

The Missing Scene in Dorothy L. Sayers' *Whose Body?* A Study on Censorship

La escena perdida en *El cadáver con lentes* de Dorothy L. Sayers. Estudio sobre censura

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Resumen

Este artículo presenta una investigación sobre la censura franquista y su impacto en la ficción detectivesca británica de principios del siglo XX, con especial énfasis en la autora Dorothy L. Sayers. Esta investigación surge tras el descubrimiento de una escena totalmente eliminada del primer libro de su serie sobre *Lord Peter Wimsey*, titulado *Whose Body?* (*El cadáver con lentes*). Este artículo está dividido en varias secciones. Tras la introducción, se ofrece contexto sobre quién era Dorothy L. Sayers y cómo sus obras fueron recibidas en el mercado español. Más adelante, se habla sobre la censura en España y sus mecanismos. Finalmente, se expone una investigación en curso sobre cómo la censura afectó a la publicación de los libros de este género, con un pequeño resumen de la información disponible en el AGA (Archivo General de la Administración), un breve contexto de la escena desaparecida y una propuesta sobre cómo reinsertarla en el texto, aceptando que, de hecho, fue censurada.

Palabras clave: Novela policiaca; censura; Sayers; escena perdida

Abstract

This article presents an investigation into censorship under Franco's dictatorship and its impact on British crime fiction in the early 20th century, with a particular focus on the works of Dorothy L. Sayers. The study was prompted by the discovery of a completely removed scene in the first book of her *Lord Peter Wimsey* series, *Whose Body?* This article is divided into several sections. After the introduction, context is offered about who Dorothy L. Sayers was and how her works were received in the Spanish market. Further on, it exposes censorship and its mechanisms. Lastly, it develops an ongoing investigation about how censorship affected the publication of these books, with a quick summary of the information available in the AGA (Archivo General de la Administración), and a brief context of the titular missing scene, offering a way for it to be reworked into the text with an acceptance that it was, indeed, censored.

Keywords: Detective fiction; censorship; missing scene; translation

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1. Introduction

“Censorship is a coercive and forceful act that blocks, manipulates and controls cross-cultural interaction in various ways... Censorship operates largely according to a set of specific values and criteria established by a dominant body and exercised over a dominated one; the former can often be identified with either the state or the Church, or with those social conventions which regulate one’s freedom of choice at both public and personal levels.” (Billiani, 2009, p. 28)

The concept of censorship upon literary works has been present almost since the dawn of literature. Be it the Church, the State (closely linked to one another throughout a very long period of history) or the press, censorship has been a constant within society and the literary world. Considering this, numerous literary works have either failed to reach their intended audience at the appropriate time or have been altered expurgated or modified to align with prevailing societal norms, governmental ideologies, or political policies (Albio, 2013, p. 258).

In Spain during the 20th century, Franco’s dictatorship—established following the victory of the rebel faction in the Civil War (1936–1939)—implemented a strict system of legal censorship to regulate public discourse across all forms of media. Cinema, art, theatre, literature and culture at large were submitted to the stance of the Regime and limited in their messages and reach. Authors were not allowed to express any ideas that could be perceived as opposing the government, the Church or any of the institutions supporting Franco’s rule (Olivares Leyva, 2015, p. 19).

This article examines a largely unexplored genre within the studies devoted to censorship under Franco’s regime: detective fiction. This genre of literature has been traditionally excluded from the literary canon, composed by older white males, who have considered it to fall into a category known as “middlebrow” or “popular literature” as explained by Brown & Grover (2012, p. 1). In the early 20th century, detective fiction was largely considered an evasive form of literature, since most of the time, the culprit was apprehended and the lovers, if any were present, ended up together, readers could find satisfaction from these books, which were not perceived as political or high-quality literature. This has been shown to be inaccurate since early 20th-century detective fiction was socially aware and politically charged (Karlovic, 2023, p. 10). Thus, as will be demonstrated, a detailed examination reveals that these texts were also altered, changed, cut, or perhaps even censored altogether to preserve the moral and dogmatic integrity of society under the Regime, despite their seemingly apolitical nature.

This article introduces author Dorothy L. Sayers (1893–1957) and her contribution to British detective fiction in the early 20th century. It argues for the necessity of reviving her works, demonstrating how censorship affected her writings and contributed to the decline in her popularity to the extent that today she is largely unrecognized, unremembered and almost unavailable. The primary focus will be her first detective novel, *Whose Body?* (1923), which marks the beginning of her Lord Peter Wimsey series. A discussion of the so-called “Golden Age of Detective Fiction” will be provided, including the role of the Detection Club of which Sayers was a member and president between 1949 and 1957. The political awareness of authors within this genre will also be explored.

Furthermore, this article will address the way censorship worked during the Regime, and how it stood on for several years after it ended, explaining how the Fraga law was dismantled, since one of the Spanish editions of Sayers' book under investigation was published during this time. It will also examine the role of translators within the Regime and explain the concept of self-censorship, which was carried out by either translators themselves or editors to avoid the banning of the book in question. Therefore, this article's intention is to argue for a revival of Sayers' works in the Spanish market and examine through her works how censorship affected British detective fiction of the early 20th century.

2. Frameworks

The following section of this article provides a historical context framework regarding the author and Detective Fiction in the early 20th century. This background shall serve to understand the political significance and literary status of the author. This segment is divided into two main points: a brief biography of Sayers including an overview of her career and information about her publication history in Spain supported by information from the Biblioteca Nacional.

2.1. Dorothy L. Sayers: A biography

Dorothy Leigh Sayers was born on June 13, 1893, in Oxford. She was the only daughter of Reverend Henry Sayers, who at the time was the headmaster of Christ Church Cathedral School. She studied Modern Languages and Medieval Literature at Oxford University during a time when women were allowed to attend classes and sit for exams, but not to graduate formally (notably coinciding in the same semester with J.R.R.

Tolkien). In 1920, when the university decided to grant degrees retrospectively, Sayers was among the first women to receive hers, albeit with a five-year delay, in recognition of her outstanding academic performance.

Sayers began her career as a teacher, and editorial reader, later working for a publishing company. This experience was later reflected in her Wimsey novel *Murder Must Advertise* (1933). Additionally, she invented the famous toucan for the Guinness beer brand, as well as jingles and slogans for various products. She published her first book, subject of this article, in 1923, introducing her famous character Lord Peter Wimsey, who would feature in eleven novels and three collections of short stories. In addition to her work in detective fiction, she also practiced poetry, editing, and translation.

Dorothy Sayers's life was marked by complex personal relationships and a secret she concealed until her death in order to protect her reputation and literary career. After ending her relationship with her first lover, she maintained a relationship with a married man, Bill White, which resulted in her pregnancy and the birth of a child. Unable to legally acknowledge the child without damaging her career, she placed the baby with a cousin who specialized in fostering children. In 1926 she married Oswald Atherton Fleming, a war veteran. Their relationship was challenging, primarily due to Fleming's well documented issues with alcoholism. Nonetheless, they remained married until Fleming's death in 1950. Dorothy hoped her son, John Anthony, could live with them, but Fleming refused. However, when the boy was ten, Sayers informally adopted him. The child knew her as "Cousin Dorothy" all his life and only learned the truth upon her death when he inherited her estate (Reynolds, 2002, pp. 107–146).

Although Sayers had planned *Gaudy Night* (1935) to be Lord Peter Wimsey's final novel, her friend Muriel St. Clare Byrne persuaded her to continue the character's story in a final work, *Busman's Honeymoon* (1937), which premiered as a stage play in December 1936. After that, she ceased writing detective stories, with the exception of three short stories and the novelization of the play.

Having achieved financial security, Sayers devoted herself to translation, an area in which she had formal training. She developed a particular interest in translating Dante's *Divine Comedy*, learning Old Italian on her own in order to produce a version in terza rima. This translation became highly acclaimed among scholars and continues to be so even today.

A devout Anglican, Sayers wrote extensively on religious and theological topics. The war prompted her to write *Begin Here* and *The Mind of the Maker*, comparing human beings to the divine Creator. In addition to writing, she also gave lectures and collaborated with Reverend Patrick McLaughlin at St. Anne's Christian Center, becoming a trustee of his London parish in 1952.

Throughout her life, she maintained a close friendship with C.S. Lewis, whom she met at Oxford. They shared interests in translation and religious ideals, as well as similarly complex personal lives. However, they also held different views, especially regarding the portrayal of women in literature, as Sayers disliked one-dimensional female characters. According to Gina Dalfonzo's book *Dorothy and Jack: The Transforming Friendship of Dorothy L. Sayers and C.S. Lewis* (2020), Lewis's shift from praising John Milton's views on women and marriage to criticizing them may have been influenced by his relationship with Sayers (*Online conversation: Dorothy & Jack: A story of friendship & formation* 2021).

Dorothy Sayers passed away from heart failure on December 17, 1957, leaving her translation of Dante's *Paradise* unfinished. The work was later completed by her friend and colleague, Dr. Barbara Reynolds (Durkin, 1980, pp. 17–26).

2.2. Dorothy L. Sayers in the Spanish market

The earliest known Spanish edition of Sayers' work dates to 1944, published in Buenos Aires. This edition was a translation of the book *The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club*, one of her most famous novels. Subsequent editions were released as part of classic novel series by José Janés and Lauro in 1946 and 1947 respectively. Notably, Lauro's edition of *Busman's Honeymoon* was among the best sold books of the year according to the ABC newspaper (January 28th, 1947, p. 6). Additional editions appeared under the G.P. Policiaca, imprint of Plaza & Janés publishing, and the collection "El Búho" by Gerpla publishing, in the years 1958, 1959, and 1960. Furthermore, a Spanish edition of *The Poisoned Dow '08* (*El oportito envenenado*) was published in 1961 as part of the magazine *Novelas y Cuentos*. In 1964, Aguilar publishing released a compilation edition containing four of Sayers' novels in a single volume, printed on low-quality paper, a common practice for this publishing house. Additionally, Molino publishing, the most renowned Spanish publisher of detective fiction and responsible for the *Biblioteca Oro* collection, released six of Sayers' novels and short story collections between 1949 and 1972.

More recently, two separate editions of *El cadáver con lentes* (*Whose Body?*), which remains censored, and *Los nueve sastres* (*The Nine Tailors*) were published by Bruguera and Diagonal in 1983 and 2003, respectively. Furthermore, Bruguera also published the novel *El almirante flotante* (*The Floating Admiral*) in the same year, written by multiple authors from the Detection Club including Sayers. Notwithstanding, the most comprehensive and recent edition of Sayers' works spans from 2005 to 2009 under the Lumen publishing label, featuring six novels, including the most famous one, *El misterio del Bellona Club* (*The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club*), which was also published in paperback under the Debolsillo imprint in 2006. The three most recent editions of Sayers' works include a 2013 Catalan-language edition of *El misterio del Bellona Club* (*The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club*), published by RBA La Magrana; a critical edition of two of her journalistic texts, edited by Professor Javier Aranguren from the University of Navarre; and a new edition of *Los secretos de Oxford* (*Gaudy Night*) launched by Lumen in 2021. While *Gaudy Night* had already been released by the same publisher in 2009, Lumen has not continued with the rest of the Wimsey series.

3. Censorship under Franco

The following section, examines the historical and legal context of censorship in Spain at the beginning of the 20th century, providing an overview of the Civil War and the legislative measures implemented to regulate the publication of literary works. Additionally, it addresses the persistence of censorship in the years following the death of the dictator in 1975, since one of the editions of the book analyzed in this study is from 1983.

3.1. Historical Context and censorship laws

The Spanish Civil War started on the 18th of July 1936, five days after the assassination of Deputy José Calvo Sotelo and five months after the Popular Front (Frente Popular) won the general elections, subsequently banning all fascist organizations. Over the course of three years, the war resulted in significant bloodshed, with deep divisions among families and widespread persecution based on political beliefs. Ultimately, the Nationalist faction, which had initiated the 1936 coup, won the war, and Francisco Franco established a dictatorship that persisted until his death in October 1975. The Regime, in its beginning, was not very different from other fascist ideologies that were taking Europe by storm including those led by Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy. Despite remaining

largely neutral during World War II (with the glaring exception of the Blue Division: Spanish soldiers sent to fight at the front in Russia to help the Axis powers), once Hitler was defeated in 1945, Spain faced international isolation, excluded from the United Nations and the NATO. However, this dynamic shifted with the onset of the Cold War, particularly after the Korean War in 1950, when opposition to Soviet ideology created a common cause among Western nations. In response, the United Nations lifted its veto on Spain in 1950. The year 1953, often referred to as the *annus mirabilis* of Franco's regime, marked a turning point in Spain's international standing. That year saw the signing of a Concordat between the Holy See and the Spanish government, along with a military and economic agreement with the United States that facilitated the establishment of American military bases in Spain. These developments contributed to the international legitimization of Franco's government and allowed for Spain to finally enter the United Nations in 1955. Over the following years, the regime would become increasingly more open both culturally and socially. Nevertheless, economic difficulties persisted, and political repression against opposing ideologies remained a defining feature of the dictatorship (Albio Villarig, 2013, pp. 267–270).

Understanding the evolution of the Francoist regime is essential to comprehending the parallel development of censorship during its four decades in power. Indeed, censorship laws—of which there were two main regulations throughout the dictatorship—were not static but adapted to the changing political and social context. During these years, publishers and the censorship apparatus held the power to change aspects of translations deemed inappropriate for contemporary Spanish society. This practice served as a mechanism for ideological control and the preservation of state-sanctioned morality.

The questions that the texts faced to determine whether they could be published or not were the following:

- Does it attack the dogma?
- Does it attack morality?
- Does it attack the Church or its ministers?
- Does it attack the Regime or its institutions?
- Does it attack any person or persons that collaborate or have collaborated in the past with the Regime?
- The censurable passages, ¿do they qualify the complete content of this text?
- Report and other observations. (Abellán, 1980. My translation.)

The first significant censorship law is that of Ramón Serrano Suñer, Minister of the Interior and brother-in-law of Carmen Polo, promulgated on April 22, 1938, whose main intention was to censor Republican press and establish control over published content. However, in its initial phase, censorship authorities lacked clear guidelines regarding permissible material. They were provided with a list of topics that could be considered reprehensible and the questions, which at the beginning were only three. These initial censorship criteria later evolved under the tenure of Arias Salgado as head of the Ministry of Information and Tourism (Olivares Leyva, 2015, p. 20). Nevertheless, it is important to consider that, censorship in Spain was particularly repressive in its early years and it would not be alleviated, or thought to be so, until 1966 (Albio Villarig, 2013, pp. 283–285). In that year, the Minister of Information and Tourism (MIT), Manuel Fraga Iribarne, introduced the Press and Printing Law (*Ley de Prensa e Imprenta*), which supposedly aimed to relax censorious behaviors by eliminating prior censorship (Zaragoza Ninet et al., 2018, p. 2). The new system was perfectly organized into three levels, as explained by Abellán (1980):

“readers, assessors, and effective censorship managers. The readers were responsible for summarizing the content of the book, filling out the censorship form, and indicating if there were any contentious pages, and hence, susceptible to censorship. Then, the elimination of all content judged as ‘UNPUBLISHABLE’ took place, and the publisher had to provide evidence of such deletions... Francoist censorship was responsible for an incalculable number of bans on works, whether partially... or the entire work.” [My translation]

Many historians argue that the end of censorship in Spain came with the elections on October 28, 1982, which resulted in the victory of Felipe González and the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE). However, as previously discussed, censorship during the dictatorship was such a well-structured system that attempts to dismantle it began earlier. A pivotal step in this process occurred in 1977 with the enactment of Royal Decree-Law 24/1977 on freedom of expression, commonly known as the Anti-Label Law (*Ley Antilibelo*). Following this, in 1978 with the approval of the Spanish Constitution, Article 20 defended and proclaimed freedom of speech and prohibited prior censorship and the seizure of publications by the administration.

Although the Spanish Constitution had already been ratified, publishers were still required to seek authorization from the MIT to publish. This process entailed submitting documents in accordance with Article 64 of the Fraga Law, which were examined by a designated reader, and adhering to the mandatory deposit of six copies as per Article 12 of the same law. Once a publisher’s request was processed, the text was sent to a censor

to produce a report, although the abovementioned questions were no longer part of the assessment criteria.

Articles 12 and 64 of the law were repealed by Constitutional Court ruling 52/1983, which determined that the requirement to deposit six prior copies had, in effect, been nullified by the adoption of the 1978 Constitution. However, it was not until August 2, 1984, when Chapters III, IV, V, and VIII of the Fraga Law were repealed, that the administrative censorship established during Franco's regime was completely dismantled. It is therefore noteworthy that despite the dictator's death in 1975, censorship persisted until the first government of González, illustrating how difficult it was to abolish such well-structured censorship legislation (Godayol, 2018).

Even though the censorship process and the application of the Fraga law during these years had largely become a procedural formality, it is noteworthy that one of the editions of *Whose Body?* edited by Bruguera in 1983 remained censored. The "missing scene" referenced in this article's title was still absent from the text. These issues raise critical questions about the actual scope of the censorship apparatus in its final years, specifically whether it functioned merely as a formality, whether this book was subject to it, or whether it represents a case of plagiarized translation. The last possibility will be examined and analyzed in the following discussion.

3.2. The role of translators and translation in censorship: the concept of self-censorship

It would be remiss not to mention how the profession of translators and translation fared during the Dictatorship years. The profession was not regarded as such until the 1950's, with translations produced before that time not being paid and carried out mainly by already established authors. However, from the 1950s onwards, associations started to arise, and the editorial market experienced significant growth. Scholars believe the poor quality of certain translations from this era was due to the pressure exerted by publishers, who prioritized rapid publication to align with international market trends.

During the early years of Franco's regime, an apparent contradiction emerges. While the government viewed translation with suspicion—associating translators with the Devil due to their role in introducing foreign ideas and ideologies—it also witnessed a surge in translated works. This paradox can be explained by the significant depletion of national literary figures after the war, leaving a void in the Spanish literary landscape. Despite Spain's political isolation, contemporary literary movements continued to shape society,

and were acknowledged by publishing houses and readers, who showed great interest in foreign texts (Albio, 2013, pp. 208–209).

Albio (2013, pp. 198–209) states that the world of translation in Spain during the 20th century entailed various forms of production: plagiarism of earlier translations, translations produced in Argentina, phantom or anonymous translators and unexplainable title changes, among others. Expanding on this analysis (pp. 245–251), Albio highlights the inherent manipulation involved in the translation process, and this is carried out through censorship. Every translation is produced within a specific cultural, political, and social context, and this affects the choices made by the translator, whether made freely or imposed by the publishing house in compliance with censorship laws. It is here we must debate the concept of self-censorship. As defined by Abellan (1980, p. 169), self-censorship consists of:

“The precautionary measures that a writer adopts with the purpose of evading the potential adverse reaction or repulsion that their text may provoke from any or some of the state groups or bodies capable or authorized to impose deletions or modifications with or without their consent.” [My translation]

Not only were authors responsible for self-censorship, but also translators. As previously mentioned, the system for censorship was highly stringent and most publishing houses were unwilling to risk their profits by attempting to publish works that might be deemed unpublishable by censors. While it remains uncertain whether this form of censorship directly affected Sayers, there is a strong possibility that it did. After consulting the AGA, it was confirmed that there are 31 censorship files. Although it has not been possible to review the files in detail, a list of the available records has been provided, offering preliminary information that will be further examined in the following section of this article.

4. Sayers and the Spanish Censorship

In this following section, an explanation and examination of how censorship affected Sayers’ work in our country will be carried out through several means. First, the available files at the AGA, of which there are 31, will be discussed, along with an explanation of the concept of administrative silence, as it is believed that the book under examination may have been subject to this process when it was first submitted for review in 1944. Second, the two editions available of this book in Spanish will be compared to ascertain if the translations are identical or not. The possibility of “plagiarism”—a common practice in the Spanish editorial market of the 20th century—will be considered, as well

as whether the work may have been affected by the last years of censorship, as previously outlined.

4.1. The AGA files: Did *Whose Body?* suffer administrative silence?

When consulting the AGA, a notice was provided indicating that there are up to 31 files related to this author and censorship within the institution's archive. However, as with all other files, consultation can only be conducted in person, as they are not digitalized and the institution lacks the necessary resources to send them via email. Since the administration is located in Alcalá de Henares, near Madrid, it has not been possible to make the journey to consult the files in person. What was provided, however, was a list of all the files they have, with numbers, years of introduction and resolution, publishing houses and titles.

When examining the book that is central to the analysis of censorship in this article, *Whose Body?* known in Spain as *El cadáver con lentes*, an interesting possibility emerges upon reviewing the list. The book was submitted in October, 1944 but it was not approved until August, 1949, a span of five years. Notably, this is not a case akin to *Clouds of Witness* (1926), the second book in the Wimsey series, which was introduced in 1946 and 1947, and it remains unclear whether it was eventually published or censored until its inclusion in an anthology in 1965. On the other hand, this book was not entered several times, just once, but there was no resolution offered until five years later. Moreover, when the rest of the list was examined, it was found to have been approved a few months after *Murder Must Advertise* (also submitted by Molino) was also approved and published under the name *Muerte, agente de publicidad*. Upon analysis, it is plausible to infer that the publication of that book along with the earlier publication of two other works—*The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club* in 1944, and *Busman's Honeymoon* (*Luna de miel mortal*) in 1947—may have played a role in expediting the review and eventual approval of *Whose Body?* Notably, *Busman's Honeymoon* was registered in an issue of *ABC* newspaper as one of the best-selling books of the year. This may be a case of what is known in legal contexts as “administrative silence”, that is “[e]stimation or tacit rejection that the law attaches to the silence of the Administration regarding a citizen's request, once the legally established deadline has elapsed” (Real Academia Española, n.d. [My translation]). To clarify, within the context of censorship, it is understood that when this happened, the censorship apparatus was not allowing the publication of a book, but it probably did not find sufficient legal basis for its disallowance. As a result, the censors

resorted to silence, allowing the legally mandated period to lapse, which effectively rendered the publishing house unable to proceed with the publication. In this case, this was probably attempted but the censors had to finally allow the publication with certain alterations including the titular “missing scene”. Additionally, in the next section some explanation will be offered as to why this scene was considered unpublishable by either the editorial or the censors. Before delving into that, however, it is necessary to talk about the two alleged translations of this book and assess their authenticity.

4.2. The two editions and two alleged translations of Whose Body?

An examination of the available Spanish editions of *Whose Body?* conducted through the catalogue of the BNE and the archives at the AGA, reveals the existence of only two editions: the first one edited by Molino in 1949 and the second one edited by Bruguera in 1983. From the outset, these two editions seem similar to one another. They are both inexpensive publications of the book, probably intended to be sold alongside either a newspaper or, at the very least, published for mass distribution in paperback. The Bruguera edition includes illustrations and presents the text in columns, a formatting choice presumably made to reduce the number of pages. However, the primary focus of this analysis is the translation itself. According to Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), the Molino edition—accessible online but not physically obtained—was by a translator called Manuel Vallvé, while the Bruguera edition was translated by Silvia Serra.

A comparative analysis of both translations in relation to censorship reveals that they are remarkably similar, if not identical. The same fragments had been censored (including the scene that prompted this analysis) and the wording remains largely unchanged between the two versions. The accuracy of the source consulted for the Molino translation could not be verified, which is why it is not included in the study. However, this preliminary investigation suggests the possibility of plagiarism. As previously noted, this was a usual occurrence with translations during the 20th century, particularly in low-cost editions, where editors may have assumed that such similarities would go unnoticed. That was one of the possibilities that accounted for the presence of censorship still within the 1983 version of the text. An alternative explanation considers the abovementioned “last stand of censorship” in Spain, since the Fraga law was not fully dismantled until August 1984. Even though the remaining censorship functioned more as a formality than an active restrictive measure, the requirement for a text to be reviewed by a reader and examiner prior to publication may have influenced the publishing house, Bruguera, to

decide to still offer the text censored in case it might have been turned down. It needs to be acknowledged that, at the time, editors were probably still adapting to the new regulations governing publication. Given that censorship had been an integral aspect of the publishing industry for decades, they may have deemed it safer not to challenge the prevailing norms.

A third possibility to consider is self-censorship by either the translator or the publishing house, perhaps thinking that the book was intended as light entertainment rather than a work prompting reflection on issues such as war or shell shock—the central theme of the omitted scene. In a society where a significant portion of the population remained deeply conservative, having lived under Franco's regime, any content that encouraged critical thought or challenged dominant ideologies may have been regarded as potentially controversial. The scandal caused by such a book being published at the time would have been naught but negative to sales and popularity for the publishing house, leading them to pre-emptively exclude the passage. Regardless of the specific rationale, the book was republished censored, and the following segment of this article will offer an explanation and context of the missing scene.

5. The Missing Scene

At the end of Chapter 8 of the book *Whose Body?* a fully censored scene has been identified. A scene in which Wimsey, the main character, suffers an episode of shellshock, an example of the subtle political and social engagement present in Sayers' work. Given that Sayers lived through World War I and was personally acquainted with many veterans who suffered from this malady. This scene was either censored by the apparatus or by the publishing house or, perhaps, even the translator. In any event, this section provides some context of the censored scene and an analysis of why it may have been cut.

5.1. Context and analysis of the "Missing Scene": How Could It Be Recovered?

Whose Body? follows the investigative hobby of the aristocratic detective Lord Peter Wimsey, who helps Scotland Yard in some investigations in the same way as Sherlock Holmes did in Arthur Conan Doyle's stories. The novel starts with Wimsey receiving a phone call from his mother, the Dowager Duchess, informing him that Mr. Thipps, a friend of the family and an architect, has found a naked body of an unknown man in his bath with only a pair of pince-nez. Intrigued by the situation, Wimsey pays a visit to Thipps and examines the body. The case becomes increasingly entangled by the fact that

a hospital laboratory is nearby to the house and the body may have come from there. However, Sir Julian Freke, a distinguished physician and the hospital's director claims there is no body missing from his dissecting room. At the same time, a wealthy Jewish moneylender called Sir Reuben Levy, a neighbor to Freke who bears a striking resemblance to the unidentified body in the bathtub, has disappeared. Wimsey has to solve both mysteries, which ultimately become intertwined, leading him to uncover the perpetrator. The "missing scene" takes place near the end of the novel just after Wimsey has finally reached a solution to the mystery. This moment follows his consultation of Sir Julian Freke's background upon the *Who's Who?* a biographical reference book listing notable figures, their titles, and professional backgrounds. Wimsey, a war veteran, stressed by the amount of work he has been carrying out with his investigation suffers an episode of shell shock triggered by a childhood recollection. He proceeds to wake up his butler, Bunter, in distress and the latter calms him down and puts him to bed. In both editions, the 1949 and the 1983 one, this chapter ends just before this scene takes place and it is not included or translated. The rationale for this exclusion likely relates to the historical context, as both the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War had recently concluded, and many men who fought at the front suffered from this malady (Ruiz Vargas, 2006).

Therefore, if the editorial intention of these books was to provide entertainment to the public, rather than provoke reflection on sensitive topics, this scene was probably considered unfit for publication and subsequently removed. The scene proves to be interesting when analysed in the context of the book, as the scene is later referenced at the beginning of the following chapter and again when Lord Peter Wimsey confronts Sir Julian Freke, since he uses it as an excuse to visit him at the hospital. There is not a clear explanation, as stated earlier, as to why this scene was absent from both translations, but it might have been due to the historical proximity of the war. Notably, the book was submitted for review just four months after D Day and the defeat of Germany in the Second World War.

Regardless of the reason for its omission, the scene should be included in any new editions of the book that were to come out in Spain since it presents Wimsey as a more complex and psychologically nuanced protagonist. A new Spanish edition could also highlight the censored fragments that have been "recovered". As explained by Panchón Hidalgo & Zaragoza Ninet (2023, para. 11), there are several ways to approach the matter.

One option is to include a prologue contextualizing the censorship the novel underwent and the circumstances under which it was originally introduced to the Spanish literary market. A different strategy would be to highlight the previously censored fragments in bold and add footnotes explaining how and why these segments were censored.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this article aims at a vindication of Dorothy L. Sayers and her work, emphasizing the necessity of reintroducing her novels to the Spanish literary market since other authors like Agatha Christie, Conan Doyle or Stanley Grandier are still published and widely read today. Sayers' work proves essential to any reader interested in classic "whodunnit" mysteries, offering dynamic characters like Wimsey, Parker, Bunter or Vane. Unlike Christie's iconic figures, such as Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple—who largely remain unchanged throughout their respective series—Sayers' protagonists evolve over time.

Sayers wrote up to eleven novels and three short story collections featuring Wimsey, as well as other detectives like Montague Egg. However, as demonstrated throughout this study, several of these works have never been published in their entirety in Spain and have been subject to censorship, whether by the actual censorship apparatus of the government or publishers who pre-emptively removed content they anticipated would be deemed unacceptable. This has prompted not only an incomplete edition of her works in Spanish, but a distortion of the characters and stories she wrote. Many readers in Spain, particularly those familiar with the Molino editions published between 1949 and 1972, may perceive him as a mere imitation of Sherlock Holmes: a superhuman detective character, smarter than the police, not as witty as the original version shows and lacking humanity and personality. This interpretation, however, is fundamentally inaccurate. Efforts to reintroduce Sayers' work to the Spanish literary market have been made by Lumen (a label currently under the banner of Penguin Random House) who edited six novels between 2005 and 2009 and then reedited one, *Gaudy Night*, in 2021. The reasons for this remain unclear—whether this was due to limited commercial success, insufficient marketing or a general lack of awareness of Sayers' significance among Spanish readers, the reason remains unknown. However, a complete, annotated and retranslated edition of the *Wimsey* series has yet to be produced, while the ones that were published are mostly out of print and can only be acquired second-hand.

In summary, it is due for Sayers to come back to Spanish libraries, with a comprehensive edition, including a meticulous retranslation that restores all the previously censored segments, a prologue or preface by either the translator or an expert selected by the publishing house which addresses the historical context of censorship and its impact on Sayers' work. Additionally, the inclusion of thoroughly documented footnotes by the translator would be invaluable, providing explanations for the numerous cultural references that Sayers weaves throughout her stories—ranging from Shakespeare and the Bible to John Milton, Dante, and many others.

Her works should once again be made available in Spanish libraries alongside those of Agatha Christie and Conan Doyle, enabling Spanish readers to appreciate Sayers's significance as one of the leading mystery writers of her time. Moreover, not only Sayers, but also authors such as Margery Allingham and Ngaio Marsh deserve to be rediscovered and properly reintroduced to the Spanish audience. Like Christie, these authors were central figures in the crime genre and should be recognized again in Spain as the "Queens of Crime" just as they are in the United Kingdom and the United States.

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