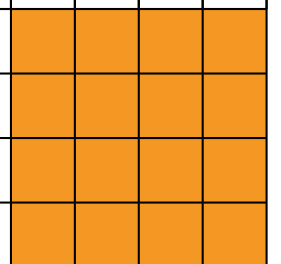
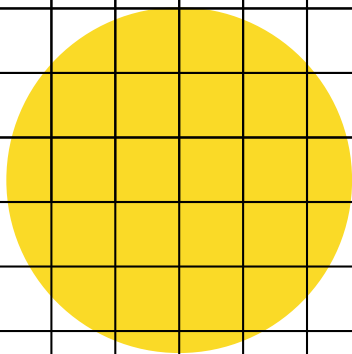
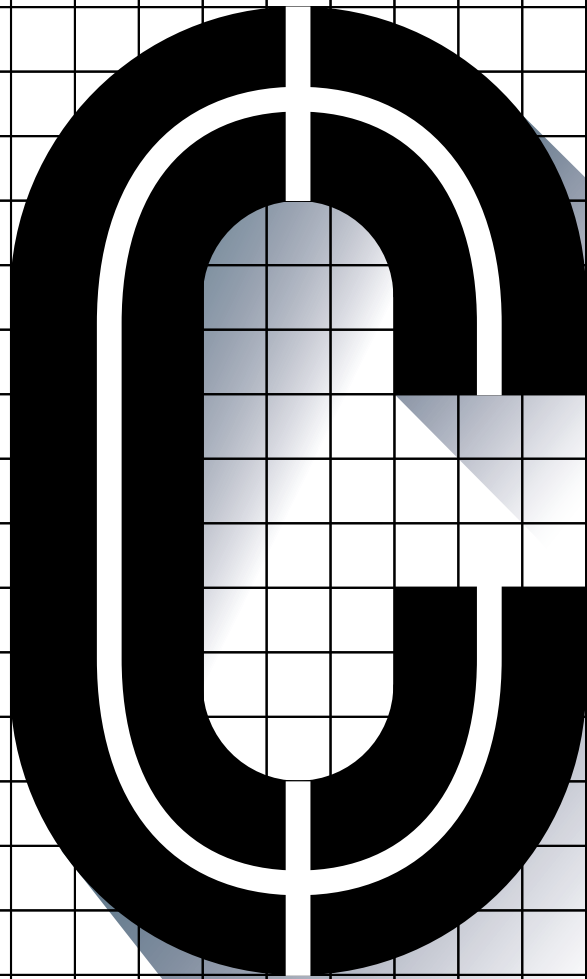
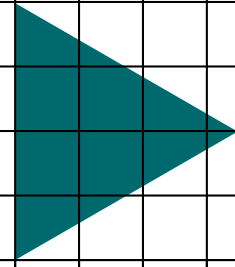


# Concept

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# Concept

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Graphic Design

# GRAPHIC DESIGN AND POLITICAL REGIMES.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POSTERS FROM FRANCO'S SPAIN AND FRANCE AS A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY. FILMS AWARDED TO THE OSCARS FROM 1939 TO 1975

graphic design - film poster - sociopolitical context - quantitative analysis - censorship

**Abstract.** The objective of this work is to determine how censorship can influence the design of film posters. To do this, a comparative analysis has been made between Spain and France in the period from 1939 to 1975, a time in which the Franco dictatorship and the censorship that this entailed developed, and at the same time the French had a democracy with freedom of expression. The posters analyzed are those of the films that won Oscars in those years. The methodology is based on quantitative analysis using a sheet that observes the use of color, typography, composition, technique and illustration in addition to the social values present. It is evident that censorship acted by limiting freedom of expression, but in the case at hand and from the results obtained, it can be concluded that at the cinematographic level the Spanish poster is not so far from that produced in France, a regime whose freedom was more present due to democracy.

**Resumen.** El objetivo de este trabajo es determinar como la censura puede influir en el diseño de los carteles cinematográficos. Para ello se ha hecho un análisis comparativo entre España y Francia en el periodo de 1939 a 1975, tiempo en el que se desarrolló la dictadura franquista y la censura que esto conllevó, y al mismo tiempo los franceses tenían una democracia con libertad de expresión. Los carteles analizados son los de las películas que en esos años ganaron premios Oscars. La metodología se basa en el análisis cuantitativo mediante una ficha que observa el uso del color, la tipografía, la composición, la técnica y la ilustración además de los valores sociales presentes. Es evidente que la censura actuó limitando la libertad de expresión, pero en el caso que nos ocupa y de los resultados obtenidos se puede concluir que a nivel cinematográfico el cartel español no dista tanto del producido en Francia, régimen cuya libertad estaba más presente debido a la democracia.

## 1. JUSTIFICATION

The importance of this work lies in the fact that it considers graphic design as a reflection of the context in which it is born, specifically it approaches the film poster to study how graphic language and the messages it transmits can be influenced or limited by freedom of expression, specifically censorship. For this reason, posters

made in Francoist Spain have been compared with those in democratic France.

### 1.1. OBJECTIVES

- **To analyse** what the film poster looks like in times of censorship.
- **To compare** graphic design between countries with different political regimes.

- **To determine** the predominant or characteristic graphic elements of the film poster.
- **To underline** the importance of the film poster in the history of graphic design.

**1.2. HYPOTHESIS**

- **H1:** The film poster is a reflection of the political regimes of countries.
- **H2:** The effects of censorship can be seen in Spanish film posters when compared to those of a democratic country like France. and this can be seen in graphic design elements
- **H3:** The presence and treatment of the female figure is one of the most manipulated elements.
- **H4:** The presence and treatment of social values related to politics, religion and sex are also affected by censorship.

**1.3. ABOUT THE ADVERTISING POSTER**

The poster plays an important role as a means of communication; in addition to its artistic value, it provides relevant sociological, economic and political information (Vázquez, 2015). Since the 19th century, when the poster was at its peak as an advertising medium, it has been used as a form of propaganda, political and even educational.

Nowadays, the poster has not lost its relevance, and has been updated in various media, being present on walls and shop windows in our cities.

The poster thus comes to the forefront of communication and its purpose is not only aesthetic, but also informative, convincing and seductive (Eguizábal, 2014).

Costa, (2003) adds that the poster is a bi-media message (image - text), the result of graphic design work, that is to say, of mental synthesis, of creative abstraction to transmit concentrated, instantaneous information with the same effectiveness.

**2. METHODOLOGY**

The present work is based on a research that uses the well-known methodology of content analysis (Bengoa, 2020), which is a systematic and objective procedure as it uses variable techniques and categories that respond to study designs and defined and explicit analysis criteria.

On the other hand, Krippendorff (1990) defines it as: “a research technique designed to formulate, from certain data, reproducible and valid inferences that can be applied to their context”. Thus, it allows different comparative studies to be carried out between different documents with different objects of reference between different sources or periods.

Hernández Sampieri, Fernández Collado, y Baptista Lucio (2018) states that we can talk about two types of content analysis: quantitative and qualitative.

Such analysis will focus on the quantitative approach, which uses data collection to test hypotheses based on numerical measurement and statistical analysis, in order to establish patterns of behaviour and test theories. It is successive and evidential. Each stage is sequential and precedes the next. It starts with an idea from which research questions and objectives are developed and a theoretical framework is constructed. Hypotheses are established and variables are determined, tested by means of a sample or matrix and a series of conclusions are drawn regarding these hypotheses.

This corpus is made up of 58 posters, taking as a reference 29 Oscar-winning films from 1939 to 1975. Therefore, we will analyse the sample composed of 29 posters produced for broadcasting in Spain, where censorship prevailed due to Franco’s repression, and 29 posters for France, which enjoyed freedom of expression due to the democratic policy of the time. As they are representative of the same feature films, they will be analysed.

A survey of film history has been carried out through FilmAffinity, which is an honest, reliable and comprehensive film database. For those that could not be found there, we used another source called Sensacine.

For our analysis, we have referred to other research theses in which we have found similar matrices that have been of great help to us.

Thanks to Pazos & Benítez (2014), we have added to our analysis sheet determinations such as: format, colour, typographies, different types of shots, different types of angles, composition, reading axes of the poster...

We also decided to carry out a content analysis based on (Ibid.), where the authors examine posters for fairs and festivals. We give the re-

search a formal character and at the same time we obtain more concrete results...

In addition, we have added other data to the file for later analysis, such as: poses of the model, values conveyed, characters represented, even elements that are modified,

juxtaposed or eliminated. Below is the analysis tab matrix.

In some sections the sum of certain percentages is greater than 100, this is due to the fact that more than one variable/ more than one element per poster has been observed in the same poster.

FILM TITLE	DIRECTOR
DATING	COUNTRY

**VALUES**

- Freedom
- Hedonism
- Youth
- Peace
- Progress
- Utopia
- Religiosity
- Erotism
- Thriller
- Clasissm
- Nature
- Family
- Tenderness
- Economic Wealth
- Suffering
- Death
- Beauty
- Happiness
- Heroism
- Commitment

**STYLE**

- Baroque
- Cubism
- Surrealism
- Russian Constructivism
- Avant-garde
- Pop Art
- Classicism
- Expressionism

**TECHNIQUE**

- Watercolour
- Oil
- Gouache
- Airbrush
- Pastel painting
- Tempera or gouache
- Fresco
- Ink
- Mixed media
- Illustration
- Coloured photography
- Photomontage
- Stencil
- Pointillism
- Collage

**STROKE**

- Simple lines
- Compound paths
- Compound shapes

**TYPES OF REPRESENTATION**

- Realistic
- Conceptual
- Mixed

**CENSURED ELEMENTS**

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- None of the above

**COMPOSITION**

- Dynamics
- Static
- Figurative
- Abstract
- Modular

**PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION**

- Balance
- Symmetry
- Regularity
- Unity
- Complexity
- Profusion
- Exaggeration
- Subtlety
- Activity
- Transparency
- Depth
- Variation
- Juxtaposition
- Sequentiality
- Continuity
- Exaltation

**TYPES OF SHOT**

- American shot
- Panoramic shot
- Panoramic or wide shot
- General shot.
- Short general shot
- General shot
- Figure shot
- Medium shot
- Medium close-up
- Close-up

**FIGURES REPRESENTED**

- Animals
- Buildings
- Objects
- People
- Typographies
- Landscapes
- Other

**GENDER WHO APPEAR**

- Male
- Woman
- Child

**INLET ANGLE**

- Upper
- Lower
- Natural

**MODEL POSITION**

- Frontal
- Profile
- ¾

**COLOUR DOMINANCE**

- Blue
- Magenta
- Red
- Yellow
- Orange
- White
- Black
- Green
- Purple or violet
- Brown
- Pink

**FONT FAMILY**

- Egyptian
- Palo Seco
- With serifs
- Script
- Decorative or fancy
- Ancient Roman

**FONT STYLE**

- Round
- Italic
- Bold
- High box
- Low box
- Versalitas
- Condensed
- Expanded

**TEXT ALIGN**

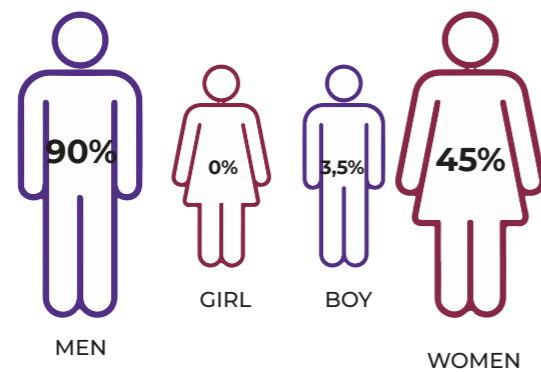
- Left
- Right
- Centred

The films whose posters have been analysed in this order are:

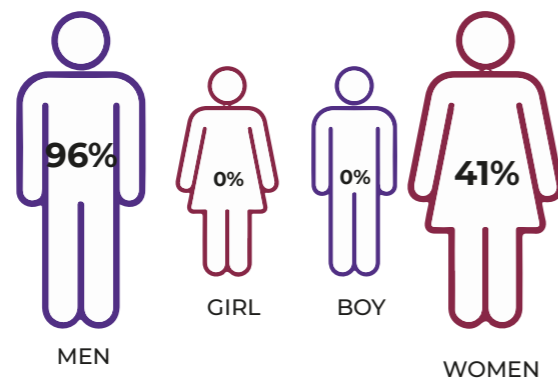
- Gone with the Wind
- Rebecca
- How green was my valley
- Mrs. Miniver
- Following My Path
- Days without a trace
- The best years of our lives
- The invisible barrier
- The politician
- Naked Eve
- An American in Paris
- The Greatest Show on Earth
- The law of silence
- Around the world in 80 days
- The bridge over the river Kway
- Gigi
- Ben-Hur
- The Apartment
- West side story(love without barriers)
- Lawrence of Arabia
- A man for eternity
- In the Heat of the Night
- Midnight Cowboy
- The French Connection (Against the drug empire)
- The Godfather
- The Sting
- The Godfather Part 2
- Somebody Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

**3. RESULTS**

**GENDER WHO APPEAR SPAIN**



**GENDER WHO APPEAR FRANCE**



**TEXT ALIGNMENT SPAIN**

LEFT TEXT ALIGNMENT

**31%**

CENTRE TEXT ALIGNMENT

**86%**

RIGHT TEXT ALIGNMENT

**7%**

**TEXT ALIGNMENT FRANCE**

LEFT TEXT ALIGNMENT

**34%**

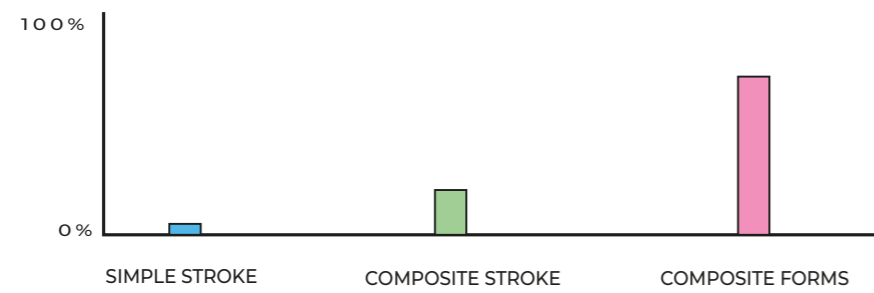
CENTRE TEXT ALIGNMENT

**69%**

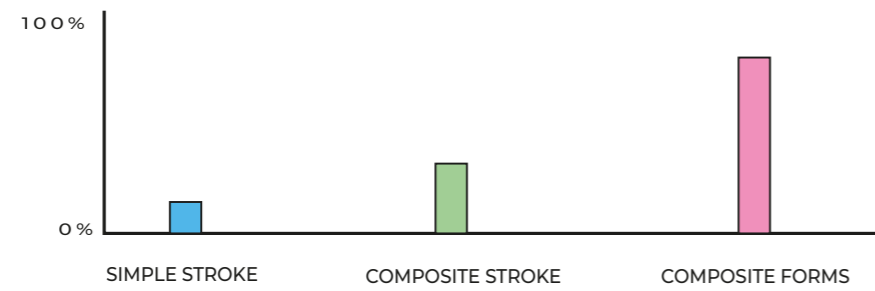
RIGHT TEXT ALIGNMENT

**10%**

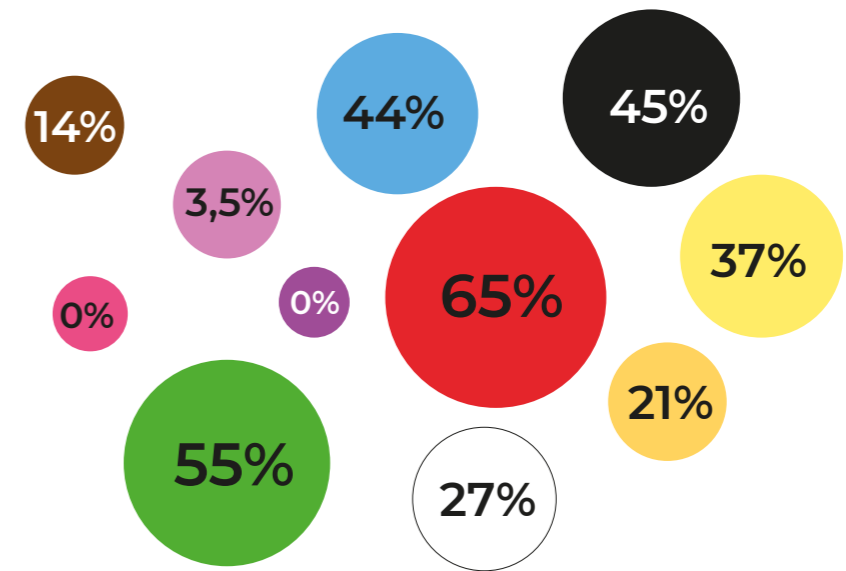
## STROKE SPAIN



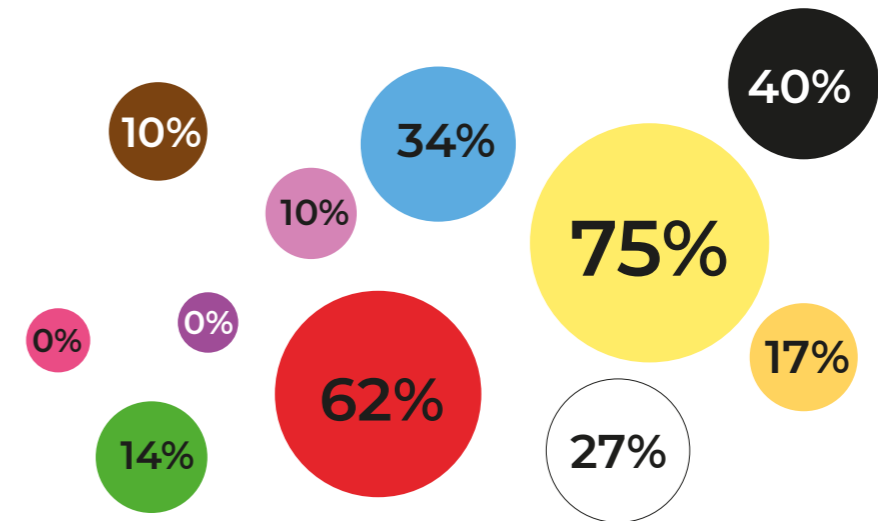
## STROKE FRANCE



## COLOUR DOMINANCE SPAIN



## COLOUR DOMINANCE FRANCE



MODEL POSITION SPAIN

MODEL POSITION FRANCE

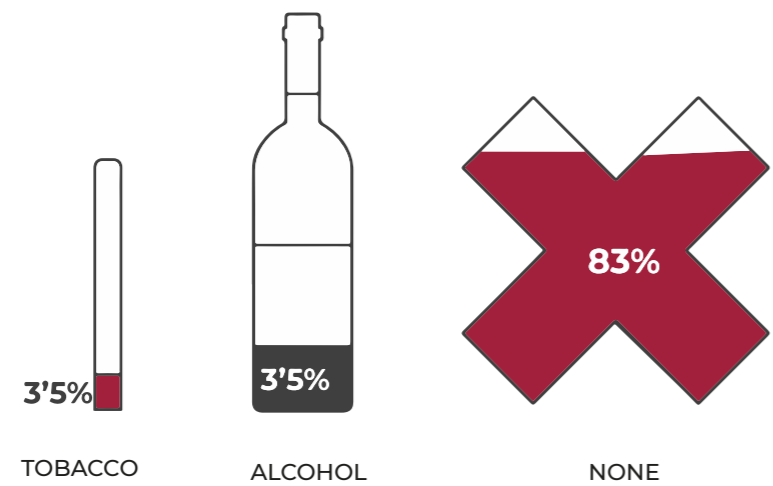
PROFILE 48%  
FRONT 62%  
3/4 37%

PROFILE 34%  
FRONT 59%  
3/4 24%

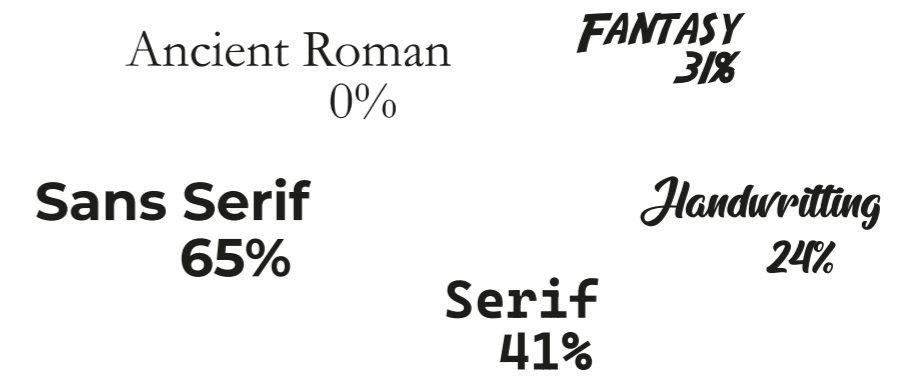
CENSORED ELEMENTS SPAIN



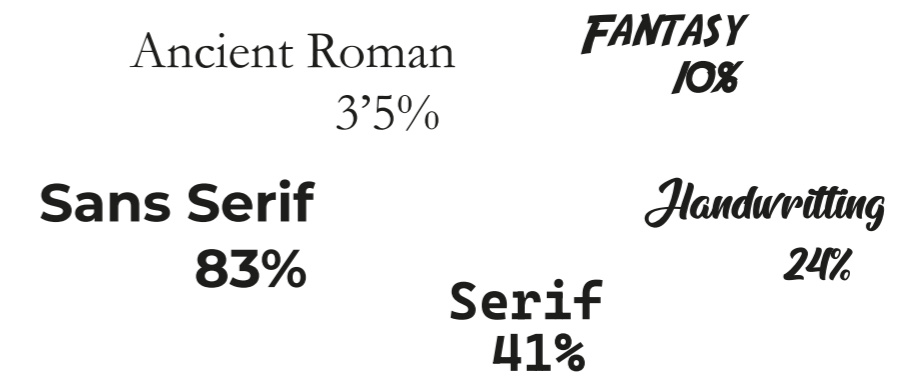
CENSORED ELEMENTS FRANCE



FONT STYLE SPAIN



FONT STYLE FRANCE



### 3.1. CONCLUSIONS

We are faced with a period in which they did not have advanced technology or other ways of advertising as they do today, to which they responded with their own supports used at the time, such as the so-called hand programmes, large posters and advertisements in printed media such as newspapers and magazines feature that characterises the advertising design of posters from a certain period onwards is the use of several different posters for the same film.

In relation to the female figure, in this case, there are not too many differences, the woman in the Spanish poster is usually in the background, although surprisingly, and having analysed the French poster later, we can see that in both cases she does not usually occupy a leading role.

At the end of the 1950s, many posters in both countries are the same, i.e. they unify the same poster, adapting it only to the language of the country in which it is to be published or broadcast.

In both cases, i.e. in France and Spain, the composition is dynamic, breaking with the formality of the static compositions that appear in the background.

As is well known, the maintenance of the family and the transmission of religion were fundamental for Francoism (Herranz, 2005). In our analysis, we have observed that in these values, which were so important for Spain in those years, there are hardly any differences with the representation observed in France. However, the most frequently mentioned is suffering, which is also the most present in the French case. It is striking that eroticism, something greatly pursued by the Franco regime (Sarasola, 2017), holds the second most prominent position. In France, however, eroticism is relegated to lower positions, which is surprising considering the freedom that France enjoyed.

In two countries where the political regimes were so different, we observe a coincidence or similarity in the colours, since the most represented colours are red and yellow, which have traditionally been related to vitality and great passions. On the contrary, magenta has not been represented, according to Heller, it is the representation of balanced emotions, not as passionate or intense as the previous ones. In

relation to the cultural movements, a greater presence of the avant-garde is observed, this is manifested in the use of artistic techniques typical of this, stencils and airbrushes.

The technique of photomontage (Bertúa, 2008) is the most representative of the avant-garde and modernity, and is used more than twice as often in Spain than in France.

**H1:** The film poster is a reflection of the political regimes of countries.

This hypothesis cannot be verified since a European Mediterranean style can be appreciated, that is to say, it does not depend directly on the political regime, but rather it is referenced from the styles of nearby countries. In France in recent years there has been a certain taste for innovation, with more conceptual and synthesised posters, without so much ornamentation.

**H2:** The effects of censorship can be seen in Spanish film posters.

Despite the censorship that was present in all areas of Franco's Spain, it is surprising that it is far removed from this idea, as it goes hand in hand with France, a certain freedom can be seen in these representations, although in Spain there is a tendency to transmit messages in which the feelings are negative, such as suffering, sadness and in which the colour red predominates, which can represent eroticism in some cases, as well as tension.

**H3:** Female figure is one of the most manipulated elements.

Actually, it is, since both in France and in Spain the figure of the man predominates over that of the woman, since in fewer cases, even in the case of girls and boys, boys always appear and in no case girls.

**H4:** Social values related to political, religious and sexual question are also affected by censorship.

Both France and Spain make a lot of reference to the religious question, and really, politics in this case does not influence the artist's freedom of expression, as similar freedoms can be observed in both countries despite the important difference between dictatorship and democracy.

It is obvious that censorship acted by limiting freedom of expression, but in the case it can be concluded that on a cinematographic level, the Spanish poster is not so different

from the one produced in France, a regime with more freedom due to democracy.

When it came to researching and contrasting posters, we came across those issued in the USA and the UK, and curiously, we can see that they had similar characteristics to each other but were different from those of Spain and France, which in many cases were similar. We could recognise a European Mediterranean style as opposed to an Anglo-Saxon model when it came to advertising.

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