is good above all because it has the government that suits it. The Brazilian State is sovereign.

What is a sovereign state? It is a State that governs itself, without admitting outside intervention. In Brazil's house, Brazil is in charge.

What is a State? A state, boy, is a constituted and free nation, governing itself by a set of its own laws.

The main law of a country is called the Constitution. Brazil has a great Constitution. All Brazilians need to know the Constitution to know their rights and duties towards the Homeland (D.N.P., 1938, section 1).

This content presents terminology that serves to inform the young reader about the foundations of the government of the time. An argumentative elaboration with internal links listing some of the conceptual aspects of a dictatorship. As a starting point, dictatorship presents as a form of government that would be convenient for the country, which tends to express as if it were the most legitimate representative of the interests and needs of the people and, in this sense, uses the artifices of language for a capillary and coercive imposition aimed at enthusiastic acceptance of the regime. On this same narrative level, the proposed notion of sovereignty seeks to hide the concentration of power and the strict form of transmission of political authority from top to bottom. However, it tries to convey the impression that the principle of popular sovereignty is met. What the regime intends to instill is that there is such sovereignty to, in some way, rely on it to remain in power. In the same context, when recalling the presence of a Constitution, the fact is that the dictatorship always intends that its government is not restrained by the law because, by the principles of authoritarianism, it ends up placing itself above it and ultimately acts to transform its own will into law. More than that, a dictatorship seeks to resort to laws that contradict those previously existing or those that create exceptions by using its powerful political bodies to directly invoke supposed superior principles, which, in the end, will guide government action and prevail over any law.

The parts of the content of *Brazil is Good* that have this nature were arranged to imply that what is acceptable is the possibility created, meaning the dictatorship cannot be restrained by the law but rather places itself above it. In other words, it converts one's own will into law, which in the case of the *Estado Novo* was done with the promulgation of a new and particular Constitution, which took place in 1937. Emphasizing the content present in section 1: "The main law of a country is called the Constitution. Brazil has a great Constitution. All Brazilians need (sic) to know the Constitution to know their rights and duties

towards the Homeland (D.N.P., 1938, section 1). It can be said that this editorial tone will permeate its textuality, as it suggests that power was derived from the regime. The legal norms were edited because the power of the military could not be limited by laws before the coup to remove the legal basis for opposition to the irregular actions that took place and would come in the future. I note that, in the entire content, the term Constitution appears 31 times, with an eloquent and repetitive narrative appeal, which is supposed to incorporate the word into the boy's vocabulary.

At the same time that the text contains a narrative about the existence of such legal foundations, I highlight the section in which the State is defined jointly as a kind of authorization to commit abuses of human rights: "What is a State? A state, boy, is a constituted (sic) and free nation, 'governing itself by a set of its own laws.'" (D.N.P., 1938, section 1, emphasis added). Then, the dictator's action, equivalent to that of the State, would be allowed to be placed above the law, ultimately presented as the law itself. There is a coincidence between the maximum leader and the Constitution since both are 'great.' The message orders the boy to do what is expected of him as a good Brazilian: "Knows Brazil and respects its laws" (D.N.P., 1938, section 2).

In the content of section 14, the laws are associated with the work of Brazilians, in the sense that they were enacted to guarantee their rights.

In the past, there were no laws regulating the employment of Brazilians in these companies. Today, there are laws. Employees have their union and their pension and retirement institute, as well as their accident fund. No company can dismiss employees without just cause and without compensating them in proportion to the years of service they have provided. The worker is, therefore, protected by a wise labor legislation and social security measures. The worker has guarantees. These guarantees emanate from their rights. From the rights that the government gave them. Brazil was not good for workers. That was years ago. Now, Brazil is good (D.N.P., 1938, section 14).

In section 17, the Constitution is recalled again in textuality, which associates it with the centrality of its role in relation to worker rights, that is, addressing labor laws.

Everything in the Constitution has a great meaning, a purpose, and an aim. Everything in Brazil's great law has a reason for being.

For example, the Constitution says that "[...] everyone is guaranteed the right to subsist through their honest work and this, as an individual's means of subsistence, constitutes an asset, which is the State's duty to protect, ensuring favorable conditions and means of defense." Thus, the State protects the worker, ensuring employment, through the guarantees of labor laws. Because everyone has the right to a dignified existence, provided by honest work, the State, in accordance with the Constitution, will determine the setting, in each area of the national territory, of the minimum wage, capable of satisfying, in accordance with the conditions of each region, the normal needs of the worker, which include housing, food, clothing, hygiene, and education of their offspring (D.N.P., 1938, section 17).

To understand the reason for the presence of such content among the sections examined, it is vital to communicate with those analyses that highlight labor issues. According to Gomes (1999, p. 53), the 1930s and 1940s were revolutionary in terms of the discussion of work in Brazil because, in addition to the elaboration of all the legislation that regulates work, "[...] a political ideology of valuing work and of 'rehabilitation' of the role and place of the national worker". Crowning this discursiveness, we have a relationship with the Constitution of the Estado Novo, which, in its supposedly republican form, would be a foundation of democracy. And there is also an allusion to a spiritualist assumption, the foundation of the protection of childhood and youth, which, by recalling a humanist background, would also radiate to a commitment to education, arts, letters, and sciences.

Brazil is good because it is a democracy. Democracy is the government of the people. In Brazil, the government emanates from the people. The President of the Republic is a delegate of popular trust, exercising government on behalf of the people. The republican and representative form of government, characteristic of democracy, is part of the constitutional foundations. Another characteristic of the democratic regime is the temporary nature of government functions, also included in the Constitution of November 10th. This Constitution is not materialist because it does not place the economic order above all else — a principle adopted in fascist and communist systems. It is spiritualist, as it is concerned with the human person and the rights of citizens, viewing the individual as a social expression and as a positive value, voting for the protection of youth, childhood, and motherhood, the development of education and the encouragement of arts, letters, and sciences. While preserving the democratic spirit in Brazil, the new Constitution suppressed, however, old evils that threatened Brazil, giving it unity, as had never been possible (D.N.P., 1938, section 25).

The term duty appears 23 times in the narrative structure. Then, we have the constant repetition of the term 'boss,' unfailingly associated with Getúlio Vargas, the man who inspires confidence, who smiles, and who led legitimately because he did so according to the people's will. This is the content of the third section of *Brazil is good*.

If all Brazilians are brothers, Brazil is a big family. Indeed, one big happy family. A family is happy when there is peace at home. When its members don't fight. When discord does not reign. Brazil is and will be a big happy family as long as there is order and work. Work is a social duty. Order is another social duty. What is a social duty? It is a common duty for all individuals. It is an obligation for all Brazilians. The State is based on the organization of the family. Therefore, the State, that is, Brazil, decided to protect large families whose heads earn little. The Constitution, which is the great law of Brazil, establishes this measure. And this measure will be applied by the government. Government is the action of the State. The head of government is the head of the State, that is, the head of the great national family. The head of the big happy family. Therefore, the head of government is the national head. Who is the national head? He is the head of the government. Who is the head of government? 'The boy knows' he is Getúlio Vargas. Getúlio Vargas is a man who smiles. He smiles because he has confidence in Brazil. All Brazilians must have confidence in Brazil. Getúlio Vargas is the national leader by the will of the Brazilian people (D.N.P., 1938, section 3, emphasis added).

Like others contained in the book, this excerpt constitutes yet another intrinsic characterization of both dictatorship and authoritarianism by using language that would be simple and accessible to child readers. We have typically fascist content because it expresses the concentration and unlimited character of power in the hands of a single person, which can also be understood as an attempt to legitimize that kind of 'subverted democracy' since the people, as a natural member of the large, orderly, and peaceful happy family, he is led to express his complete adherence to the political orientation of the 'boss' so that the dictator proclaims that the popular will supports his action. It turns out that the content of *Brazil is good* establishes relations with the propagandistic literature created by the Estado Novo, whose nostalgic effects persist in the memory of many Brazilians, notably regarding the efficient ideological inoculation of Getúlio's image. However, if for some, the portrait of Vargas that remained is positive and is linked to a period of government with beneficial achievements in favor of the Brazilian people, according to analyses by Carneiro (1999), these are 'dark times,' marked by the conduct of repression, censorship, prejudice, and abuse of power.

For many nostalgic fans, the Estado Novo should be seen as a nation-state, idealized, and realized by the strength of one man: Getúlio Vargas, an authentic caudillo, representative of the Gaucho pastoral aristocracy. One of the first memories to be recovered is that his government was committed to the fight against communism and, of course, the support given to the poor, the humble, and the workers of Brazil. This expression, in fact, still produces echoes, even though it has been identified by generations that did not experience the Estado Novo. But what are these echoes?

We could say that they are 'voices of silence,' translated here as 'dark times.' Contrary to what many would have you believe, times symbolize a dark period in the history of Brazil. Difficult, hard times were marked by repression, censorship, anti-Semitism, abuse of power, and behind-the-scenes agreements (Carneiro, 1999, p. 327-328, emphasis added).

As if the repetitions were not enough, there is a new exaltation of the 'President' in section 29, in which he is presented as someone who, through his function, would even surpass the precision of the Chamber and the Senate, bodies that until then did not function, especially regarding the country's financial organization.

The President of the Republic wanted to straighten things out, balancing expenses and revenue in the country's budget. It was necessary that Brazil's expenses did not exceed its revenue, that is, its own resources, its collections, its tax revenues. But there was no way for the President to get what he wanted. The Legislative Branch, that is, the Chamber and the Senate, where all the country's laws were manufactured, including the budget, which is the so-called law of means, did not help the President. All efforts to establish budget balance were useless, they were in vain, because the Chamber and the Senate always increased the amount of expenses, often for the benefit of initiatives that had nothing to do with the public interest. This is the same as saying that they threw Brazil's money, all of our money, out the window...

There were, in the Chamber and the Senate, it is true, and we must proclaim them, for justice, men of culture, of enlightenment, devoted to the good of the country, inspired by principles of sound patriotism, capable of carrying out the most important public functions. Still, these were prevented from carrying out works of real merit, either due to the indifference with which their colleagues received their ideas, or due to defects in the organization of the Legislature itself (D.N.P., 1938, section 29).

The ideological background resurfaces, again, in content associated with what would be an orderly Brazil free from disagreements and fights, mobilizing the construction of a specific ideology through indications that equality would exist, even if class differences and inherent conflicts were disguised.

Today, all Brazilians are equal. The boss and the worker are the same size. The State, that is, Brazil, is bigger than both. And that is why it has the necessary authority to resolve differences between the two. Does the boy know what a divergence is? No, the boy doesn't know. Have you ever seen a fight between brothers? Well, that's a divergence. All Brazilians are brothers. Brazil does not want its children, Brazilian brothers, to fight with each other. Brazil doesn't want ugly things. Brazil does not want divergences. There is yet another reason why BRAZIL IS GOOD (D.N.P., 1938, section 2).

The allusion to disagreements, fights, or 'ugly things' refers to the analysis of excerpts from the book in which aspects are glimpsed that, as Stoppino (1998) argues, help to classify the types of dictatorship, by focusing especially on the nature of the power that is sought to establish, that is, considering the instruments of control and the degree of their penetration into the social fabric. Traces of a totalitarian dictatorship can be seen, as it employs "[...] traditional coercive means, [...] thus being able to completely control education and the media and also economic institutions" (Stoppino, 1998, p. 375). Furthermore, one of the hallmarks of a regime of this nature is the strong and continuous presence of propaganda, which penetrates in a widespread manner, combined with the action of police and terrorizing political apparatuses, which force the population to accept the regime. Such allegations allow, in dialogue with Santos (2012), a characterization of certain operations of the Estado Novo as practices of fascistization, as when analyzing editions of a newspaper written by children between 1941 and 1944, educational legislation documents, school inspection reports, and minutes, his research identifies fascist expressions inserted in the curriculum of elementary schools in southern Brazil under the dictatorship: "As a curriculum activity, children's involvement in the preparation of the school newspaper could contribute to the formation of citizens that Brazil needed. In the Estado Novo, school education lent itself to the nationalist construction idealized by the fascist project of Getúlio Vargas" (Santos, 2012, p. 137). In short, I want to say that:

Furthermore, it can exert permanent propagandistic pressure and penetrate every social formation and even the family life of citizens, suppressing any opposition and even the mildest criticism through special political, police, and terror apparatuses, thus imposing acceptance and enthusiasm for the regime on the entire population (Stoppino, 1998, p. 375).

Coercion emerges, which can be associated with violence of various types, exposed in the text or tacitly proposed and legitimized when linked to institutions that would have exactly such a function in the form of governing presented to childhood, which in the narration of section 15 is disguised as 'defense' of Brazil.

Brazil needs, for its defense, as with all peoples, its armed forces. What are Brazil's armed forces? They are its Army and Navy. Brazil also has other forces: the State Military Police, the Fire Brigades, which constitute reserves of the National Army, and the Merchant Navy, which is a reserve of the Navy, and Civil Aviation, which is a reserve of Military Aviation.

The Army and Navy constitute permanent national institutions, organized based on hierarchical discipline and faithful obedience to the authority of the President of the Republic, for the defense of order, regime, and territorial integrity of the Homeland in case of foreign aggression (D.N.P., 1938, section 15).

These statements also take advantage of this to create a model of man—the soldier—who, by duty, is affiliated with the established order and is even capable of giving his life in the name of the security of the State and the defense of the Homeland. Violence is treated as a duty, an attitude that is desirable and generates rewards, in addition to which such commitment would generate heroization.

Soldiers and officers are duty-bound to maintain order and commit their lives to the security of the State and the defense of the Homeland. If a soldier or officer fails to do this duty, he is considered a traitor to the country and will lose his rank or position, being tried, and punished for his crime.

A good soldier in Brazil does not commit a crime against the security of the State (D.N.P., 1938, section 15).

Here, I identify messages that guide the militarization of the boy reader. In fact, in section 16 of *Brazil is good*, the condition for becoming a soldier of the country is in the narration that, at the beginning, states that all Brazilians have 'burdens and obligations' with national security, which is described as follows: "National security is understood as the defense of the country. To defend their country, each Brazilian must be ready to take up arms, to sacrifice their own life [...]", followed by the lines stating that Brazil is not a

'warlike' country nor 'warrior' since "The nobility of its traditions lies in what they translate as an expression of pacifism" (D.N.P., 1938, section 16). Interestingly, in this same part of the book, an argument resurfaces with elaborate terminology, hardly palatable for a child, in which the term 'arbitration' requests explanations for the conviction that Brazil is 'pacifist':

Brazil has always been the champion of arbitration. What is meant by arbitration? This is it: the solution to an international issue peacefully, without resorting to arms. Two countries choose an arbitrator, or judge, who will be a nation equally friendly to both. This nation, through its representative, resolves the issue. This Brazilian doctrine became victorious. And its triumph earned our country the reputation of a pacifist nation (D.N.P., 1938, section 16).

Even with the wording that announces difficulties for the understanding of the child reader, the narrative continues to say that we have a pacifist country that wishes to maintain a good neighborliness and cordiality policy with all nations. Still, soon comes the warning, with the use of the term 'sovereignty,' that is, another new addition to the indigestible language in the book's glossary: "But Brazil, even encouraged by these peace purposes, will never allow its sovereignty to be offended. It will not tolerate any moral or territorial damage. It has armed forces and reserves at its disposal to assert its sovereignty." (DNP, 1938, section 16). The touchstone beneath the ideological shell is a call for everyone to become a soldier since the condition of being a good Brazilian and being a soldier are equivalent, and it is a duty to engage in forming a military character: "Each Brazilian citizen must be a soldier. For this reason, all good Brazilians must fulfill their military duties, providing regulatory service in the Army or Navy, or obtaining the reservist card in the War Shooting and Soldiers' Schools of educational establishments" (D.N.P., 1938, section 16).

If we consider that being a soldier implies 'taking up arms,' the invitation to fight and use violence in the name of the country and the fight against enemies are on a threshold; that is, in a place given as a path of entry for the Brazilian boy. This time, I associate such content with the content of *Avventure e spedizioni punitive di Pinocchio*, a title that can be translated as Adventures and punitive expeditions of Pinocchio, another of the *pinocchiate*, in which the puppet carries out a robbery and goes on a hunt for communists with a revolver in his hands, conditions for obtaining a fascist card, actions embedded in a plot that makes it possible to interpret such deeds as evidence of patriotism. In these situations, even a puppet can be a *ballilla*.

The book narrates the actions of the puppet, who lives with his adoptive father, a patriotic shoemaker, to get his fascist card. In his first action, he prevents the publication of a communist journal by stealing the printing machine from the newspaper's printing plant. In the second, he goes hunting for communists, carrying in his hands a toy revolver built by his father (Netto, 2019, p. 136).

In the case of this Italian children's literary work, the ideological background of the messages is reinforced by the cover design: "[...] it shows a Pinocchio who doesn't hide his smile as he shoves a bottle of castor oil down the bearded man's throat. The revolver was left out of the illustration; Pinocchio wields a wooden sword" (Netto, 2019, p. 136). The adventures of the puppet designed to punish, which are carefully portrayed, bring the recipient suggestions on how to act when faced with one of the first targets of the fascist regime, the communists. According to Curreri (2008), the communist characters are presented as hypocrites, cowards, and disinterested in the fate of the people, which leads Pinocchio to dedicate himself to increasingly cruel pranks to terrorize the 'reds.' The hunt for communists is the equivalent of child's play!

In the search for elements that enable a comparison between the plots of the *Pinocchiate* and the contents of *Brazil is good* I find, in section 8, a significant correspondence regarding a vision with common features regarding attacks on communism:

Communism is extremism. But not only communists are extremists. There are other extremists, just as dangerous as these. They are those who want to implement fascism in Brazil, copied from foreign parties. Brazil does not need imported regimes because Brazil is the boss in Brazil's house. Therefore, it has a regime that is its own. A form of government that is its own (D.N.P., 1938, section 8).

Pinocchio's actions, like those of the Brazilian boy about to become a soldier, seek to inspire heroism. Therefore, another component of the text of the book *Brazil is good* dedicated to the figure of the soldier brings a list of national heroes to be copied.

The Army has its great heroes, such as Caxias, Osorio, Tiburcio, Villagran Cabrita, Sampaio, Camisão, and Câmara, and the Navy has glorious figures such as Barroso, Tamandaré, Marcílio Dias, Greenhalgh and so many more. The soldier and sailor worthy of the uniform that these heroes wore are faithful defenders of order, law, and the Homeland (D.N.P., 1938, section 15).

The appeal for children to become little soldiers is evident, a perspective that, from the standpoint of fascistization, sought to consolidate and gain strength in the educational context. We have examples of this in the many images of children and young people holding weapons that were produced and circulated by Italian fascism in photographs, postcards, and even in the cinema. It is thus possible to learn, in detail, the process of construction of the citizen-soldier in fascist Italy through the *Opera Nazionale Balilla*, which was created in 1926 and operated until 1937 in the military, physical, social, and moral education of children and young people among six and 18 years old, and from six to 13 the boys were *Balilla*, from 14 to 18 they were part of the *Avanguardisti*. It is worth remembering that when attending any public school, everyone was obligatorily enrolled in fascist organizations since, from an early age, they would begin to wield the *Moschetto*, a type of rifle that the youngest was replicated in wood. Still, for the others, it consisted of a portable firearm with a short barrel, light and easy to use:

From 1930 onwards, boys began to carry out activities with *moschetto*. The Balilla, whose age did not allow them to handle firearms, used wooden replicas, while the Avanguardisti used real weapons. With the accessory on their shoulders, they performed military movements such as marching, running, aiming, placing themselves on the ground with a shooting stance, etc. The young people in the Avanguardisti group, whose age already allowed more advanced military training, took shooting classes, and practiced with light machine guns (Rosa, 2009, p. 629).

The Opera Nazionale Balilla was later replaced by the Gioventù Italiana del Littorio, in which “[...] Italian boys received a military education focused on war and where they learned to be true soldiers” (Rosa, 2009, p. 623).

Given such constituent aspects of the content of *Brazil is good*, one can say that such literature served the purposes of ideological indoctrination of the Estado Novo. As Santos (2014) confirms, it was a period of investment in propaganda aimed at children, also found in school writings such as notebooks, books, newspapers, minutes, and pamphlets, generating conditions of fascistization through the curriculum. Therefore, it is inferred that there are anchors of fascism which transmit to the boy the naturalization of social violence and its expressions. I understand that the contents of the book *Brazil is good* resemble those of the fascist *pinocchiate*, which, according to Netto (2022), were expressions of an educational project with the instrumental purpose of dominating, convincing, and indoctrinating:

The educational project constituted an apparatus of domination and a vehicle for the reproduction of the State, aimed at using persuasive apparatuses that sought to adapt to the target audience, children, to allow the messages to be understood and accepted. An essential part of the instruments mobilized for developing fascist ideology was organized in language, discourse, and narrative. The childhood spaces were taken over, and a rigid indoctrination apparatus was built around Italian children (Netto, 2022, p. 315).

There is a predominance of a narration specially developed for children, whose ideological and indoctrinating content is aimed at the *boy* so that he acts as a protagonist, using the rhetoric of fascistization as justification and ideological guidance for his actions. *Brazil is Good* emerges as one of the propaganda tools of the Estado Novo, well represented by the metaphor contained in a study that analyzes childhood education under the Vargas regime, which compares Brazilian fascism to a medicine administered ‘dropwise’ to children, with expected formative results aligned with the purposes of dictatorial power: “In this way, within the scope of the Brazilian Estado Novo, the campaign elaborated under the vigorous leadership of Getúlio Vargas reached elementary schools in southern Brazil as a remedy carefully administered to the sick boy, inoculating ‘dropwise’ the ideas of nationalism with fascist colors (Santos, 2010, p. 336, author’s emphasis, our translation³) And refinement of this inoculation of fascist poison into the boy is found in the part of the book that justifies the existence, at that moment in the history of Brazil, of the death penalty, which would be based on the Estado Novo constitutional basis. Such content, revealed in section 12, is based on comparisons that would help to understand that the death penalty was naturalized and that it is not a reason for shame in other countries, even if these were liberal, fascist, or communist states.

The Constitution of Brazil says that the law can prescribe the death penalty for various crimes. Death penalty? Yes sir. Boy, don’t be surprised. The death penalty is not for the good citizen. It’s not for the good Brazilian. Not at all. The death penalty is a guarantee for order and the lives of all Brazilians. We cannot say that the death penalty embarrasses Brazil. The United States has the death penalty, and Americans are not ashamed of it. England has the death penalty and is not ashamed of it. Germany has the death penalty. Italy also has the death penalty. Russia has the death penalty, too. Liberal states, fascist states, and communist states all have the death penalty (D.N.P., 1938, section 12).

³ “In questo modo, nell’ambito dello Stato Nuovo brasiliano, la campagna elaborata sotto la vigorosa conduzione di Getulio Vargas arrivò nelle scuole elementari del sud del Brasile come una medicina accuratamente somministrata ad un bambino malato, inoculando “goccia a goccia” le idee di un nazionalismo dai colori fascisti”.

If it would not be up to the boy to be 'surprised', I denounce the surprise regarding this content embedded in a booklet intended for circulation among children and which, by extension, would reach Brazilian families. It is one of the most striking examples of the linguistic instruments used in *Brazil is good*, which aims to elaborate fascist ideology. Besides preaching that adopting the death penalty should cause neither surprise nor shame, the text refines it by arguing that such a measure did not apply to good Brazilian citizens. However, an internal contradiction is perceived, possibly not perceptible to some readers, when assuring that "The death penalty is a guarantee for order and the lives of all Brazilians" (D.N.P., 1938, section 12). Furthermore, the search to praise and give weight to the argument that naturalizes the death penalty is notable, which is done by inserting a list of countries where killing as a punishment was permitted, each of them classified according to the respective government regime: the United States and England, considered 'liberal states'; Germany and Italy, the 'fascist states'; and of course, Russia, a 'communist state.' The issue of the death penalty is introduced into the narrative as if the book were an innocent and unpretentious fictional text intended for children, as the *pinocchiate* would be, from a fascist perspective.

The more or less implicit force of writings of this nature makes me return to aspects of the discussion regarding children's literary experience proposed by Soares (2015), which I believe can at least help to speculate about how the processes of formation of child readers take place, about what type of reader should be formed and also concerning the role of the teacher and other adults in dealing with the diversity of texts generated and used in the sociocultural environment, notably at school. It also leads to questioning regarding the potential for imposing models and possible domination and submission that the language present in literary texts intended for children can raise. For example, if the death penalty is presented to Brazilian children as a reasonable solution, what is the reach of this message in the process of raising awareness? I venture, without any intention of exhausting the responsive possibilities, but bringing a preliminary problematization, to mention the study by Amparo (2023, p. 10), which, based on literary theory, shows that the meanings that reading gains in plots of everyday life depends on the actions of teachers and students, which reveal socially structured points of view and that generally question school imperatives, and concludes that what structures the legitimacy of literary content in school "[...] varies between teaching positions and students, as the former is based on the value of literature in itself, as heritage and artistic form, while students affirm the legitimacy of fiction based on the possibility of evasion, entertainment, and circumstances of identification with their lives".

From a broader analytical perspective, I believe it is worth highlighting some aspects of the controversial foreign relations policy of Vargas and his command group during the Estado Novo. As for the United States, in a retrospective in which he presents a synoptic picture of the bureaucratic organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Schwartzman (1983) highlights what he calls the secular tradition of international relations, which since the 1930 Revolution, with the action of the Provisional Government then led by Getúlio Vargas, would have made clear his orientation regarding the methods of his foreign policy, which accentuated a more intimate and private collaboration with the American nations, in the search for forming the union of the countries of the continent and organizing it in the face of threats of the situation in Europe, which meant that Brazil continued, in the historical *continuum*, "[...] hand in hand with the United States" (Schwartzman, 1983, p. 290).

I draw attention to the fact that this historical factor conceals Vargas' rapprochement with both Mussolini and Hitler, which preceded his total accession to the United States in 1942 during the Second World War. And especially regarding the rapprochement with the Nazi Reich, and to illustrate the type of relationship that the leader of the Estado Novo and his staff developed with the German empire, I bring to light the memorial content in which Getúlio Vargas's daughter transcribes the content of letters he wrote to his father about his visit to Germany in 1937:

I do not doubt that this country is preparing for war and war to come. Two gigantic Black Guard officers, under Mother's orders, accompanied us day and night and made us visit the Führer's works. We went to Hitler's Gym: the physical exercises that 13 and 14-year-old boys undergo are aimed exclusively at training them to fight. They crawl on the ground as if moving on a battlefield under machine guns. They cross narrow and very long iron tubes as if to accustom their eyes to the darkness, their lungs to the precariousness of fresh air, and their bodies to the smallness of a trench. They throw stones, pieces of wood, and heavy objects over great distances, like throwing a bomb. They climb 2 to 3-meter walls with the speed and silence of someone attacking a fortified position (Peixoto, 1960, p. 283).

I also confirm the argument of Santos (2014), who, by unveiling several of how fascist infiltration reached primary schools during the Getulista dictatorship, such as the promulgation of educational

legislation, the insertion of regime-aligned content in adopted books, the requirement and the control of civic rituals of a nationalist hue and the use of gymnastics, points out the similarity between the children's training projects of Italian fascism and German Nazism: "In the same way, the Estado Novo had reserved a place for Brazilian childhood and youth which it proposed to conform to. [...] they aimed to instill obedience and respect, circumscribed within a perspective of child militarization" (Santos, 2014, p. 184).

Still, regarding the existing alignments and sympathies between the Brazilian Estado Novo and Italian fascism, as well as with German Nazism, there are considerations to be made. I initially referenced a study with a central variable for analyzing the relational bases between Vargas' Brazil and Mussolini's Italy, as well as many Italian immigrants and their descendants in South America. In this case, Trento's (2005) extensive approach to the potential expansion of Italian fascism in Brazil shows that the phenomenon relied on these expatriates not only as a vehicle for commercial and cultural penetration but also as foreign policy instruments. It is shown that, despite Mussolini's initial attack on the immigration policy of previous governments since the second half of the 1920s, sympathy and adherence to Italian fascism were generated through various paths, remembering that they had, as an earlier basis, in addition to the considerable number of immigrants who had settled since the last decades of the 19th century: the implementation of a set of Italian-Brazilian associative enterprises, including the formation of *Fasci* in some parts of southern Brazil, nourished with generous donations to local fronts and institutes; the search to permeate the concept of Latinity of Roman origin to form a large ethnic family that would radiate from Mussolini's Italy to Latin America, opposing Washington's Pan-Americanism; the small increase in commercial exchange; the benevolent attitudes of the Catholic Church across the ocean and the immigrant parish priests; the conversion of members of the diplomatic corps and the growth of consular agencies; the adherence of the so-called 'uncles of America', such as the Matarazzos, Crespi, Morganti, and Martinelli and their local leadership; the release of the inferiority complex of Italian immigrants and their descendants due to the prestige on the international scene that fascism assumed; the sympathy of the middle segments and the petty bourgeois merchants of São Paulo, a group that had access to the Italian periodical press that praised the regime; the reach that the fascism expansion campaign had among urban and rural popular masses; the use of propaganda, with the creation of an editorial market with publications in Portuguese and Italian that circulated illustrating fascist philosophy and achievements; and, finally, by explaining elements of the relationship between Mussolini and Vargas, which, to a certain extent, was connected to the origin of integralism:

The agreement with Vargas explains why the government in Rome took so long to support the Brazilian Integralist Action. This party claimed fascism for itself, whether in external signs (green shirts, meetings, etc.) or political doctrine. Only in 1936 did the diplomatic corps seem more interested in establishing the degree of fidelity to the Rome model than in analyzing the role of AIB in the Brazilian scene (Trento, 2005, p. 42, our translation)⁴.

It also occurred that, according to this perspective, there was a certain competition, based on an identity issue, between integralism and the implementation of *Fasci* with Italian influence in Brazil because even if the first functioned as a more or less legitimate descendant of fascism, integralism attracted many more descendants of Italians to its ranks, even obtaining financial contributions. Therefore, this constitutive nature of the two movements was an object of attention, given Vargas' interests in maintaining power control, which created a fluid situation, if not ambiguity:

[...] he focused on the fundamentalists, supporting them with a monthly contribution of 50,000 lire, but this new address did not affect cordial relations with Vargas. The Brazilian situation on that date seemed quite fluid. It appeared that the head of state maintained ties with the green shirts to the point of making one think about future collaboration, in relation to which there was an expectation from Mussolini himself, who wanted this to result in the emergence in the subcontinent, of a large totalitarian state, opposed to the United States. The regime could thus maintain good relations with both. Still, if the situation resulted in the rise to power only of integralism, legally (elections would be held in 1937, and Vargas could not constitutionally participate in them) or illegally, it was essential for fascism to have credit with the AIB to repel Nazi meddling and to exclude or mitigate the risks of a strongly nationalist policy, in addition, to influence foreign policy guidelines and to strengthen Italy's economic and commercial presence (Trento, 2005, p. 43, our translation)⁵.

⁴ "La sintonia con Vargas spiega come mai il governo di Roma tardò tanto ad appoggiare l'Ação Integralista Brasileira, partito che al fascismo si richiamava, sia nei segni esteriori (cmicie verdi, adunate, ecc.) sia nella dottrina politica. Per la verità, sino al 1936 il corpodiplomatico apparve più interessato a stabilire il grado di fedeltà al modello di Roma che ad analizzare quale poteva essere il ruolo dell'AIB sulla scena brasiliana".

⁵ "[...] decise di puntare sugli integralisti, sostenendoli con um contributo mensile di 50.000 lite, ma questo nuovo indirizzo no scalfi i rapporti cordiali con Vargas. In effetti, la
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Therefore, it is worth problematizing the presence of a historical environment in Brazil that was to some extent prone to accepting fascist orientations, just as Vargas' flirtation with the Brazilian aspects of fascism existed. Moreover, we should also consider the Estado Novo's rapprochement with Nazi Germany, which has been noticed since the coup that installed the Getulista dictatorship.

Indeed, precisely in November 1937, Vargas and the leadership of the Armed Forces launched a coup and inaugurated the Estado Novo, which, to put it in the words of a former ambassador, was a 'union, corporate, authoritarian State,' greatly appreciated by Rome and Berlin, whose perplexity concerned, at least, the lack of involvement of the Brazilian Integralist Action, of which, in any case, it seemed to be the ideological derivation. (Trento, 2005, p. 43–44, emphasis added, our translation)⁶.

It should be added that, according to Trento (2005), the situation of commercial relations between Brazil and Germany has been growing since the end of the 1920s, which resulted in the fact that trade between the two countries, in the second half of the 1930s, doubled in values, which brings more elements to understand a context in which Nazi-fascist ideas found conditions to permeate.

The allusion to Russia, presented to the boy reader as a communist state, can be analyzed in the light of a socio-historical perspective regarding the category of communism, combined with the understanding of its denial, manifested by Brazilian anti-communism. This means that the content of the book *Brazil is Good* is especially restricted by the political-ideological dimension, at that time as a claim by the Estado Novo leadership that was absolutely uncommitted to its conceptual use and served as an additive to the other ideological narratives. According to Oliveira (2021), Brazil's first signs of anti-communism were located in the third decade of the 20th century. They appeared as a reaction to the creation of the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), which took place in 1922 and was linked to the Communist International. However, no real possibility of the advancement of communism in Brazil at the time could be envisaged. However, there is an understanding that it was precisely during the Vargas Era, between 1930 and 1945, which includes the dictatorial period of the Estado Novo, that contextual aspects contributed, with a certain vigor, to Brazilian anti-communism, which would have nourished the discourse and the anti-communist actions of the Estado Novo.

A second decisive historical moment was the Brazilian communist uprising (*Intentona Comunista*) of 1935. Personified in the leadership of Luís Carlos Prestes, captain of the Brazilian Army who joined communism, the uprising was a movement against the authoritarian government of Getúlio Vargas, which conformed with at least the National Liberation Alliance (ANL), the PCB, and the support of the Communist International [...]. At this time, unlike the previous decade, the movement that sought communism in Brazil perceived actual chances of success. Even so, for a series of reasons, the attempts lost strength and failed (Oliveira, 2021, p. 148).

As a result, I can add to the ideological nutrients that are included in the content intended for children in *Brazil is good* with the aim of building the perception of communism as a true monster. I bring an excerpt in which the intention was to characterize communism as a form of government associated with evil, slavery, unhappiness, and misery. And if such an adjective could penetrate the field of language understanding by the reading child, on the other hand it is introduced through an elaborate and hermetic wording, in which the term *organization* is used and another concept to be understood, that of 'import regimes.' So, according to section 7:

Brazil is good in its current organization. This organization must not be altered or replaced. What is good must be preserved. There are no import regimes in Brazil. What are import regimes? They are forms of government of other peoples, different from ours, with other problems that Brazil does not have. Communism is evil. In Brazil, there is no place for communism. What is communism? It is the slavery regime that reduced Russia to poverty. Russia is an unhappy country. There, communism rules. Brazil is a happy country. In it, communism finds no place.

Communism was implemented in Russia at a time of despair. In a country where hunger reigned, a regime was born that aimed to divide not only goods but also land among everyone. But, as the country was poor, the poor did not improve, and the rich got worse. Communism was the sharing of misery for everyone. The State became, in Russia, a hateful and cruel boss of all men when the failure of communism became clear (D.N.P., 1938, section 7).

situazione brasiliana, a quella data, si presentava abbastanza fluida e sembrava che il capo dello stato mantenesse vincoli con le camicie verdi, tanto da far pensare a una futura collaborazione, nella quale peraltro sperava lo stesso Mussolini, il quale auspicava che ciò si traducesse nella comparsa, nel subcontinente, di un grande stato totalitario, opposto agli Stati Uniti. Il regime poteva così tenere buoni rapporti con entrambi, ma se la situazione fosse sfociata in un'ascesa al potere del solo integralismo, legalmente (nel 1937 dovevano tenersi le elezioni e Vargas non poteva costituzionalmente parteciparvi) o illegalmente, per il fascismo era indispensabile avere credito presso l'AlB, per rintuzzare l'intromissione nazista e per escludere o attenuare i rischi di una politica fortemente nazionalista, nonché, ovviamente, per influire sugli indirizzi di politica estera e per rafforzare la presenza economica e commerciale dell'Italia".

⁶ "In effetti, proprio nel novembre del 1937, Vargas e i vertici delle Forze Armate misero in atto un golpe e inaugurarono l'Estado Novo, che, per dirla con le parole di un ex-ambasciatore, era uno 'Stato sindacale, corporativo, autoritario', apprezzatissimo da Roma e Berlino, le cui perplessità riguardavano semmai il mancato coinvolgimento della Ação Integralista Brasileira, della quale, comunque, esso sembrava essere la derivazione ideologica".

It is also essential to remember that one of the allegations for the coup that implemented the Getulista dictatorship in Brazil was the supposed existence of the Cohen Plan — a terrible threat that would combine communists and Jews in an attack on the safety of Brazilians —, presented amidst the powerful ordering discourse of the Estado Novo, and which, as seen in the content of *Brazil is good*, granted the authoritarian regime the position of “[...] interpreter of the feelings of the country and the Brazilian people [...]” (Carneiro, 1999, p.), i.e.:

This dark torrent was presented to public opinion on September 30, 1936, as a terrible monster that, hidden in the underground of society, was planning a violent coup with invisible international forces. Named the Cohen Plan, this monster — invented by the Ministry of War — collaborated to feed two political myths: that of the 'international communist plot' linked to the myth of the 'international Jewish conspiracy' whose essence had been inspired by 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,' translated and commented on by the anti-Semite Gustavo Barroso (Carneiro, 1999, p. 329–330, emphasis added).

I highlight, again, the frequency of the term work, which in the excerpts analyzed is generally associated with duty and is a condition for happiness, except if the nation's political orientation was communism. The condition of becoming a worker brought up in the speech for the 'Brazilian boy' is presented as freedom of professional choice, as opposed to what happened with the 'Russian boy,' as he lived in a place where everything is denied to the individual, even 'being what you want':

In Brazil, if a boy wants to be an aviator, he will be an aviator. If the boy wants to be a doctor, he will be a doctor. In Russia, the Russian boy wants to be an engineer, but the State thinks there are already too many engineers, and they send the boy to work in a mine, digging the ground. A Russian boy wants to be an aviator, but the State thinks there are already too many aviators and sends the reluctant boy to take care of a flock of sheep. The freedom to choose a profession or type of work is guaranteed by the Constitution of Brazil. But, in Russia, communism denies the individual everything and he cannot even be what he wants.

There is yet another reason why communism is bad and why Brazil is good (D.N.P., 1938, section 7).

There is yet another element in common between the anti-communist content of the book *Brazil is good* and the plot of *Pinocchio fra i balilla*, translated as Pinocchio among the *balilla*, one of the *pinocchiate* whose central plot is the fight against what was considered the great enemy.

Pinocchio fra i balilla was written by Cirillo Schizzo and published in 1927. The plot begins with Pinocchio's antics, which lead him to prison. The imprisonment, plus the insistence of his friend Succianespolo, a proud *balilla*, makes Pinocchio reflect on the possibility of becoming a young supporter of the regime himself. The distribution of chocolate and free access to the cinema are among the resources used to convince Pinocchio (Netto, 2019, p. 136).

According to Curreri (2008), this is the story that comes closest to Collodi's original fairy tale, as it has the same narrative structure, in which the previously naughty boy becomes polite, and in which the puppet becomes a child. However, the plot brings all of Pinocchio's efforts, inventiveness, and intelligence so that all his companions become *balilla*, a condition in which they would find fulfillment. Pinocchio aligns himself with fascism and thus proposes his contribution to the education of younger children.

In the text of *Brazil is good*, the alleged freedom of choosing a professional destiny by the Brazilian boy, who can dream of being an aviator or a doctor, beckons the child as an adventurous possibility, just as the irreverent and also adventurous puppet Pinocchio achieved unimaginable places and accomplished feats: “He was a horse tamer, cyclist, privateer, boxer, writer, inventor. He traveled to the North Pole, to the African continent, he was in Wonderland and even on the moon” (Netto, 2019, p. 131). Happiness means the boy lives in Brazil and not in Russia!

This language, which aims to inculcate the ideology of the context to the world of work, is found in several other excerpts, reaching 52 occurrences, most combined with the worker's representation. I highlight an excerpt in which the condition of being a worker, that is, of being *a worker*, is linked to love and respect for the country, as well as the defense of order and justice: the condition for being a good Brazilian is, after all, the one achievable only by working Brazilians: “A good Brazilian loves his country. He works for the greatness of Brazil. He knows Brazil and respects its laws. He defends order and justice. Is a worker (sic) a good Brazilian? Yes, 'boy,' a worker (sic), is a good Brazilian because he is a Brazilian who works.” (D.N.P., 1938, section 2, emphasis added).

This quest to portray a given social background, which everyone would love, is one of the assumptions of the essay whose indoctrinating intent would serve for the boy reader to naturalize the fact that he belongs to a lineage of workers. However, the conditions for being a worker in the new era that was announced

would enable both the boy and his father to share a historical moment with fewer injustices, as there were now 'RIGHTS,' a term that will be repeated throughout the text another 29 times. Therefore, such social reality, conditioned by rules of heredity, would be the one perceptible to the 'boy,' as follows:

'The boy's father is a worker. The boy's father's father was also a worker.

Who is the boy's father's father? He is the boy's grandfather. The boy knows that his grandfather was poor and complained about injustices. But the boy's father is not so poor anymore. Why? Because the boy's father already has RIGHTS. Law is the wealth of the honest and hardworking man (D.N.P., 1938, section 2).

I highlight that during the Estado Novo, especially within the scope of political ideas linked to the issue of work, the treatment of the relationship between work and wealth and between work and the status of citizens was highlighted, with implications for the understanding of being poor. As Gomes (1999) explains, a political-ideological strategy was created aimed at combating poverty, with a focus on exalting the value of work activities, which borrowed from classical liberalism the association between work and wealth and citizenship:

From there, we can also detect — especially during the Estado Novo (1937-45) — an entire political-ideological strategy to combat 'poverty,' which would be centered precisely on promoting the value of work. The quintessential means of overcoming the country's serious socioeconomic problems, whose most profound causes were rooted in the abandonment of the population, would be precisely to guarantee this population a dignified way of life. Promoting the Brazilian man and defending the country's economic development and social peace were objectives that were unified in the same great goal: transforming man into a citizen/worker, responsible for his individual wealth and also for the wealth of the nation as a whole.

Work, disconnected from poverty, would be man's ideal for acquiring wealth and citizenship. The approval and implementation of social rights would, therefore, be at the heart of a broad policy for the revaluation of work characterized as an essential dimension of the revaluation of man. Work would become a right and a duty; a moral task and, at the same time, an act of achievement; an obligation towards society and the State, but also a necessity for the individual viewed as a citizen (Gomes, 1999, p. 55, emphasis added).

Brazil is good also dedicates one of its 30 narrations to teachings related to the provision of school education, presented as the responsibility of the government through the maintenance of institutions with this purpose: it emphasizes that knowing how to read is a duty of the good Brazilian and that the absence of education makes man unhappy and incapable of working in favorable professions, and that it was necessary to distance Brazilians from 'their own ignorance':

To be a good Brazilian, the boy must also know how to read. An uneducated man is an unhappy man because he does not have the qualifications to exercise many advantageous professions and constantly suffers from his own ignorance. Therefore, the government does not want there to be Brazilians who cannot read. Why doesn't the government want it? Because the government is a friend of Brazilians and does not like ignorance. Because the government does not like ignorance, it maintains schools and universities, facilitating the education of young people. The Constitution of Brazil considers the integral education of offspring to be the first duty and natural right of parents (D.N.P., 1938, section 9).

Interestingly, this part of the content establishes a co-responsibility for children's education, or in terms of the text, 'offspring,' between the State and parents. In this case, it is also clear that, despite the intention of presenting a simplified text for understanding, on several occasions, the writing resorts to explaining the terminology used.

What is the offspring? The boy doesn't know. The offspring of a couple are their children. The boy and his siblings are the offspring of their parents. All parents have a duty to educate their children. Education is a wealth that a poor father passes on to his son. It is an inheritance that is worth more than money because education enables the individual to succeed in life.

A father who does not educate his child is a bad father. A bad father is a bad Brazilian. The father who abandons his son to ignorance disrespects the Constitution, committing a serious offense. No one should claim poverty to justify a lack of education. If the father is poor, he can ask for help from the State, that is, from Brazil, for the education of his offspring. The Constitution guarantees this right (D.N.P., 1938, section 9).

The last section, in turn, contains an essay that seeks to recapitulate and conclude. The main aspects that again come to light are the country's wealth and strength and the existence of Brazil's adequate and redemptive regime, the so-called Estado Novo.

Here is a panorama of Brazilian life, a confrontation between the Brazil of yesterday and the Brazil of today. Brazil is rich. Brazil is strong. Brazil therefore has the right to be happy, thriving, and respected. What did Brazil lack for this? A regime suited to your needs. A form of government that corresponded to national desires. This regime, this form of government, Brazil has it now. The Estado Novo represents this ideal, with an imperative to save the country (D.N.P., 1938, section 30).

And then, in the last paragraphs, there is an allusion to that man so necessary for the leadership of the country, who embodied the supreme figure of the Estado Novo dictatorial regime: Getúlio Vargas, the Boss.

Once the new regime was created, he revealed himself to be the Leader that Brazil needed, the guide that nationality needed. This Boss and this guide is Getúlio Vargas, the man who trusts and believes in the future of the country, who promotes the happiness of Brazilians, and who had the courage to break with the mistakes of the past, to reform the country's system of government in an act of high significance, prestigious by the armed forces, strengthened by public opinion, giving new guidance to Brazilian life.

Brazilians!

Here is the regime that suits Brazil and the Boss that suits the regime: the Estado Novo and Getúlio Vargas. The strong regime and the energetic and serene Boss correspond to the demands of the national conscience, and the Boss corresponds to the spirit and needs of the regime (D.N.P., 1938, section 30).

I identify in this writing style the same formula of literary expression presented in the book *Il Grande Nocchiero* (Fiori, 1932), whose title can be translated as *The Great Helmsman*. Adopting a manualistic analysis perspective — since it is a printed product resulting from propaganda produced in the social environment of Italian fascism and intended for use in schools — I point out that this 160-page volume, sprinkled with some illustrations related to the regime that conceived it, presents a textuality that, especially regarding language, aimed to cause in the reader a complex of emotions and feelings desirable in that historical context.

Therefore, as Badanelli and Cigales (2020) point out in the presentation of a dossier on methodological issues concerning manualistics, the scrutiny of manuals as objects and sources of investigation help to question, from both a historical and sociological perspective, the educational processes engendered, as methodological combinations are considered that include, among other aspects, content analysis and disputes between the various social and political agents involved in the constitution of the educational field. In the case of this Italian manual, the structure adopted and which justifies its title becomes more than evident when analyzing the index, which is composed of three large parts, each of which is subdivided into several small lessons whose titles integrate a harmonious set of phrases inexorably associated with fascist ideology: *La Nave Sbandata* (The Disoriented Ship), *Il Grande Nocchiero* (The Great Helmsman), and *Sulla Sicura Rotta* (On the Safe Route). Such a script suggests that, until the arrival of fascism, Italy was a ship without control, the actions of the maximum leader worked perfectly in governing the vessel, and even though, as a consequence, the nation took the right direction, it began to progress safely. In accordance with this logic, the second part is introduced with an illustration that represents a muscular, shirtless Mussolini, who vigorously holds the helm in the middle of a rough sea, followed by the subtitle *Chi operò il miracolo?*, that is, Who worked miracles?

Who can work miracles of such rapid and profound change?

One man only: MUSSOLINI!

One man only! Those who will come after us, even the new generations of the next century, reading about the glories of Fascism and its Duce, will have to think that we have, perhaps through a phenomenon of collective suggestion, exalted the Man and his work immeasurably: therefore that this seems to surpass human strengths and human possibilities.

So, who is this legendary Man?

Benito Mussolini, the great figure of statesman and leader of the people who sums up in himself the highest virtues of people of Italian descent, who by a thousand cubits towers over the most illustrious men of all countries and of all times, Benito Mussolini that Divine Providence wanted to give to Italy for its immediate salvation and its future fortunes, is nothing more than an authentic son of the people. However, going back in time, one can find among his ancestors men who had noble origins and gave prestige to Italy in the weapons, letters, and sciences (Fiori, 1932, p. 41–42)⁷.

⁷ "Chi pote operare il miracolo di un cambiamento così rapido e così profondo? Un uomo solo: MUSSOLINI! Un uomo solo! Coloro che verranno dopo di noi, anche le nuove generazioni del più prossimo secolo, legendo i fasti del Fascismo e de suo Duce, dovranno pensare che noi abbiamo, forse per un fenomeno di suggestione collettiva, esaltato oltre

Final considerations

As the application of the content analysis of *Brazil is good* progressed, it became evident that despite the alleged intention of communicating with the child reader, the object of the book presupposes that there is a certain type of reader receiving the text and a desired set of messages to be assimilated. However, it is important to note that the reception of this literary text is associated with questioning how a child produces meaning.

Due to the context in which the book was produced, the Estado Novo dictatorship commanded by Getúlio Vargas, in which a propaganda department was created, the narration is marked, at various times, by a phraseological complexity, even though the reader would be the Brazilian 'Boy.' In other words, it results in a departure from syntactic and semantic stability, which, in several cases, is combined with the impossibility of accurately describing to the child reader the context and intentionality with which a word is used, sometimes in a mixture of terms that are difficult to understand and which, consequently, requires new explanations so as not to make the wording misunderstood and generate distance from its indoctrinating objective.

Even so, the application of the content analysis methodology made it possible to identify the most frequently occurring terms, which also nourished, in dialogue with the chosen theoretical framework, the set of interpretations that allow me to assert equivalences between the textuality of *Brazil is good* and the *pinocchiate* produced in the environment of Italian fascism. This is because if the plots in which the Pinocchio puppet was involved on behalf of fascist propaganda are filled with messages for Italian childhood, which appeal to a basis made up of violence and prejudices of different types in relation to the enemies of the Mussolinian regime, in several of the sections of the Brazilian book examined, it appears that the concepts, explanations, as well as warnings and orders regarding the foundations of human action suggested to the Brazilian boy, are nourished by equally fascistizing ingredients.

In the Italian stories, unlike the original version in which the puppet ends badly, Pinocchio always emerges victorious because he adhered to fascist ideology, the path to redemption. Comparatively, in the book *Brazil is Good*, the contents are intended to present everything that *The Boy wants to know*, that *The Boy doesn't know*, or, at various times, reiterates what *The Boy knows*! Still, always in accordance with the ideology present in that authoritarian context.

I conclude that, as much as the fascist *pinocchiate*, the book *Brazil is good* translates an educational project that intended to use various materials for school use and aimed at children's consumption as an apparatus of domination and ideological indoctrination. The analysis of the present content points to the fascistization intentions that the forms of language that constructed the speeches and narrations sought to achieve as the messages were understood, accepted, and internalized by the boy reader and even by his relatives. If, on either side, the *pinocchiate* sought to legitimize themselves as fiction literature, to seduce as entertainment and the possibility of evasion, all associated with the sympathy generated by the adventurous puppet, the content of the book *Brazil is Good* needs to be understood as inoculating an ideology that is now unwanted, but which, at the time, intended to act towards the deconstruction of training perspectives aligned with the defense of human rights, justice, peace, and democracy. *Brazil is good* is an expression of Brazilian fascism.

I leave this contribution as another element for the continuity of discussions on the formation of childhood because this is based on the search for the continuous development of perspectives on literature that, under the framework of critical historical knowledge, and as researchers, teachers, and families of all types, we will present them in homes and schools. More than that, it is a warning for those who disbelieve in the continuous historical action of those who raise swastikas and other symbols linked to contemporary expressions of fascism. Unfortunately, new forms of political action have been emerging and attempts to reinvigorate fascist myths and their flags. *The Brazil that I understand as Good* is not the one presented by any type of dictatorship and never comes close to any historical form that fascism took, regardless of its leaders!

misura l'Uomo e la sua opera: di tanto questa sembra sorpassare le forze umane e le umane possibilità. Chi è dunque mai quest'Uomo leggendario? Benito Mussolini, la grande figura di Statista e di condottiero di popoli che in sé riassume le più alte virtù della gente di stirpe italiana, che di mille cubiti giganteggia sui più insigni uomini di Stato d'ogni paese e di ogni tempo, Benito Mussolini che la Divina Provvidenza volle dare all'Italia per la sua salvezza immediata e per le sue fortune avvenire, non è che un autentico figlio del popolo, sebbene risalendo nel tempo possano trovarsi fra i suoi antenati nomi nobili e che diedero lustro all'Italia nelle armi, nelle lettere e nelle scienze".

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