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Transferring Woody Allen's New York: Translation strategies and the polysystem

Abstract

We are immersed in a process of cultural globalization which rotates around the Anglosaxon axis. The massive exportation of audiovisual products from the U.S.A. to other cultural contexts leads not only to a vaster knowledge of the source culture but also to an increase in the progressive acceptability of the values inherent to their consumption. The Spanish context of reception of the five Woody Allen films which compose the corpus of this article [*Sleeper* (1973), *Love and Death* (1975), *Annie Hall* (1977), *Hannah and her Sisters* (1986) and *Manhattan Murder Mystery* (1993)] has been increasingly dominated by American imports. Actually, in the year of the release of the latest film, 1993, there were four times as many American films shown in Spanish cinemas as there were local ones. The translators of these audiovisual productions are, therefore, commercial mediators who attempt to achieve a maximum degree of transparency so that the target audience will accept and consume them.

Looking back at the vast amount of translation maneuvering required for the dubbing of these films, the purpose of this article is to evaluate diachronically the extraordinary effect of the massive importation of this kind of products on Spanish customs and even on the Spanish language. Within the theoretical framework of the polysystem, the different translation strategies applied to several segments of these films will be analyzed following the typology defined by Javier Franco (1996). The extracts will be grouped in three sections, related to (a) the treatment of religious taboo items, (b) American culture specific items and (c) consumption of drugs. The first two films were released while Generalísimo Franco was still alive and exerting a strict censorship on translation and many other practices. Later, with *Annie Hall* released so shortly after his death, the translation of many culture

specific items was problematic because these items were unknown in the target context or had a different intertextual status in the system of reception. Finally, with the last two films, it will be shown that most of these references have become so embedded in the target culture that it would even be difficult for the average Spanish viewer to consider them foreign at all. Habits and values once restricted in one community have come to be shared through translation.

1. Woody Allen and the situation in Spain

Film distribution in most parts of the Western world is overwhelmingly dominated by American companies. Huge budgets are invested in both production and advertising, and the whole process of marketing abroad is followed closely through branch offices of the film majors located in the different countries where the films are exported, as revenues pouring in from outside the U.S.A. are an important part of the total income generated by a film. Due to the linguistic barrier in non-English speaking countries, the role of the audiovisual translator of these productions as mediator will adopt a commercial perspective far more crucial than with other kinds of texts which do not require so much investment. With this form of popular culture for hypothetically massive audiences, the *skopos* of the translator, using Vermeer's (1990) terminology, is evidently to achieve a maximum degree of transparency which will make the film audience of the target culture accept, and therefore consume, the new text. The fact that American films are so widespread will contribute to this transparency, since target audiences may have established a familiarity with the source cultural context which can be as close as, or perhaps even closer to their own culture. This is the case in Spain, where, for instance, in 1993 (the year the last film of the corpus was

premiered), two hundred and five American productions were released in Spanish cinemas compared to fifty seven local ones.

In Spain, dubbing is the main accepted code for language transfer in films, which helps to incorporate the source text in the new context even further. This is because, due to a suspension of disbelief that makes audiences accept that foreign actors speak in Spanish, a large percentage does not even seem to be aware of the linguistic manipulation and, therefore, does not question its accuracy. The only complaints could arise if there were a lack of cohesion between auditive and visual channels, mostly related to *kinetics* and *isochrony*¹, but decades of experience from dubbing studios make it highly unlikely that this should happen nowadays. As a consequence, and thanks to this shared delusion, the margins of acceptability in translation for dubbing are wider than with subtitling, where the

1 Frederic Chaume, academic and film translator from English into Catalan, considers them top priorities in the dubbing translation process and defines them as follows:

- Kinetics: the non-verbal sign appears together with an explanation which makes reference to that sign through words. The interaction of gestures or physical movements is extremely cohesive [my translation]

(“el signo no verbal aparece acompañado de una explicación que hace referencia a dicho signo mediante palabras. La interacción de los gestos o los movimientos corporales está estrechamente cohesionada” (Chaume 2004: 266)).

- Isochrony: Here, the norms the professional practice of the translator sticks to as far as isochrony is concerned, related to movements of articulation, opening and closing of mouth, can be summed up as follows: to manage to adjust the translation proposals to the length of the utterances of the characters on screen [my translation].

(“Así, las normas que rigen la práctica profesional del traductor en el apartado de la isocronía en relación con los movimientos articulatorios, o de apertura y cierre de la boca, se pueden resumir de la siguiente manera: conseguir ajustar las propuestas de traducción con la duración de los enunciados de los personajes de pantalla” (Chaume 2004: 276)).

gossiping effect, term coined by Törnqvist (1995) to refer to the reception of two languages simultaneously through two different channels, restrains the translator's maneuvering.

Acknowledging the American cinematic supremacy in the western world, the asymmetrical relationship between cultures still unavoidably affects the translation process of its discourse, specially with comedy, a genre which, as Agost (2001: 18) emphasises,

requires from the translator an effort of imagination and special creativity as well as a high linguistic and extra-linguistic competence. If we focus on the jokes, the audience will understand them relying on the fact that speaker and listener share the same cultural and linguistic reference [my translation]².

Therefore, in many cases the translator has to move away from the original content and references of the source text so that a humorous illocutionary effect can be achieved in the new context. Probably more often than with other types of films, a variety of translation strategies (to be found between the two methodological poles of conservation and substitution) have to be used by the professional translator in order to integrate the presence of the *other's* sense of humour and develop a certain degree of identification in the target audience.

But it is not only the synchronic differences among cultures or the predominant commercial position, in this case, of the source context which require the application of strategies of adjustment in the translation process of a film. The changing character of the conditions of reception also makes it difficult to establish fixed patterns of what a target text should be like in order to be assimilated by the

2 Exige del traductor un esfuerzo imaginativo y una creatividad especial, así como una gran competencia lingüística y extralingüística. Si nos fijamos en los chistes, la comprensión de estos por parte del espectador descansa en el hecho de que tanto el emisor como el receptor comparten los mismos referentes culturales y lingüísticos.

new context. In other words, one of the main features of translation norms is their permanent variability, and translators, who are as well spectators, will try to perceive the standard of acceptability at a specific time in order to struggle with ideological and/or economical constraints, since being able to establish what the current norm is will enable them to know how far they can go with the linguistic manipulation of the audiovisual text. As far as translational analysis is concerned, the theoretician will equally be able to perceive the degree of tolerance of a target culture towards the new text which is being incorporated and/or its degree of solidity against the overwhelming power of the source culture.

In any case, it is feasible to transfer linguistically all kinds of audiovisual texts, even those with a strongly contextualized humour, as Díaz Cintas (2003: 254), an academic and audiovisual translator himself, remarks:

Many comedies have had an extraordinary success around the world. The favourable reception to Woody Allen's films outside the U.S.A. and to Pedro Almodovar's films beyond Spanish borders proves it [my translation]³.

It is still extremely surprising for the Spanish public to verify how popular Almodóvar is abroad in spite of his extremely local humour, and one supposes New Yorkers will be equally puzzled at how some of Woody Allen's films, with many supposedly undecipherable references to the city, get shown abroad at all. As mentioned above, however, an extended exposure to texts from a specific context eventually allows some of its recurrent features to leak in and be assimilated by a new cultural system.

3 Gran número de comedias han encontrado un éxito extraordinario en todo el mundo. La buena recepción de las películas de Woody Allen fuera de los E.E.U.U. y de las de Pedro Almodóvar más allá de las fronteras españolas deja constancia de esta realidad.

This would definitely be the case of Woody Allen, who has directed 32 films in 35 years. His extensive work would compose an excellent field of analysis for Film Studies academics prone to applying the concept of *auteur* but, from a perspective of Translation Studies, it is also highly interesting to analyse diachronically the strategies applied to transfer linguistically to a different cultural context the work of such fruitful creativity in which, unavoidably, we can find a number of themes recurrently dealt with throughout the years. Allen's alternative humour, so distant from mainstream Hollywood comedy, adds interest to this analysis: its embedment in New York, where some of his films are located and most refer to, makes his irony focus on subjects that could be considered foreign to other parts of his own country, and even more so in other countries which have the interference of a linguistic barrier. Actually, nowadays his work is so peculiar within the United States that he is thought to be more popular in Europe, where his critical perception of current issues is more warmly embraced.

From a Spanish perspective, the interest of this analysis is enhanced as well for chronological reasons. Allen's first five films were produced between 1969 and 1975 coinciding with the death throes of the dictatorship of Generalísimo Franco, who ruled the country for 36 years under a fierce censorship isolating it from any outside influence that could be considered contrary to the interests of the system⁴. Even after Franco's death, it still took some time for the country to release itself from so many ideological restrictions and be updated socio-culturally with the rest of the western world. Therefore, the analysis of the forcefully unhurried introduction of

4 Allen's, second film, *Bananas* (1971), which portrayed a military dictatorship, was not released till 1974 with several changes made to its dialogue via translation for dubbing. His next film, *Everything you always wanted to know about sex but you were afraid to ask* (1972) was, for obvious reasons of sexual explicitness, not released till 1978, three years after Franco's death.

Allen's filmography in Spain can actually become a study of the evolution of the target system from a linguistic and cultural perspective. Taboo themes which eventually became acceptable, lexical coinages for concepts and/or objects unknown to the target context at a specific time and, generally speaking, culture specific items from Allen's milieu which progressively became absorbed and accepted by the Spanish culture constitute a framework of research that justifies this analysis and might encourage academics from other nationalities to perform translational surveys on how these texts were linguistically transferred to their own cultural contexts.

2. The data

The corpus of analysis of this paper consists of extracts from five Woody Allen films: *Sleeper* (1973), *Love and Death* (1975), *Annie Hall* (1977), *Hannah and her Sisters* (1986) and *Manhattan Murder Mystery* (1993). The choice of the first three films revolves around the death of Generalísimo Franco in 1975 and all the macro-textual constraints related to his military dictatorship which had such a restrictive influence in translation practice. As for the last two films, they represent vantage points in the following two decades from which we can perceive the linguistic and ideological changes in the Spanish system when approaching recurrent themes which had appeared in previous texts. I will be dividing the corpus into small groups of segments with the purpose of illustrating these changes by contrast, and will include references to taboo subjects, culture-specific items linked to the U.S.A and eventually introduced in Spain, and a theme specific to Allen's films such as legal and illegal drug-consumption.

If the study of translation is to be made productive for the study of literary theory, and, especially, literary history, it is quite clear that translation can no longer be analysed in isolation, but that it should be studied as part of a whole system of texts and the people who produce, support, propagate, oppose, censor them. Or, to put it differently, translation can be studied in isolation only if it is reduced to one half of one of the constraints under which it is produced: that of the locutionary level of language (Lefevere 1985: 237).

Therefore, within a polysystemic theoretical framework, concisely defined by Theo Hermans⁵ and subsequently elaborated on by other academic researchers who followed the path lead by Gideon Toury, focusing on the needs and constraints of the target context has become essential in order to deduct translation norms and understand the causes that originated them. Obviously, the power of the American film industry is a key issue in the cultural globalization which currently rotates around the Anglosaxon axis but, for commercial reasons, major multinational companies are still willing to adapt to the peculiarities of the different target contexts. And in the case of the exportation of Woody Allen's films to Spain in the early 70's, referring back to Lefevere's quotation above, we can see how "the people who produce, support, propagate" his films were ready to negotiate with those who "oppose, censor them".

5 "a differentiated and dynamic 'conglomerate of systems' characterized by internal oppositions and continual shifts" (Hermans 1985: 11).

2.1 Religion

Church and state were indivisible during Franco's dictatorship, so any allusion to religion which might be perceived as slightly critical would automatically be erased. Dubbing was a useful tool to modify on film and television any verbal segments with no visual prolongation on screen which were found unsuitable for the official discourse. The invisibility of this procedure made it even more effective than strict prohibition, since the censors could actually rectify the translators' work again and again till they eventually adapted the dialogues so that any hint of subversion would disappear. Those familiar with the *persona* that Woody Allen created of himself for his films will easily recognise his existential uncertainty related to religion, closely linked to his hypochondria, which is constantly expressed in many of his films. *Love and Death* (1975), his fifth film, has several references to life beyond death, and I would like to illustrate how censorship dealt with unacceptable themes (it was released the year Franco died) with three manipulations of the source text within a single segment:

(ST1)

BORIS Sonja, what if there is no God?

SONJA Boris Dimitrovitch, are you joking?

BORIS What if we're just a bunch of absurd people who are running around with no rhyme or reason?

SONJA But, if there is no God, then life has no meaning. Why go on living? Why not just commit suicide?

BORIS Well, let's not get hysterical. I could be wrong. I'd hate to blow my brains out, then see in the papers they found something. (00.06.35)⁶

6 The time code of the Spanish DVD editions is supplied so that readers who are interested in locating the segments can do so.

- (TT1)
- BORIS Sonja, ¿y si no hubiera nada?
(Sonja, and if there were nothing?)
- SONJA Boris Dimitrovitch, ¿estás bromeando?
(Boris Dimitrovich, are you joking?)
- BORIS ¿Y si fuéramos un atajo de gente absurda que va y viene sin
cuenta ni razón?
(And if we were a bunch of absurd people going to and fro
with no rhyme or reason)
- SONJA Pero, si no hubiera nada, la vida no tendría significado. ¿Para
qué seguir viviendo? ¿Por qué no suicidarse?
(But if there were nothing, life would have no meaning. Why
go on living? Why not commit suicide?)
- BORIS Bueno, no nos pongamos histéricos. No tendría gracia que,
después de volarme a cabeza, leyera en los periódicos que
encontraron algo dentro.
(Well, let's not get hysterical. It wouldn't be funny if, after
blowing my brains out, I read in the papers that they found
something inside)

It is remarkable to observe how the translator applies the same strategy of attenuation twice in order to erase the reference to God, replacing it with *nada* ('nothing'), a hyperonym which expands the semantic possibilities but, for the ruling system at the time, would still be preferable to speaking about the unspeakable in a dubious way. Even more outstanding, however, is the addition of the word *dentro* ('inside') immediately after *algo* ('something') at the end of the last utterance, verbally conveying the meaning in Spanish that he is talking about something in his head, when we can see simultaneously how he is pointing at the sky with his gun, clearly referring to something in heaven.

One of the key constraints for audiovisual translation is the way kinetics determine linguistic choices. As Chaume (2004: 270) remarks, "kinetic signs hold a higher status in the hierarchy of translation priorities: the linguistic code can be manipulated" [my

translation]⁷. In this case, however, for ideological reasons the linguistic code has been manipulated in the opposite direction, resulting in a lack of cohesion between the auditive and visual channels which produces a *semiotic noise* that affects the credibility of the sequence. At that time, however, this incoherence must have also been considered secondary when compared to the unacceptable issue of questioning the existence of God.

Still focusing on religious taboos, two years earlier, in his science-fiction fantasy *Sleeper* (1973), Woody Allen plays the part of Miles, who wakes up two hundred years into the future to find how much the world has changed. He comes across an old newspaper and reads an outstanding headline.

- (ST2)
- LUNA Let me see that.
- MILES It's a *New York Times*, be careful, from 1990. "Pope's wife gives birth to twins." Wow. (00.46.02)
- (TT2)
- LUNA A ver, ¿qué es eso?
(Let's see. What's that?)
- MILES Eh... el *Times* de Nueva York. Cuidado, que es de 1990. "Mil millones por el traspaso de Cruyff Jr." Oooh.
(Hmm... The New York Times. Careful, it is from 1990. "A thousand million for the transfer of Cruyff Jr." Wow.)

This humorous reference to the Pope was as unacceptable at the time as the reference to God, but, this time, the translator, by using "A thousand million paid for the transfer of Cruyff Jr.", applied a strategy coined as *naturalization* by my colleague in Alicante Javier Franco to refer to the instance when "the translator decides to bring the CSI [culture specific item] into the inter-

7 Los signos cinésicos ostentan un rango superior en la jerarquía de prioridades de traducción: el código lingüístico es manipulable.

textual corpus felt as specific by the target language culture” (1996: 63). We should bear in mind that the Dutch star Johan Cruyff was then playing for Barcelona F.C., a Spanish football team, so the translator makes use of a local referent to replace the allegedly offensive utterance. Naturalisation is commonly used to avoid the semantic opacity which results from a cultural reference belonging to the source context which is unidentifiable for the target culture, but the Pope is a universal referent widely known in Spain, so this strategy was applied again for obvious ideological reasons. Curiously enough, Johan Cruyff’s son did eventually sign for Barcelona.

A reference to the Pope thirteen years later in *Hannah and her Sisters* (1986) which could have been considered far more offensive remained, however, intact in its transfer to the Spanish screens. This fact would prove that not only had censorship already virtually disappeared as a constraint from its cultural context, but that Spain had evolved socially and culturally to the point that it could even be considered more liberal than the United States, where allusions to certain issues can still stir trouble, as Allen portrays in the following scene which takes place in a television studio.

(ST3)
MICKEY You. Standards and Practices?
ED Ed Smythe, yes.
MICKEY Okay. Why, all of a sudden, is the sketch dirty?
ED Child molestation is a touchy subject...
MICKEY Could you--
ED ...with the affiliates.
MICKEY Read the papers! Half the country’s doing it!
ED Yes, but you name names.
MICKEY We, hev-- We don’t name names! We say the Pope.
GAIL We always say the Pope!
ED That sketch... cannot go on the air. (00.11.34)

(TT3)
MICKEY Tú. ¿Eres de censura?
(You, are you from censorship?)
ED Soy Ed Smythe.
(I am Ed Smythe.)
MICKEY Vale. ¿Por qué habéis decidido que el sketch es obsceno?
(Great. Why have you decided that the sketch is obscene?)
ED A los patrocinadores les disgusta el tema del abuso sexual...
(Our sponsors are disgusted by the theme of sexual abuse...)
MICKEY ¿Por qué no...
(Why not?)
ED ... de niños.
(...of children.)
MICKEY ¿Por qué no? ¡Medio país lo está haciendo!
(Why not? Half the country is doing it)
ED Se citan nombres concretos.
(It mentions specific names.)
MICKEY En absoluto, no decimos nombres, decimos el Papa.
(Not at all! We don’t say names, we say the Pope.)
GAIL ¡Sí, el Papa!
(Yes, the Pope!)
ED Ese sketch no puede salir en antena.
(That sketch cannot go on the air.)

As we can see, the changing conditions of reception in the target context clearly had an influence on the translation process of these audiovisual texts, since no specific manipulation was required in 1986 to transfer a reference which would have been found totally unacceptable thirteen years earlier. That sketch could now go on the air in Spain.

2.2 Culture specific items

A far more common translation problem, as we have mentioned above, is the semantic opacity which results from the use of cultu-

re specific items in the source text unknown to the target context. Familiarisation with references rooted in the American culture is a logical consequence of the massive viewing of the films they export. The permanent entrance of these productions in other cultural contexts leads to a vaster knowledge of the features which constitute their national identity, and also to an increase in the progressive acceptability of the standard values inherent to their viewing. From this perspective, Allen's extended filmography proves again to be an extremely valuable field of research to evaluate diachronically the extraordinary effect of the massive importation of American audiovisual products on Spanish customs, and even on the Spanish language. It is enlightening to verify how culture specific items of American origin, but currently considered universal, posed a translation problem scarcely a few years earlier because they had still not leaked into the socio-cultural target system. As Toury (1995: 27) points out, "translation activities and their products not only can, but do cause changes in the *target* culture". It is also further proof of how influential the American audiovisual industry is in the way of life of many countries in the world.

I will take three short segments from *Annie Hall* (1977) to prove this point and at the same time to illustrate three other translation strategies which can be applied when a difficulty in decoding the source text cultural reference is feared by the audiovisual translator. In this film Allen's *alter-ego*, Alvy, feels insecure for not being up to the standards of the *avant-garde* attitude of his love interest, Annie, and of friends of hers such as Tony, who boast about their social circle.

(ST4)

ALVY It's always some kind of an excuse. It's- You know, you used to think that I was very sexy. What... When we first started going out, we had sex constantly... We're-we're probably listed in the Guinness Book of World Records. (00:13:04)

(TT4)

ALVY Sí, siempre tienes alguna excusa. No sé, antes creías que yo era muy sexy. Cuando empezamos a salir juntos nunca tenías bastante ración de sexo. Hubiéramos podido batir un récord olímpico.
(You always have an excuse. I don't know, you used to think that I was very sexy. When we started going out together you never had enough helpings of sex. We could have beaten an Olympic record)

(ST5)

ALVY Hey! What is this? What? Did you go to a rock concert?
ANNIE Yeah.
ALVY Oh, yeah, really? Really? How-how'd you like it? Was it-was it, I mean, did it... was it heavy? Did it achieve total heavy-ocity? Or was it, uh... (00:55:12)

(TT5)

ALVY ¡Eh! ¿qué es esto? ¿has ido a un concierto rock?
(Hey! What is this? Have you been to a rock concert?)
ANNIE Sí. (Yes!)
ALVY ¿Ah, sí?, ¿de veras?, ¿no me digas?, ¿y qué te gustó?, ¿fue aerolítico?, dime, ¿fue de veras superferolítico? O ¿fue...
(Ah, yes? Really? Don't tell me! And what, did you like it? Was it meteoric? Tell me, was it really super-feroric? Or was it...?)

(ST6)

TONY This is a great house, really. Everything. Saunas, jacuzzis, three tennis courts. You know who the original owners were? Nelson Eddy, then Legs Diamond. (01:13:42)

(TT6)

TONY Es una gran casa Hay de todo: saunas, tres pistas de tenis. ¿Sabes quién fue el primer propietario? Nelson Eddy y, luego, Legs Diamond.
(This is a great house. There's everything: saunas, three tennis courts. Do you know who the first owner was? Nelson Eddy and, then, Legs Diamond.)

In the first segment we can perceive how the old-fashioned character Allen portrays, with a lifelong obsession for sex, misinterprets Annie's liberal attitude towards it and assumes that she will be permanently available to his urges, a generational gap which could be easily reflected in the social situation of Spain in 1977. However, what is outstanding from our contemporary perspective is that the cultural reference of the source text, *Guinness World of Records*, so common nowadays (news items are constantly appearing in Spanish newspapers about bizarre records being beaten in the presence of representatives of this organization so that they will be officially registered), would then be considered difficult to decode and, therefore, require the application of a translation strategy known as *absolute universalization* or *absolute neutralization*: "the translators [...] prefer to delete any foreign connotations and choose a neutral reference for their readers" (Franco 1996: 63). The choice of the universal 'Olympic record' instead of *Guinness record* maintains the semantic connotation and, consequently, produces an equivalent humorous illocutionary effect, but it is interesting to point out how nowadays the status of the latter reference is almost as universal as the former, to the extent that, to many, it would not even be considered a culture specific item at all.

In the second extract, the humorous resource in the original text rotates around the use of the adjective *heavy* to refer to a specific kind of popular music which Allen's character does not sound to keen on. His uneasiness with the term leads to his ironic creation of a nonce word, the obviously derived noun *heavy-ocity*. We can observe how the lexeme has been completely erased in the target text even though this lexical borrowing was at the time already being used in Spain within the musical scene, but not to the extent that it is nowadays. However, as Candace Whitman-Linsen (1992: 207) remarks,

Woody Allen plays to a limited audience, a private audience who knows him, understands him [...] and he does not hesitate to make allusions which can be understood by only a narrow insider group.

It is therefore arguable that it would be necessary to clarify the segment by replacing *heavy* and *heavy-ocity* for *aerolítico* (a non-existent adjective that would derive from *aerolito* and could be translated as 'meteoric') and *super-ferolítico* (composed by formal analogy with the former one). As with much of Allen's humour, not all his references are expected to be decoded by massive audiences, and *heavy* should probably sound as foreign in any context of reception as it did to Alvy himself. Therefore, an excessive hermeneutic effort on behalf of the translator to achieve transparency might miss the point of the restricted complicity that Allen could have been trying to establish with his audience.

The last segment is mainly an example of the easiest way to deal with semantic opacity in a culture specific item, which is to apply the translation strategy known as *deletion*:

The translators consider the CSI unacceptable on ideological or stylistic grounds, or they think that it is not relevant enough for the effort of comprehension required of their readers, or that it is too obscure and they are not allowed or do not want to use procedures such as the gloss, etc. (Franco 1996: 64)

We have a reference to *jacuzzi*, an artefact virtually unheard of in the Spain of the 70's, but commonly known nowadays. It did not seem to deserve the effort of finding a term to replace it since it was irrelevant to the semantic layer conveyed by the segment so it was simply deleted. On the other hand, the references to Nelson Eddy (an actor in Hollywood musicals of the 30's) and Legs Diamond (a gangster) remain unchanged even though they are virtually unknown to the Spanish audience. They would probably

not have been that widely recognised by the American audience either.

The aim of the analysis of these three segments has been to demonstrate how, chronologically speaking, culture specific items are eventually assimilated by other cultural contexts to the extent that their *otherness* ceases to be considered an issue, becoming practically indistinguishable from idiosyncratic elements of their own system. However, this block of examples (exs.4-6) has no connection with the previous one (exs.1-3) based on religious allusions, since the translation behaviour observed here is not a consequence of the censorship exerted in Spain during Franco's regime, but simply a matter of chronological evolution. In far more recent films, translators have applied strategies to transfer culture specific items whose need is difficult to understand barely a few years later, as happens with the following segment from *Manhattan Mystery Murder* (1993), where one would think now that the source referent is far more easily identifiable than the target one.

(ST7)

LARRY How could you see her? She's dead. Not only is she dead, she's been cremated! It's not even Halloween! (00:51:00)

(TT7)

LARRY ¿Cómo vas a verla si está muerta? Y no sólo muerta, sino incinerada. Y esto no es Transilvania!

(How are you going to see her if she is dead? And not only dead, but cremated. And this is not Transylvania!)

2.3 Drug consumption

Finally, I would like to refer to customs portrayed in some Woody Allen films which were, at a given time, mainly related to the United States, or more specifically to New York. Due to the asymmetrical evolution of other cultural contexts they were difficult to transfer, not only because of the lack of shared knowledge of cultural referents but, even more important, due to the fact that the target linguistic code did not have the terminology to allude to these customs which were not necessarily alien to them, but of not such an extended popularity. I will focus my analysis on the consumption of illegal and legal drugs in these three decades with examples of three films of the corpus, and my purpose is to show how the language system of the cultural target context would eventually pick up the terminology it needed to refer to this practice. We shall start with two segments from *Annie Hall* in a year when the drug counter-culture was still widespread in the United States, whereas in Spain Franco had been dead for only two years and there was still a period of socio-cultural and also linguistic adaptation.

(ST8)

ANNIE Well, okay. Well, listen, I'm gonna get a cigarette, okay?

ALVY Yeah, grass, right? The illusion that it will make a white woman more like Billie Holiday.

ANNIE Well, have you ever made love high? (00:39:03)

(TT8)

ANNIE De acuerdo, espera voy por un cigarrillo.

(All right. Wait, I'll get a cigarette)

ALVY ¿Vas a fumar hierba? ¿quieres hacerte la ilusión de que soy Robert Redford?

(Are you going to smoke grass? Do you want to have the illusion that I am Robert Redford?)

ANNIE ¿No has hecho nunca el amor estando cargado?
(Haven't you ever made love being loaded?)

(ST9)

WOMAN Wow, I don't believe it... you mean to tell me you guys have

FRIEND never snorted coke? (01:07:27)

(TT9)

AMIGA Me parece increíble, chicos... ¿Queréis decir que nunca
habéis sorbido coca?

(It sounds incredible to me, guys... Do you mean you have
never sipped coke?)

To begin with, we could point out in the first segment how the reference to American jazz singer Billie Holliday has been replaced by Robert Redford, applying a translation strategy known as *limited universalization* (or *limited neutralization*):

In principle, the translators feel that the CSI is too obscure for their readers or that there is another, more usual possibility and decide to replace it. Usually for the sake of credibility, they seek another reference, also belonging to the source language culture but closer to their readers (Franco 1996: 63).

Besides the arguable need for this replacement (Alvy mentions Billie Holliday to ridicule Annie, probably suggesting that she smokes grass to feel like a "cool black woman"), what is definitely remarkable is that the meaning conveyed with this new cultural reference upturns the original one, because focusing the attention on himself in the target text, the egotistical perception that many spectators have of Woody Allen is emphasised and confirmed, whether his egotism is ironic or not. Therefore, the background knowledge the audience has of it's character would make this manipulation of the dialogue more easily assimilated by the target culture.

However, a greater interest in this segment relies on the two references to drug consumption. In the first case, the verb *fumar* ('smoke') precedes *hierba* ('grass'), as if the translator felt the need to perform an intensification by means of the use of an intratextual gloss, which takes place when "the translators feel they can or should include their gloss as an indistinct part of the text" (Franco 1996:62). Even more remarkable is the use of *cargado* ('loaded') to translate *high*, when this Spanish term is customarily related to drink, not drugs. The common colloquial term, *colocado*, does not seem to have been so extended at the time.

In the second segment, the use of *sorber* ('sip') is puzzling. The most common verb used to refer to consumption of cocaine is *esnifar*, a false anglicism (sniff has a slightly different meaning) adapted to the phonotactic rules of the target language by adding the epenthetic *e* to prevent the initial *s*, non-existent in Spanish. There are records that this term had already been used by 1977 in some restricted circles, but the translator may have thought it was not widely known, or had not heard about it. In any case, *Tomar* ('take') could have been another alternative, but the first impression one gets of the choice of *sorber*, related to liquids, is that, perhaps subconsciously, the term *coke* might have been linked to the famous American soft drink.

Almost a decade later, in *Hannah and her Sisters*, we can see how drug consumption is no longer related only to counter-culture. Certain drugs are socially acceptable, even as a sign of high status, among other groups perfectly integrated in the establishment of the source context. The linguistic system of the target context had also accommodated these practices by supplying suitable terminology to describe them.

(ST10)

MICKEY Yeah, that's tough! You don't deserve Cole Porter. You should stay with those groups that look like they're gonna

stab their mother!

HOLLY At least I'm open to new concepts!

MICKEY And you don't have to snort cocaine at the table all the time! What do you do? Carry a kilo around in your purse?
(01:01:24)

(TT10)

MICKEY Me importa un bledo. No mereces oír a Cole Porter. ¡A ti te van más los grupos que tienen aspecto de apuñalar a sus madres!

(I don't give a damn. You don't deserve to listen to Cole Porter. You dig groups who look as if they were going to stab their mothers)

HOLLY ¡Porque estoy abierta a nuevos conceptos!

(Because I am open to new concepts!)

MICKEY Y no tiene gracia que estés esnifando siempre cocaína en la mesa ¿Vas por ahí con un kilo en el bolso?

(And it is no fun to always have you snorting coke at the table. Do you go around with a kilo in your handbag?)

(ST11)

HANNAH Now, Holly's not shy.

NORMA No, Holly's game for anything. Holly takes after me.

HANNAH True.

NORMA I'd have been a great dope addict. (00:44:55)

(TT11)

HANNAH Sin embargo Holly no es nada tímida.

(However, Holly is not shy at all)

NORMA A Holly no le da miedo nada. Holly se parece a mí.

(Holly is not afraid of anything. Holly is like me)

HANNAH Cierto. (True)

NORMA Yo hasta hubiera podido ser yonqui.

(I could even have been a junkie)

The time gap between *Annie Hall* and *Hannah and her Sisters* has allowed *esnifar* to become a word which is even officially sanctioned by the *Real Academia de la Lengua Española*, and used recurrently in this and other films. In the second segment we find another

term, *yonqui*, which is clearly a lexical borrowing of the English word *junkie* also adapted to Spanish phonotactic rules. The target linguistic system, therefore, has started stocking a whole lexical field of words related to illegal drug consumption, mainly from slang, which proves how the linguistic system evolves to fulfil the communicative needs of society.

The 90's would be the decade of drug prescription and consumption in New York fuelled, above all, by years of massive attendance to mental therapy sessions. Woody Allen has based the ironic humour of some of his films on how his characters keep making appointments with their psychoanalysts hoping that they will be able to solve all sorts of entangled personal problems. *Manhattan Murder Mystery* (1993) does not specifically deal with this issue, but Allen's character, Larry, is constantly dropping one-liners that refer to therapy and prescription drugs.

(ST12)

LARRY Oh. You don't have to see your shrink. There's nothing wrong with you that can't be cured with a little Prozac and a polo mallet. (01:32:54)

(TT12)

LARRY No tienes que ir al psiquiatra. No tienes nada que no pueda curarse con una tortilla de calmantes o con un bate de béisbol. (You don't have to go to the psychiatrist's. There's nothing wrong with you that can't be cured with a tranquilizer omelette or a baseball bat)

(ST13)

LARRY Ted? Ted-Ted's, you know, he's got his date with Marcia Fox tonight. He's probably out buying some Spanish Fly. (01:04:52)

(TT13)

LARRY ¿Ted? Ted, Ted está citado con Marcia Fox esta noche, debe de haber salido a comprar Erectol.

(Ted? Ted, Ted has a date with Marcia Fox tonight, he must have gone out to buy some Erectol)

In the first segment we have the colloquial word *shrink*, whose only Spanish equivalent, *loquero*, is not as commonly used so as to be easily identified; the register has been raised with the term *psiquiatra*. On the other hand, the now popular anti-depressant *Prozac* had not yet been commercialised in Spain, so we can find instead an intensification in the target text with the use of *tortilla de calmantes* ('tranquilizer omelette'), probably with the aim of making sure the humorous illocutionary effect would be achieved. Finally, Allen disrupts the linguistic expectations of the listener by referring to *a polo mallet* (to metaphorically hit her over the head with it), an autonomously created idiolect in the film, instead of the far more usual *baseball bat*, in an attempt at ironic sophistication. However, the translator seems to have deducted the expected underlying text expected and decided to use it (*bate de beisbol*) instead of the surface text, which could be considered harder to decode.

As for the second and final segment, just another example of how the conditions of reception of a socio-cultural system can be modified in a very short time. Back in 1993 there was not a word in Spanish to refer to a commercialised aphrodisiac. As we can see, the translator had to make up a coinage *ad hoc* from a recognizable lexeme, *erect-*, which would make clear what kind of product the character is talking about even though it did not exist as such in Spain. With so many prescription drugs of this kind in the Spanish market today, one would have to agree that *the times are a-changing* (hopefully footnotes are not necessary to decode this CSI), and very quickly.

3. Globalisation: to be celebrated or feared?

With this article I have tried to prove that the analysis of the translation of the same lexical elements, cultural references or concepts linked to specific themes along a diachronic axis can give us a clear view of the socio-cultural evolution of a linguistic community. In the case of the audiovisual translation of American productions, their massive exportation has an important effect on target cultures which, to a higher or lesser degree, assimilate customs and sets of values and, in some cases, even make them their own assuming the predominance of the source cultural context. As we have seen, there was a time when the *Guinness Book of Records* (ex.4) *Jacuzzi* (ex.6) or *Prozac* (ex.12) were unknown to the Spanish system, something which might probably sound unbelievable for younger generations who do not even consider them culture specific items at all. As for attitudes and customs, Woody Allen's critical approach to religion was unacceptable for the Spanish context during the Franco regime (ex.1 & ex.2), but the conditions of reception changed so much after the end of the dictatorship that his sense of humour could be currently more appreciated in Spain than in some areas of his own country. Besides, the progressive introduction of the drug culture in Spain had a huge socio-cultural impact, beginning with the language system, which had to expand a terminology needed to define a new social reality. As Toury (1995: 27) very accurately concludes,

the more persuasive rationale is not the mere existence of something in another culture/language, but rather the observation that something is 'missing' in the target culture which should have been there and which, luckily, already exists elsewhere.

Different translation strategies have been applied in order to solve hypothetical problems derived from semantic opacity. The only translation norms which can be deduced from the manipulation of culture specific items in Woody Allen films belonging to three different decades are a tendency towards attenuation [*God* (ex.1) and *The Pope* (ex.2) become 'nothing' and 'Cruyff'] because of ideological censorship in the early 70's, and towards intensification [e.g. *grass* (ex.8) replaced by 'smoking grass' or *Prozac* and a *polo mallet* (ex.12) by 'tranquilizer omelette and a baseball bat'] in order to achieve a humorous illocutionary effect more easily. For the same reason, we can also find a perhaps 'overzealous hermeneutic urge to clarify connotations of cultural references [*Halloween* (ex.7) and *Billie Holliday* (ex.8) becoming 'Transylvania' and Robert Redford']. In any case, this laudable effort implies a flexibility which is not only unavoidable but desirable if the notion of culture specific item is to be kept open to intercultural evolution. And, as has been verified in this article, an important component in the nature of the translation process is the course of time and the obvious possibility that objects, habits or values once restricted to one community (New York, U.S.A) will come to be shared by the rest of the world. We will leave it to sociologists (and psychoanalysts?) to decide whether this cultural globalisation is to be celebrated or feared.

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