

ABSTRACT

Key words: translation, Czech literature, 20th century, polysystem theory, censorship, history of translation, Čapek, *War with the newts*

History as a scientific tool contributes in a unique manner to the evolution of mankind, its activities and ideas, because mankind, in contrast to things, is formed by its past. In the field of translation studies, History of Translation is perceived as a valuable instrument for understanding the complexity of translation work, and its importance among creative activities and within society in general.

Among theories concerning human activities and translation in particular, polysystem theory is characterised by a descriptive and systemic approach that is rooted in Russian formalism and Czech structuralism. Polysystem theory emphasises the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of systems as opposed to the static, homogenous and ahistorical nature of systems which has wrongfully been attributed to the structuralists. Translation activities and its products are mainly part of the target culture's polysystem, because the translation process culminates in the target culture with the final reception and interpretation of the original work, in which in this phase the repertoire of the target system is incorporated.

Despite the evident differences which existed between the evolution of the Czech and Spanish socio-cultural systems in the period concerned, there were also abundant and significant similarities in the developments which both systems went through in recent history. The creation of a repertoire and its acceptance, followed by its rejection and the acceptance of a new repertoire occurred in each of the polysystems and display a parallelism that is highly significant and which, far from being an obvious fact or a coincidence, deserves to be analysed and has concrete motives.

One of the factors common to both systems was the existence of institutionalised censorship for several decades. Its emergence, existence and abolishment had a vital impact on literature and on the translation of literature. In the case of Spain, the institutional archives of the censorship are of tremendous importance in that they demonstrate the values of an era; they serve not only as a record of publishing activity but also of translation activity.

An analysis of the environment in which the translation process takes place and ends as well as an exploration of the translated works shows the evident influence of the environment on translation, resulting in other promising lines of investigation suggested in this doctoral thesis.