

# The Censorship of Sex: A Study of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* in Franco's Spain

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A number of Translation Studies scholars have explored manipulation in translated texts and the underlying ideologies that support them. Indeed, the Manipulation School (Theo Hermans, José Lambert and others) emerged early in the short history of the discipline and set out to describe the textual manifestations of manipulation and to elucidate the ideological constructs upon which they rested. Despite this early impetus for examining manipulation in translated texts, relatively few studies of the actual mechanisms of censorship—a specific kind of manipulation—and the actual textual outcomes in translated texts have appeared in the discipline so far. This investigation, therefore, will focus some attention on this area, and it will shed some light on the complexities that ensue at the juncture of censorship and translation.

In order to reach an insightful understanding of censorship in translated texts, the concrete textual manifestations must be approached in such a way as to examine the censorship system in practice and, perhaps more importantly, to reveal the underlying subtleties of the system, in particular the ideologies that support it. Though certain censored elements may appear to respond exactly to what would be expected under the ideological constraints of the places and periods in which they occurred, others may respond to a number of contradictions and subversions that also evolve within these constantly fluctuating systems. The present study, therefore, will describe, analyse and theorise the relationship between censorship and translation within a framework that will examine the system itself, as well as the contradictions and subversions the system inevitably produced.

The study will examine all censored material in the into-Spanish versions of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1939) produced during the Franco dictatorship in Spain (1939-1975). The rationale behind this choice of example text is primarily the following: the explicit sexual references —homosexuality/bisexuality, nudity and suggestive dialogue— contained in the book cover a wide range of the kind of sexual activities typically discouraged by the Catholic Church during the period; also, the Spanish versions of *The Big Sleep* (1949, 1958, and 1972) contain instances of government censorship and self-censorship that reveal many of the tensions and developments the system underwent during this period, as well as some of the contradictions and incongruities of the system in action, and the subversions and challenges that individual translators brought to their tasks.

The first section of this research report describes the structure of the official government censorship during the Franco dictatorship in Spain; this section also analyses the underlying ideologies that supported the censorship, and theorises some of the complexities present in the censorship of the period. The second section describes the actual censorship that the novel underwent in Spanish translation; it examines the three into-Spanish translations in some detail and also provides some background for each of the translators. The third section describes, analyses, and theorises the three main types of sexual reference in the text —male homosexuality, female nudity, and sexually suggestive dialogue.

### **Censorship in Franco's Spain**

Spain could be said to be somewhat of an expert in censorship, as Spain's writers and translators have long been exposed to the likes of Torquemada's Inquisition and other periods of political and cultural conflict during which censorship was common practice. Franco's censorship, therefore, slipped neatly into the long-running national history of censorship and repression. His government, quite predictably, sought to protect itself and its main ally, the Catholic Church, by promoting its own ideology and by concealing opposing ideological manifestations from the Spanish people. The ideological system the government imposed rested on the newly-fortified notion of Spanish nationalism and the traditional notion of Catholic morality: officially, the Spanish nation was Catholic and the Catholic Church was nationalist. So while the government set out to promote a fervent

national patriotic spirit and unquestioning loyalty to the nation's leader, the Catholic Church undertook a similarly fervent endeavour in the sphere of morality. The Catholic Church upheld its vision of morality not only by predicating from the pulpit, but also by dominating Spanish social life, commandeering the education system, and censoring the publication of books, newspapers, films and other media.

The moral code imposed by the Catholic Church was a typically fervent version of male patriarchy within the institutions of marriage and the family. In this conception of morality, any kind of sex that did not serve the male patriarchal model—premarital sex, sex for pleasure, extramarital sex, sex with same-gender partners, and so on—was officially banned. Men held power, and women were subject to it; Spanish women were called on to uphold the morality of the nation come what may.

However, to paraphrase a Spanish expression, the Church was holier than the Pope himself, in the case of women, and it did not practise what it preached, in the case of men. While exhorting all Spaniards to cohere under its banner of morality, the Church allowed women to be cut to two male-oriented patterns: women who were desirable for marriage for their impeccable morality, and women whose more assailable morality made them undesirable for marriage. On the other hand, the Church was tolerant of the immorality of Spanish men, and it would turn a blind eye to minor sins such as male infidelity, male promiscuity, and so on, whereas the Church encouraged women to forgive, hide, and forget for the sake of institutions greater than themselves such as marriage and the family (see Alonso Tejada (1977), Martín Gaité (1987), and Torres (2002)). The Church allowed the two opposing realities—the official and the actual—to exist, providing that the latter was kept clandestine.

Furthermore, the Catholic Church in Spain, rather unpredictably, sought to prevent actual physical affection between members of the opposite sex, even within the marriage and the family. During the Franco period there was an almost complete physical and emotional separation of men and women into two entirely different worlds. Alonso Tejada says: “For both boys and girls alike it was forbidden to look members of the opposite sex in the eye, and all ‘special friendships,’ meaning any manifestation of personal affection no matter how innocuous, were forbidden. A morose fear of any expression of tenderness or emotion was instilled into them” (1977,

p. 110, my translation). Similar testimony is contained in Torres (2002) and Martín Gaité (1987). The celibate clergy, perhaps unable or unwilling to understand what affectionate love meant or should mean for lay people, taught men and women to accept unquestioningly that even in the marriage and in the family, affection was an ill. Martín Gaité laments that while it may have been consistent with Catholic doctrine to actively prevent young couples from discovering each other's bodies before marriage, it was insincere and pernicious "to prevent them from becoming friends and sharing their desires, fears, disappointments and hopes. In other words, to prevent them from letting themselves be loved [...]" (p. 210, my translation).

The Catholic Church brought this rather cynical ideology to the censorship system by seeking appointments to high posts for Catholic sympathizers and by encouraging recruitment of Catholic sympathizers for the anonymous posts of readers, i.e. censors. In accordance with the ideological construct described above, the Church was able to suppress discordant opinions about the male-dominated sexual morality and any mention of its own tolerance of male sexual immorality. Also suppressed from texts were allusions to any affectionate physical and emotional proximity between men and women, even within marriage.

Though it is convenient to think that the censorship period ran from 1939 to 1975, the dates of Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War and that of his death, it actually began in 1938, when Franco's provisional wartime government adopted its first Press Law, and did not end until 1978, when the current Spanish constitution guaranteed freedom of expression. Franco's censorship can be divided into two distinct periods: a severe autocratic period from 1938 to 1966, and an apparently more lenient period from 1966 to 1978.

The first period was unashamedly harsh. The Information and Tourism Minister Gabriel Arias Salgado (1951-1962) was characteristic of the reigning ideological spirit of this first period. He was unwaveringly stern in his defense of censorship as a way of enabling the Spanish people to have "the freedom to do only good" (qtd. in Sinova, 1989, p. 103). The word censorship (*censura*) was used as a source of pride by the new Regime. Publishers were required to submit all titles for prior censorship, after which readers were assigned, and a judgment was issued. The censors filled in a Reader's Report designed to help them screen out any offensive references to the dogma of the Regime, the Regime itself, its allies, the Church, Church ministers, and

morality in general. Readers were encouraged to state in the Report whether they felt the book should be authorized or not, but the final decision about any particular work resided with a superior or the minister himself. Readers were also entitled to add more extensive comments and/or observations about the book. The outcome of the censorship process could be authorization, authorization with omissions, or non-authorization.

This first period of autocratic censorship drew to a close in the late 60's, when Spain's external politics and economic expansion called for a seemingly more open type of information control. Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the young Minister of Tourism and Information who succeeded Arias Salgado, was given the duty of redesigning the legal framework for the new system of censorship. He revamped it in such a way that on the surface it indeed appeared more open, while underneath it was as effective as the prior system at censoring what the government wanted.<sup>1</sup>

During this period prior permission was no longer a requirement for all books published in Spain; the word censorship was even avoided in favor of the supposedly more acceptable expression of voluntary consultation (*consulta voluntaria*). Prior to publication, publishers were encouraged to submit all their titles for voluntary consultation, where they underwent a process very similar to that established for mandatory censorship during the first period. All publishers, however, regardless of whether they had submitted their titles for voluntary consultation or not, were required to deposit all titles with the censors prior to distribution. At least two of the modifications made turned the business of publishing books into a much riskier affair than it had ever been before. One was the above-mentioned deposit prior to distribution, a stage at which books that had not been presented for voluntary consultation could be sequestered by the censors. The other was the addition of "administrative silence" as a possible outcome of the censorship process. "Administrative silence" was an ambiguous

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<sup>1</sup> The relative administrative consistency over such an extended period of time appears to have been unique among autocratic twentieth century European Regimes. In Mussolini's Italy (1933-1945) censors relied on inconsistently applied post-publication sequestering and the use of discrete channels of communication with editors as a form of pre-publication censorship (see Rundle, 2000), and in Hitler's Germany (1933-1945) censors relied on pre-publication censorship, which was fairly tolerant in the pre-war period and absolutely intolerant during the war (see Sturge, 1999).

bureaucratic state in which the censors neither authorized nor refused to authorize the publication of a book, and publishers could proceed at their own risk; titles submitted for voluntary consultation which met with administrative silence could also be sequestered at the prior deposit stage (Abellán, 1980, pp. 138-139).<sup>2</sup> For the publishing houses, this actually meant a tougher state of affairs in economic terms, as full print runs of books met with administrative silence during voluntary consultation or presented for prior deposit could be sequestered. Today, all official documentation is open to the public and stored in the Archivo General de la Administración in Alcalá de Henares (Madrid). The dossiers typically contain the official requests for censorship, the readers' reports, all other documentation written by censorship officials, all correspondence with publishers, and often a copy of the work itself in typewritten manuscript copies and/or in proofs.

The ideological and administrative model for the blanket censorship during the Franco period must also be weighed against the observable tensions, inconsistencies and subversions that faced the system at the same time. On the other side of the censorship equation were the authors, translators, editors and others, who were not entirely without recourse to buck the system. Over the years, the rigor of the censorship system came under scrutiny as it became evident that Spanish writers living outside of Spain, such as Luis Cernuda, were publishing their works freely in Mexico, Argentina and other Spanish-speaking countries. It also appeared ridiculous that the Regime should want to censor the works of prominent international writers, such as Ernest Hemingway, when their works had already been published in Spanish elsewhere. Spanish writers, translators and editors used arguments such as these in order to appeal for increased leniency. In fact, the untiring work of Spanish editors during this period was one of

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<sup>2</sup> Other influential studies on censorship in Spain during the Franco period were conducted by Cisquella et al (1977), Neuschäfer (1994) and Rabadán (2000). Cisquella examined publishers' files and discusses this data in a rather anecdotal fashion, heavily leaning towards the publishers' stance against the injustices they suffered under censorship. Neuschäfer examined several canonical texts in Spanish literature by Nobel Prize winner Camilo José Cela, Carmen Martín Gaité, and others and concluded that authors writing in Spanish during the period often developed alternative modes of expression, and censorship did not really have such a detrimental effect on Spanish literature as others have contended. Rabadán's edited volume, specifically about the censorship of translations, contains a preliminary overview of some of the most interesting research being conducted in this area in Spain today.

the greatest obstacles the censors faced when wielding the red pen. Spanish editors such as José Janés (Janés Editor and Plaza y Janés), Luis de Caralt, and José Manuel Lara (Planeta) were well acquainted with the publishing world on an international level and persistent enough to break ground for the works that they wanted to include in their catalogues. They argued that Spain would be seen as an international laughingstock if it censored the translations of works by well-known international authors, and they also threatened to expose Spain's unfair administrative procedures for censorship, such as "administrative silence" and sequestering, on an international level. Prominent Spanish writers made similar appeals and circumvented the system by seeking alternate modes of expression (see Neuschäfer, 1994).

While prominent writers and the translations of their work may have enjoyed a certain preferential treatment, others unwillingly but dutifully censored their own work prior to submitting it to the censors for approval. In order to do so, writers and translators developed a sort of counter-ideology created through an acute awareness of the system and its ideology combined with the perception that the system could and often did act unfairly, arbitrarily, and in bad faith. While the system remained apparently constant while the dictatorship lasted, changing social conditions within and outside the country did in fact produce some changes to the system in the very long term. However, in the short term these changes often produced arbitrary overreactions by the censors that made authors, editors, publishers, and translators leery of rocking the boat too much. As a result, many authors, translators and editors took few risks with material that bordered on what was publishable at any given time and they would censor it themselves prior to presenting the manuscript for government censorship.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Abellán states that the primary goal of the system of censorship was to incite authors and translators to censor themselves (Abellán, 1980, p. 74).

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<sup>3</sup> When speaking of "government censorship", what is commonly meant is the action of officials acting on behalf of the government who suppress and/or manipulate either entire texts or specific material from texts submitted for publication; when speaking of "self-censorship" what is commonly meant is the action taken by the translators and/or editors, copyeditors, proofreaders, and so on acting on behalf of the translator(s) to suppress and/or manipulate specific material in texts prior to submitting them for approval by the censors.

It is useful for translation studies scholars to determine whether a translation was censored by the government or self-censored. In order to establish what was government-censored, researchers must consult the censorship files for each edition, which contain the readers reports and the proofs specifying what was censored. In order to establish what was self-censored, the published texts must then be contrasted with the original. Researchers can then describe and analyse the passages censored by the government and the self-censored passages, and ultimately propose explanations in light of the ideology that supported the system and in light of the counter-ideology held by authors, translators, editors, and others. Research into self-censorship clearly stumbles against a methodological hurdle: the existence and availability of the testimony and materials of translators and editors is inconsistent. However, for the present study, I have been able to gather some data from an interview with Luis Escolar, the translator of *The Little Sister* [*La hermanita*], published in the same volume as the Navarro translation (see section below), held on 10 June, 1999.

### ***The Big Sleep* in Franco's Spain**

The first translation of *The Big Sleep* was published by Mateu (Barcelona) under the titles *Una dama tenebrosa* [A dark lady] and *Una mujer en la sombra* [A woman in the dark]. Though the books are undated, both appear in the *Catálogo General de la Librería Española: 1931-1950*, the former as having been published in the year 1949 and the latter undated (Catálogo, 1957, p. 680). The translation appeared under yet a third title, *Carne y demonio* [Flesh and the devil], in Argentina in 1955. All three of these titles were published as trade paperbacks with simple cover illustrations destined for a fairly lowbrow readership. The author of the translation is Juan González de Luaces, who signed his works as Juan G. de Luaces, a prolific professional translator of a great many classic and contemporary works of English and American literature (Hurtley, 1992, p. 212). There is no record for this book in the Archivo General de la Administración; but there is a record dated 19 November, 1947 of Francisco F. Mateu's request to translate *The Big Sleep*, using as a temporary title *El gran sueño*. This request was summarily suspended by the censors prior to entering the reading process for reasons that are unspecified. However, it appears that Mateu was not dissuaded: he went ahead and published his translation of *The Big Sleep*. Abellán, based on his extensive research on censored works in this period, believes that the records for these translations must be missing (personal communication); but I believe



that these were pirate translations, because all the data surrounding the publication of the two titles indicate that Mateu was attempting to keep the books out of the view of the censors. He had to make the translation inconspicuous, so he selected a well-known translator, changed the title, omitted the date of publication, and neglected to present the proper legal deposit copy as required by Spanish law to the Spanish National Library. He also severely censored the book by suppressing an entire chapter as well as numerous paragraphs and sentences containing material of a sexual nature.

After this first translation, the Spanish book distributor SGEL requested authorization for importing English versions of *The Big Sleep* into Spain on 10 May 1954 and on 14 May 1958, both of which were denied. The file for the first request is missing from the Archivo General de la Administración, but the file for the second contains an English-language version of the novel and a single Reader's Report. This reader states that "in many points [the novel] borders on pornography, which is precisely one of the elements that intervenes in the plot" and recommends that the authorization be denied.

The second translation of *The Big Sleep* was published in Madrid by Aguilar in 1958 under the title *El sueño eterno*. The translation appeared in an anthology entitled *Novelas Escogidas* [Selected Novels], which contained five Chandler novels. Destined for a more highbrow readership, the book was bound in a unique soft plastic cover with no illustration on it, rather than in paperback, and it was printed on thin bible paper. The authors of the Aguilar translation were Inés Navarro and Antonio Gómez, who were not professionals, but simply people affiliated with the publisher who translated in order to supplement their income. Inés Navarro was an executive secretary at Aguilar and Antonio Gómez was her husband.<sup>4</sup> *Novelas Escogidas* was submitted to prior censorship on 22 October 1957 and authorized on 23 May 1958. The file for *Novelas Escogidas* contains a list of all prior authorizations and rejections for the five novels that the anthology contains, two Reader's Reports, a complete set of typewritten copies of the novels, and a complete set of proofs of the novels. In the list of prior authorizations and rejections, the censors duly noted that the 1947

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<sup>4</sup> On 10 June, 1999, I interviewed Luis Escolar, an editorial consultant for Aguilar and professional translator, who testified that Navarro and Gómez were not professional translators, but that she was an executive secretary and he her husband.

Mateu petition and the 1954 and 1958 SGEL requests for importing English-language versions of the text were suspended. The first reader, who read only *The Big Sleep* and none of the other novels, recommends several suppressions, all of them from chapter 23. The censor has duly crossed out the passages from the typewritten copies, and the proofs contain marks, supposedly written by the editor, showing that the suppressions had been made. The second reader, who read *The Big Sleep* and two of the other novels, merely states that the novel may be published. As to why one novel was read by both censors and two of the novels apparently were not read by either of the censors, it could be suggested that since *The Big Sleep* had already been turned down by the censors, the latter determined that it needed to be examined closely before it was authorized for the first time. It could also be suggested that since *Novelas Escogidas* was a rather large volume destined for a highbrow readership, the censors determined that reading only half of the remaining novels would be sufficient to authorize the publication of the entire volume.

The third translation of *The Big Sleep* was published in Barcelona by Barral Editores in 1972 under the title *El sueño eterno*. This translation was also published as a trade paperback with an eye-catching fluorescent image on the cover and the page edges painted black in such a way that the entire book is black except for the cover image. This translation, attributed to José Antonio Lara, is an almost exact version of the Navarro translation. Only occasional words have been substituted with synonyms and none of the suppressions of the earlier Navarro translation have been reinstated (see example 3 below for examples of this). This is a likely scenario for what happened with the Lara translation: either a real person named José Antonio Lara took the 1958 Navarro translation and transcribed it while changing a minimum of words in the process; or an editor at Barral Editores, possibly even Carlos Barral himself, disguised the transcription of the Navarro translation behind the invented name José Antonio Lara.<sup>5</sup> Had Lara or the Barral editor produced the translation from Chandler's original, or had they at least compared their version with Chandler's original, they certainly would have noticed the self-censored parts of the text, and they might have attempted to restore, if not all, at least some of them. The Lara translation was not presented for voluntary

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<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed explanation of the reasons for suspecting that the Lara version is an unoriginal version based on the Navarro translation, see Linder, 2000.

consultation, but simply deposited in compliance with the prior deposit requirement. The file for this translation contains a single Reader's Report that mentions the fact that this book had already been approved in 1957. The Lara version is the most widely available of the three Spanish-language versions of *The Big Sleep*, as it has been published in more than twenty editions by Bruguera (Barcelona), Planeta (Barcelona), and Debate (Madrid).

### **Censorship in the Translated Texts**

*The Big Sleep* (1939), Raymond Chandler's first and perhaps most important detective novel featuring the hard-boiled Philip Marlowe, contains no potential political offenses to Franco's Regime and its allies, but it does contain potentially offensive material of a sexual nature. Gershon Legman, in a book titled *Love and Death: A Study in Censorship*, offers the following description of the sexual goings-on in *The Big Sleep*: "Raymond Chandler brings sex into his principle volume [...] basing *The Big Sleep* [...] on a pornographic lending-library operated by a homosexual who is murdered for taking nude photographs of a drugged débutante. [...] The evil female protagonists are all lecherous as so many minks, leaping naked in and out of the detective's bed and arms, but this shamus-Galahad is adamantly pure. He never lays so much as the proverbial finger on Chandler's loose-kneed villainesses, and he detests the pornography that he must handle" (Legman, 1949, pp. 68-69).

### **Censorship in the Translated Texts: Male Homosexuals**

There are two male homosexual characters in *The Big Sleep*: Geiger, an effeminate bisexual, is the purveyor of pornographic books; and Carol Lundgren, a very young homosexual, lives with and is employed by Geiger. At one point, Geiger is murdered and Carol Lundgren avenges the murder of Geiger by killing Joe Brody, the man he thought killed Geiger. Marlowe captures Carol Lundgren and hands him in to the police.

Based on biographical accounts of Chandler's life and on his published letters, it is clear that Raymond Chandler showed some intellectual interest in male homosexuals and perhaps even harbored some sympathy for them. Chandler scholars have detected a number of passages in which Chandler's first person narrator Philip Marlowe apparently expresses a homoerotic desire for other men (Legman, 1949,

p. 70; Mason, 1977, p. 95). But even though Chandler included homosexuals in his first novel and may have felt sympathy toward them, he included them in the rather negative roles of murder victim (Geiger) and murderer (Carol Lundgren); his detective Philip Marlowe, furthermore, used derogatory homosexual-specific terms. It is my opinion that Chandler did this because the period and the genre in which he wrote compelled him to portray homosexuals in a negative light or not at all. Below are the complete examples of the derogatory uses of the slang terms *queen*, *fag* and *pansy* in the original text followed by the translations in the three target texts.

Example 1:

Original:

1a. [Philip Marlowe]: “You must have thought a lot of *that queen*,” I said. (Chandler, 1995, p. 662, my italics)

1b. [Marlowe]: “You shot the wrong guy, Carol. Joe Brody didn’t kill *your queen*.” (Chandler, 1995, p. 663, my italics)

1c. [Carol Lundgren]: “Who said I had a key?”

[Marlowe]: “Don’t kid me, son. *The fag* gave you one.” (Chandler, 1995, p. 663, my italics)

1d. [Philip Marlowe, first person narrator]: [The punch] meant to be a hard one, but *a pansy* has no iron in his bones, whatever he looks like. (Chandler, 1995, p. 663, my italics)

<u>Original</u>	<u>De Luaces</u> (Chandler, 1949, pp. 102-103)	<u>Navarro</u> (Chandler 1958, pp. 118-121)	<u>Lara</u> (Chandler, 1972, pp. 111-114)
1a. that queen	(entire segment suppressed)	<i>ese amigo</i>	<i>ese amigo</i>
1b. your queen	<i>tu amo</i>	<i>tu amigo</i>	<i>tu amigo</i>
1c. the fag	(entire segment suppressed)	<i>Geiger</i>	<i>Geiger</i>
1d. a pansy	<i>los degenerados</i>	<i>un afeminado</i>	<i>un afeminado</i>

All translators have censored their own work. De Luaces suppresses two of the terms, *queen* and *fag*, as part of a larger suppression and he manipulates the meaning of the other two, making *queen* mean “master or employer” and *pansy* mean “degenerate.” Navarro does not suppress any of the words, but manipulates the meaning of all of them, making

*queen* mean “friend,” *fag* represent “Geiger,” and *pansy* mean “effeminate.”

There is no lack of homosexual-specific terms these translators could have used in Spanish: Delfin Carbonell’s *English and Spanish Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional Language* lists no less than 15 different words as contemporary Spanish equivalents of *fag*, *pansy* and *queen* (Carbonell, 1997, pp. 190, 312, 333). Nor is there a lack of derogatory terms for homosexuals; Alonso Tejada lists at least eight that were current during the Franco period (Alonso Tejada, 1977, p. 217). None of these words was used; the only words in any of the versions that even slightly ring of homosexuality are “degenerados” in De Luaces and “afeminado” in Navarro, which are completely insufficient to signal that Geiger and Carol Lundgren are homosexuals, that Philip Marlowe has a negative attitude towards homosexuals, and that Carol Lundgren killed Joe Brody as a crime of passion.

However, it could be said that not all is lost, as the words “degenerado” and “afeminado” were used during this period as umbrella terms for all types of deviant male sexuality. Gutiérrez Lanza states that in cases of self-censorship such as this, reading between the lines may help readers to “unearth semi-occult ideological messages, as readers were perfectly aware of the author’s intentions, camouflaged as they were by allusive forms the readers were more or less accustomed to” (Gutiérrez Lanza, 1997, pp. 285-286, my translation). I believe that “degenerado” and “afeminado” functioned in this way: they were “allusive forms” for male homosexuality that readers were “more or less accustomed to.” Ramón Berenguer, describing what Spaniards were used to hearing in dubbings of Hollywood films, said: “Film dubbing has accustomed us to hearing things like *hijo de perra* (son of a gun), *cualquiera* (floozy), *fornicar* (fornicate) and *afeminado* (effeminate) when the censors have wanted to soften the otherwise blunter terms that are used in everyday life” (qtd. in Santoyo, 1996, p. 158, my translation). While these two words are incapable of expressing the array of sexual behaviors in the original, they do manage to partially convey that something deeper is happening between these two men. By keeping these characters’ sexuality partially hidden, the translators have been able to convey a portion of the meaning contained in the original.

Let us now examine some of the reasons why the translators have apparently censored their own work. It is possible that the

translators did not understand the meaning of the terms *queen*, *fag*, and *pansy*. No direct translator testimony has survived to tell us what their understanding of the English text was; but we know that the reader of the 1958 importation request read the text in English and his Reader's Report stated that "in many points this novel borders on pornography, which is precisely one of the things that intervenes in the plot, this being in the form of photographs, indecent books, hysterical women that turn themselves over lasciviously to men, etc." (my translation). The reader mentions the pornography business run by Geiger, but the reader does not seem to have caught on to the underlying homosexual relationship of Geiger with Carol Lundgren. If the censor did not catch on, it is at least possible that the translators did not either.

However, I believe it is more likely that the translators understood the meanings of the homosexual-specific terms more or less correctly, but they prevented themselves from transferring them into the Spanish target text because homosexual behaviour was illegal at the time. Homosexuals in Franco's Spain were always subject to government persecution, which, rather than relenting over time, intensified in the last years of the Regime. From the very beginning of Franco's rule, homosexual authors disappeared almost entirely from public and textual view: they were executed (Federico García Lorca), in exile (the poet Luis Cernuda), or lived very quiet lives inside Spain (Nobel prize winner Vicente Aleixandre). In the words of Daniel Eisenberg, "censorship of sexually-oriented materials and authors the Regime found inappropriate was pervasive" (Eisenberg, 1999, p. 12). In the early years of the Regime, the Law against Vagrants and Delinquents, which was enacted by the Second Republic in 1933, was made to apply to homosexuals, even though the Law made no reference to homosexuals specifically (Torres, 2002, p. 168). In 1970, Franco's government passed the Law of Social Dangerousness and Rehabilitation, which classified homosexuality as a criminal act and intensified persecution of it (Hooper, 1995, p. 162; Domingo Loren, 1977, p. 41; Mira, 1999b, pp. 267-268). Alberto Mira,<sup>6</sup> offering an explanation for the suppression of numerous homosexual references in a Spanish version of a gay-friendly dramatic text that was translated

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<sup>6</sup> Mira, one of the relatively few translation studies scholars who have addressed issues of translation of literary works that deal with homosexuality and works by gay-identified authors, has shown a keen awareness of censorship. His article "Pushing the Limits of Faithfulness: A Case for Gay Translation" (1999a) mentions it several times, and his mammoth *Diccionario de cultura homosexual, gay y lesbica* (1999b) contains an entry for censorship.

and performed in Madrid in 1975, states, “given the threat of censorship or even jail, the textual encoding in the play cannot be made explicit and equivocal” (Mira, 1999a, p. 113). Therefore, translators, even though they may have understood the homosexual-specific terms correctly, preferred not to reproduce the meaning for fear of such consequences befalling them.

### **Censorship in the Translated Texts: Female Nudity**

Marlowe’s client, the elderly General Sternwood, hires Marlowe because Geiger is blackmailing him for money that his youngest and naughtiest daughter Carmen supposedly owes him. However, the General really wants Marlowe to discover if the husband of his eldest and most sensible daughter Vivian, Rusty Reagan, who disappeared a month before, is behind the blackmail. When Marlowe, conducting surveillance on Geiger’s house, hears gunshots from inside, he enters and finds Carmen Sternwood drugged and naked in front of a camera, with Geiger dead at her feet (chapter 7). Later, Carmen tries to seduce Marlowe by waiting for him in his bed with no clothes on (chapter 24). Marlowe categorically rejects her, but when he does so he witnesses her extremely violent reaction and concludes that she could have had that same violent reaction to Rusty Reagan’s rejection of her. In the end, Marlowe is right: Carmen did kill Rusty because he refused to sleep with her.

Chandler’s novels tend to contain two kinds of women: beautiful, treacherous women whose seductive efforts the detective refuses because these women mean trouble; and beautiful women of honor who the detective is attracted to but refuses to get involved with. Michael Mason has described these two types as “saint or slut,” as there is no middle ground for Chandler. His “saints” (never more than one per novel) are women whose loyalty the detective finds admirable, although these saintly women are usually loyal to other men; his “sluts” (usually numbering 3 or 4 per novel) are generally cast in the roles of murderers, instigators of murder, or characters steeped in corruption (Mason, 1977, pp. 94-95; MacShane, 1976, p. 71). Chandler’s Philip Marlowe refuses any sexual involvement with the women related to the case he is working on, but he often must let them think he is interested in their seductions in order to solve it. In *The Big Sleep*, Marlowe sees Carmen Sternwood (“slut”) in the nude on three occasions (chapters 7, 9, and 24). In the De Luaces version of *The Big Sleep*, all explicit descriptions of nudity have been entirely suppressed through self-

ensorship; in fact, the entire chapter 24, in which the unclothed Carmen Sternwood awaits the detective in his bed, is missing, making the plot incomprehensible later on in the novel. In the Navarro version, none of these segments have been suppressed.

In example 2 below, taken from chapter 7, Marlowe describes Carmen Sternwood's naked body as follows:

Example 2:

2a. Original

She was wearing a pair of long jaded earrings. They were nice earrings and had probably cost a couple of hundred dollars. She wasn't wearing anything else.

*She had a beautiful body, small lithe, compact, firm, rounded. Her skin in the lamplight had the shimmering luster of a pearl. Her legs didn't quite have the raffish grace of Mrs. Regan's legs, but they were very nice. I looked her over without either embarrassment or ruttishness. As a naked girl she was not there in that room at all. She was just a dope. To me she was always just a dope. (Chandler, 1995, p. 614, my italics)*

2b. De Luaces

La adornaban unos pendientes de jade, que no debían de haber costado menos de doscientos dólares. Y fuera de esos pendientes, no tenía cosa alguna sobre su cuerpo.

La miré sin turbación, juzgándola ajena a su desnudez ... y a todo. Ya me había parecido antes una muchacha que no tenía cabales los sentidos. (Chandler, 1949, p. 42)

2c. Navarro

Llevaba pendientes largos de jade. Eran muy bonitos, y probablemente habían costado un par de cientos de dólares. No llevaba otra cosa encima.

Tenía un hermoso cuerpo, pequeño, macizo, compacto, firme y redondeado. Su piel, a la luz de la lámpara, tenía el brillo trémulo de una perla. Sus piernas no poseían la gracia vulgar de las de mistress Regan, pero eran muy bonitas. La miré, no obstante, sin violencia ni deseo. Como mujer desnuda, era como si no estuviese en la habitación. Para mí era solamente una estampa de la estupidez. Siempre fue tan sólo una estúpida. (Chandler, 1958, p. 52)



## 2d. Lara

Llevaba pendientes de jade. Eran muy bonitos y probablemente habían costado un par de cientos de dólares. No llevaba otra cosa encima.

Tenía un hermoso cuerpo, pequeño, macizo, compacto, firme y redondeado. Su piel, a la luz de la lámpara, tenía el brillo trémulo de una perla. Sus piernas no poseían la gracia provocativa de las de mistress Regan, pero eran muy bonitas. La miré sin ningún deseo. Aunque desnuda, era como si no estuviese en la habitación. Para mí era solamente una estampa de la estupidez. Siempre fue tan sólo una estúpida. (Chandler, 1972, p. 42)

As mentioned above, the suppression of chapter 24 in the De Luaces translation has enormous plot implications. In the detective novel, readers are generally encouraged to slip into the shoes of the detective and try to solve the crime. In every detective novel, the detective starts with little more than suspicions, but there is generally a point where the detective realizes the solution to the crime. However, the detective generally waits for confirmation of this realization, and then, somewhere towards the end of the novel, he reveals all.<sup>7</sup> Carmen's seduction in chapter 24 is precisely the point in *The Big Sleep* where Philip Marlowe realizes that Carmen could have committed the murder of Rusty Regan, as the detective witnesses one of Carmen's key behavioral traits — an extremely violent reaction in the face of sexual rejection. But Marlowe waits for confirmation. He agrees to teach Carmen how to shoot her gun and she leads him to an abandoned oil field, where she plans on killing him. But Marlowe foils her plan: when

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<sup>7</sup> This is a very generalized explanation of the process of detection involved. There are two large generally recognizable branches of the detective novel, the American hard-boiled detective novel and the British locked-room mystery. In the American hard-boiled novel, a professional private detective tends to be hired for a relatively minor case that turns out to be much more than it appeared, usually later involving murder (Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler are typical adherents to this tradition). In the British locked-room mystery tradition, the detective, often a police detective or amateur detective, tends to investigate an unsolvable murder in a place of limited accessibility such as a drawing room or a train involving a limited number of suspects, all with ample motives for murder (Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie are typical adherents here). Although the traditions vary widely, the general pattern of suspicion, realization, confirmation, and revelation remains constant in both. For more on the detective novel as a genre see the now-classic text by Cawelti (1976).

he walks away to set up a target, Carmen shoots at him, but Marlowe had previously loaded the gun with blanks. Marlowe reveals the solution to the whole crime in the last two chapters. Spanish readers of the De Luaces version of *The Big Sleep* have been deprived of the point where the detective observes Carmen at her naughtiest, the key point that will allow the detective to solve the case. At the end of the novel, in chapter 32, when Marlowe is certain that Carmen killed Rusty Reagan, he explains to Vivian what happened, referring back to the scene from chapter 24, but none of his explanations makes sense since chapter 24 is missing.

Why three scenes in which Marlowe sees Carmen naked should have been allowed to go uncensored in the Navarro translation can most likely be explained by the elitist book the anthology intended to be. The Aguilar anthology was not aimed at the mass market, but rather at the more educated discriminating reader. As part of the Lince Astuto Collection of anthologized detective classics, it contained an authoritative introductory essay on Chandler by the editor of the collection, Salvador Bordoy Luque, and a picture of Chandler on one of the first inside pages. The soft plastic binding and the bible paper used for its nearly one thousand pages put the book out of the price range of the lowbrow readership. Since only three of the five novels in the collection were read by censors, it could be suggested that this anthology was indeed less closely scrutinized because the book was destined for a more elitist readership. The more elitist a book was, the less likely the censors would scrutinize it closely (Santamaría, 2000, p. 222).

When contrasting the implications for the readership of this translation with the readership of the earlier De Luaces translation, two distinct pictures emerge. The De Luaces translation, published under two different titles, neither one similar enough to the original to allow the reader to be aware that it was a translation of *The Big Sleep*, would certainly have disappointed Spanish readers. If they had bought both titles thinking they were different novels by Chandler, they certainly would have felt that they had been tricked by the publisher. Also, those who bought one of these titles tempted by the promise of reading about a “dark lady” and a “woman in the dark,” supposedly Carmen Sternwood, would have surely felt disappointed because the self-censored portions actually suppress many of the explicit details about the “darkness” in her behavior. The Navarro translation, published under a title similar to the original, would have been much more

satisfactory for Spanish readers, as it reflected Chandler's original much more closely and contained all of the explicit descriptions of the nude Carmen Sternwood.

### **Censorship in the Translated Texts: Sexually Suggestive Dialogue**

I would now like to examine the suggestive dialogue between Marlowe and Vivian Sternwood in chapter 23 as an example of how censors suppressed and/or manipulated these powerful volleys of double entendre and innuendo. Marlowe engages in sexually suggestive conversation with Vivian Sternwood on three occasions (chapters 2, 9 and 23) in an attempt to extract information from her. But the third time, when Vivian tries to entice Marlowe into kissing her and suggests that they finish the evening at his house, Marlowe realizes that this tactic does not work with her and categorically rejects her advances. This two-page conversation between Vivian and Philip Marlowe was government-censored. However, some of the government-censored changes, when combined with several translator-/editor-introduced punctuation changes, create, surprisingly, an even more suggestive dialogue than Chandler had in mind.

In chapter 23, Philip Marlowe is driving Vivian Sternwood home in his car, when she asks him to park the car at the seaside by the Del Rey Beach Club. While parked, they kiss almost immediately (half a page), engage in sexually suggestive conversation (a page and a half), and then Marlowe drives Vivian home in silence (half a page). The italics in the original indicate where segments have been either suppressed or manipulated.

#### 3.a. Original

[Vivian]: "Where do you live?"

[Marlowe]: "Hobart Arms. Franklin near Kenmore."

"I've never seen it."

"Want to?"

"Yes," she breathed.

"What has Eddie Mars got on you?"

Her body stiffened *in my arms* and her breath made a harsh sound. *Her head pulled back until her eyes, wide open, ringed with white,* were staring at me.

"*So that's the way it is,*" she said in a soft dull voice.

“That’s the way it is. Kissing you is nice, but your father didn’t hire me to *sleep with you*.

“You son of a bitch,” *she said calmly without moving*.

I laughed in her face. “Don’t think I’m an icicle. I am not blind or without senses. *I have warm blood like the next guy*. You’re too *easy to take — too damned easy*. What has Eddie Mars got on you?” (Chandler, 1995, p. 703, my italics)

### 3.b. De Luaces

[The entire Del Rey segment has been suppressed.]

### 3.c. Navarro

—¿Dónde vive?

—Hobart Arms, en la calle de Franklin, cerca de Kenmore.

—Nunca lo he visto.

—¿Le gustaría verlo?

—Sí.

—¿Qué tiene Eddie Mars contra usted?

Su cuerpo se puso rígido y su aliento hizo un ruido áspero. Se me quedó mirando con los ojos negros.

—¿Esas tenemos...? — me dijo con voz suave y triste.

—Esas tenemos.

—¡Hijo de perra! — gritó tranquila y sin moverse.

Me reí en su cara.

—No crea que soy un carámbano — le advertí — . No soy ciego ni carezco de sentidos. ¿Qué tiene Eddie Mars contra usted? (Chandler, 1958, pp. 174-175)

### 3.d. Lara:

—¿Dónde vive?

—Hobart Arms, en la calle Franklin, cerca de Kenmore.

—Nunca lo he visto.

—¿Le gustaría verlo?

—Sí.

—¿Qué tiene Eddie Mars contra usted?

Su cuerpo se puso rígido y su aliento hizo un ruido áspero. Se me quedó mirando con los ojos negros.

—¿Esas tenemos...? — me dijo con voz suave y triste.

—Esas tenemos.

—¡Hijo de perra! — gritó tranquila y sin moverse.

Me reí en su cara.

—No crea que soy un témpano — le advertí — . No soy ciego ni carezco de sentidos. ¿Qué tiene Eddie Mars contra usted? (Chandler, 1972, pp. 165-166)

In example 3, the whole Del Rey segment has been self-censored in the De Luaces translation. In the Navarro translation, many of the elements have been manipulated or suppressed by the translator and/or editor in a sophisticated way — the punctuation of “so that’s the way it is” and “son of a bitch;” “her eyes wide open, ringed with white” becomes “con sus grandes ojos negros” [with her large black eyes]. Also parts of the segment were crossed out by government censors in the Navarro translation — the kiss segment, “in my arms”, “her head pulled back until,” the “sleep with you” sentence, the “warm blood” sentence, and the “too damned easy” sentence. The only differences between the Navarro translation and the Lara translation are the missing “de” in “la calle Franklin” and the substitution of “témpano” in place of “carámbano,” both synonyms. None of the material from the government-censored suppressions was restored nor any of the manipulations remedied.

One might wonder why the kiss between Marlowe and Vivian was suppressed by the government in the Navarro version when Carmen’s nudity was not. I would posit that there is a logical explanation arising from the fact that Marlowe shows total sexual and emotional aversion to Carmen on all occasions, whereas he shows a shallow sexual and emotional attraction to Vivian. A man’s aversion to a naked woman with whom he makes no physical contact may have been considered less censurable than a man’s attraction to a fully-clothed woman with whom he makes physical contact (see section on Censorship in Spain, above). Therefore, it would seem logical that the censors would allow Carmen’s nudity as long as Marlowe was not attracted to her, but they would not allow any affectionate physical contact between Vivian and Marlowe as long as there was a certain amount of attraction, even though Marlowe was only using it as a ploy.

Chandler’s original makes it perfectly clear that Marlowe kisses Vivian as a ploy in order to extract information from her and when he does not get the information he is seeking he rejects Vivian categorically. This idea is central to understanding the effect of suppressions and manipulations that occur in the above passage of the

Navarro translation. The kiss and three of the sentences that have been suppressed by the censors contain charged words (sleep with, “*caliente*”, and easy), supposedly offensive to the sexual morality of the Regime. But by suppressing the kiss and these three sentences, Marlowe’s categorical rejection of Vivian also disappears. When Vivian asks where Marlowe lives she implies that she wants to sleep with him, and when Marlowe tells her where he lives he implies that he wants to sleep with her as well. But when Marlowe tries to get Vivian to tell him “What has Eddie Mars got on you?” and receives an uncooperative response, he rejects the implied content of their previous dialogue turns, and explicitly says that naturally he is attracted to her but he will not sleep with her because she is his client’s daughter and she is too easy. Marlowe’s refusal of Vivian is effective because it brings out the implicit content of their dialogue and explicitly rejects it.

But the explicit rejection is not there in the Navarro version. The absence of Marlowe’s explicit rejection of Vivian plus subtle changes in punctuation made by the translator/editor have actually made this part of the dialogue much more suggestive than the original. We get the impression that Marlowe and Vivian are engaged in a very nuanced dialogue that promises plenty of foreplay — not what Chandler intended at all. This is achieved by changing mere statements into open-ended questions followed by bullet points (That’s the way it is.=¿Esas tenemos...?) or into exclamations (You son of a bitch.=¡Hijo de perra!). This also occurs in a previous part of the Navarro translation, when Carmen is waiting for Marlowe in his bed and whips open the sheet to reveal her naked body. The detective, who had already seen her that way twice before with no particular attraction, states rather coldly, “She was undressed all right,” implying that he was getting tired of her. But the Navarro version, with its exclamation points punctuating the sentence for heightened emotion, implies that Marlowe welcomes seeing her that way once again — not what Chandler intended at all (She was undressed all right.=¡Vaya si estaba desnuda! (=Was she ever naked!)). These instances of heightened sexual suggestiveness introduced by self-censored punctuation are not unique to this book. La Prade, in *La censura de Hemingway en España* [The Censorship of Hemingway in Spain], cites several passages from the censored translation of *A Farewell to Arms* in which the manipulated dialogue becomes more suggestive than the original through changes in punctuation such as these (La Prade, 1991, pp. 45-47).

Why would Navarro want to make the dialogue more suggestive and open-ended than the original through these punctuation changes? It could be suggested that they were trying to compensate for the material that the censors had crossed out with their red pen, but I believe the answer lies elsewhere. As Gutiérrez Lanza notes above, there were certain forms of language that readers of the period were accustomed to reading in detective fiction, among them suggestive dialogues containing innuendo and double entendre. I believe that the translators were simply incorporating some of the type of material that they felt their readers were expecting in a text of this type.

## Conclusion

All three of the into-Spanish translations of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* published in Spain during the Franco period were self-censored, government-censored, or both. The censored passages cause undesirable effects in terms of the visibility of homosexual characters and the behavior of women who disrupt the patriarchal male-dominated society in matters of sexuality. This study reveals that the homosexual/bisexual underworld portrayed in the original, while self-censored in all the translated texts, was made partly visible through the use of allusive language more or less familiar to Spanish readers. The study also reveals that much of the nudity that had been self-censored in the earliest Spanish version of the novel was not censored in any way in the following versions, a fact that should perhaps be attributed not to any change in the underlying ideology of the censorship system but to the fact that the latter were aimed at a more elitist audience than the first one. The only instance of government censorship encountered in this study occurred in a passage involving sexually suggestive dialogue in the second Spanish version. The passage, surprisingly, becomes even more suggestive than the original due to the government censorship of some sexually-charged or sexually-explicit words and also to some punctuation changes introduced by the translator/editor.

During the Franco period in Spain, no complete version of this novel was available to Spanish readers. Even today, the most widely-available version of *The Big Sleep* in Spanish is the version by Lara, a plagiarism of the earlier censored Navarro translation; in fact the Lara version was included in the only complete anthology of Chandler's works available to date in Spanish, Debate's *Obras Completas* (1995). Given that the period of official censorship in Spain finished more than twenty years ago, what is required, ideally, is an entirely new

translation to restore the material that the original was stripped of as a result of the complex mechanisms of the official government censorship of the period and the self-censorship the system encouraged.

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**ABSTRACT: The Censorship of Sex: The Case of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* in Franco's Spain** — During the period when General Francisco Franco ruled Spain (1936-1975), official censorship kept a watch on all books that were published in the country. The main objective of this censorship was to conceal from the Spanish people political manifestations that might be ultimately threatening for the dictatorial government politically. However, under heavy influence of the Catholic Church, the censors also veiled for the moral health of the Spanish people by intervening in all matters of sexual morality, decency, obscenity and vulgarity. Research has shown that during this period censors were as vigilant for sexual content as they were vigilant for political content. In this study I will examine censorship and sex by studying Raymond Chandler's first novel, *The Big Sleep* (1939) and the three Spanish-language translations published during this period (1949, 1958, 1972). Chandler's novel contains no potential political offenses to Franco's Regime and its allies, but it does contain references to male homosexuals, scenes of female nudity, and sexually suggestive dialogues involving the detective and a female character. All of the Spanish versions were censored, whether by government censors or the translators/editors prior to presenting the manuscript to the censors. I will discuss the government-censored and self-censored passages in the Spanish versions of the novel, and show that all of the references to the homosexual characters, much of the nudity, and many of the sexually-suggestive dialogues have been manipulated and/or suppressed, producing undesirable and often unexpected effects.

**RÉSUMÉ : La censure sexuelle : Le cas de *The Big Sleep* de Raymond Chandler dans l'Espagne de Franco** — Pendant la période durant laquelle le général Francisco Franco gouvernait l'Espagne (1936-1975), la censure officielle maintenait un contrôle sur tous les livres publiés dans le pays. Le principal objectif de cette censure était de taire aux Espagnols toute manifestation d'ordre politique qui pouvait représenter une menace directe pour le gouvernement dictatorial. Toujours est-il que, sous la forte emprise de l'Eglise Catholique, les censeurs ont exercé leur vigilance sur la santé morale du peuple

espagnol en intervenant sur les questions de moralité sexuelle, de décence, d'obscénité et de vulgarité. Des recherches ont démontré que durant cette période, les censeurs étaient les gardiens du contenu sexuel aussi bien que du contenu politique. Dans cette étude, je vais analyser la censure sexuelle par le biais du premier roman de Raymond Chandler, *The Big Sleep* (1939), et ses trois traductions espagnoles publiées durant cette période (1949, 1958, 1972). Le roman de Chandler ne contient pas d'offenses potentielles envers le régime de Franco et ses alliés, mais il contient en revanche des références à des homosexuels, des scènes de nudité féminine, et des dialogues à connotation sexuelle entre le détective et un personnage féminin. Toutes les versions espagnoles ont été censurées, soit par les censeurs officiels, soit par les traducteurs ou éditeurs avant la soumission du manuscrit à la censure. Je traiterai des passages censurés officiellement et des passages autocensurés des versions espagnoles du roman et démontrerai que toutes les références concernant les personnages homosexuels, la plupart des scènes de nudité et une grande partie des dialogues à connotation sexuelle ont été manipulés et/ou supprimés, produisant ainsi des effets indésirables et souvent inattendus.

**Keywords:** censorship, homosexuality, manipulation, self-censorship, sexual morality.

**Mots-clés :** censure, homosexualité, manipulation, autocensure, moralité sexuelle.

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