

HARVESTING NEW REALITIES IN PORTUGAL: LITERARY RETRANSLATION AND J. D. SALINGER'S *THE CATCHER IN THE RYE*

Tiago Cardoso*

Universidade NOVA de Lisboa

ABSTRACT: Retranslation – in this case literary – is a practice that, despite existing for centuries, only started to be discussed in Translation Studies in the 1990s. Indeed, its very definition has proved problematic. With the purpose of contributing to the debate on this subject, this article aims to explore the reasons behind the retranslation of literary works, showing at the same time how it can be observed in practice. To achieve this, a comparison will be made of two Portuguese translations of J. D. Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951a): one of them by João Palma Ferreira (1962), written during the Estado Novo regime, and the other by José Lima (2005), produced in more recent democratic Portugal. The differences found illustrate the idea that when a country goes through several transformations at the sociopolitical and cultural level, translations are susceptible to change too.

KEYWORDS: Estado Novo, Literary Translation, Portugal, Retranslation, *The Catcher in the Rye*

1. Introduction

Though retranslation has not yet been explored as much as we might expect (Susam-Sarajeva, 2003; Vanderschelden, 2000), in the sense that deeper and more rigorous theoretical studies into the subject only began around 30 years ago (Berman, 1990; Pym, 1998), retranslation is not a new nor recent phenomenon (Haj Yasin, 2016). In fact, it has been present since the Middle Ages (Van Poucke and Gallego, 2019, p. 10) and has been object of debate by Goethe (Míndreci, 2014, p. 359), amongst others. As time goes by, the act of retranslating occurs ever more frequently, far more often than we notice (Al-Shaye, 2018; Míndreci, 2014), particularly in the case of political and philosophical texts (Van Poucke and Gallego, 2019, p. 11), religion, and literature (Feng, 2014, p. 70; Sá, 2017, p. 10).

But what does it mean to retranslate? This is a question for which there is no consensus, which is why Gambier (1994) asserts that it cannot be reduced to one single explanation. However, a working definition might be the one provided by Koskinen and Paloposki (2010, p. 294), namely, “a second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language”. We can further add that retranslation might only encompass certain parts of a text and that it can occur by resorting to the original work or a previously existing translation (or translations). In this case, there are two types of retranslations: direct and indirect¹ (Jianzhong, 2003).

The purpose of Section 2 is to identify the reasons why certain works are retranslated and how that happens, first taking a brief look into Berman's Retranslation Hypothesis²

¹ In short, “direct retranslation refers to the translation for the second or more times from the original,” while indirect retranslation “refers to the translation not from the original but from the other language translation(s) translated from the original” (Jianzhong, 2003, p. 193).

² This is a term later used by Gambier (1994) and Chesterman (2000) to refer to Berman's argument.

(1990), which has canonical relevance for this area of Translation Studies. Section 3 then demonstrates the importance of retranslation in practice through the study of two Portuguese translations of J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.³ To this end, the article outlines and debates the differences found between the translations by João Palma Ferreira (1962) – the first in Portugal, though it is a second edition (the first edition was published in 1951, immediately after the release of Salinger's work in the United States; see 'Salinger traduzido', 2010) – and by José Lima (2005), produced in two very different historical time periods. Finally, Section 4 provides brief final remarks on the importance of (literary) retranslation.

2. Retranslation: how and why?

2.1 Berman's Retranslation Hypothesis

In 1990, the French journal *Palimpsestes* decided to dedicate its fourth volume to the study of retranslation, for which Paul Bensimon and Antoine Berman were responsible. Their goal was to let the public know what this concept stood for – for Berman (1990) it was every translation produced after the first (see Sá, 2017, p. 11) – and the reasons why some works were retranslated, literary ones in particular. Berman's (1990) ideas and proposals stood out and became amalgamated into an approach known as "Retranslation Hypothesis".

With this approach, Berman (1990) asserts that, in general, all translations hold a degree of imperfection, "a failure that makes itself felt both as an 'incapacity' and a 'resistance' to translate" (Gürçağlar, 2009, p. 233) and is mostly present in the first translation, thus appearing as an "incomplete act" (Berman, 1990, p. 1; see also Dastjerdi and Mohammadi, 2013, p. 174). In order to tackle this incompleteness, Berman (1990) defends the principle of the more retranslations the better, as this is the only way to truly get closer to the original text. As Goethe (1992, p. 61) put it, the more we translate, the closer we are to attaining "[a] perfect identity with the original". It can thus be stated that more recent translations tend to be closer to the source text, and in this way symbolise progress (see Al-Shaye, 2018; Chesterman, 2004, p. 8).

Bringing forward a text that is closer to the original work without however neglecting its "otherness" (see Al-Shaye, 2018, p. 37) is fundamental for Berman (1990). Translations that stand out and can survive the passing of time are considered "great translations" (Berman, 1990, p. 2) and, like the original, they remain young and timeless (Berman, 1990; see Sá, 2017).

With regard to the need for retranslation, Berman (1990) specifically highlights the idea that translations get old, as do their interpretation and reception. In Al-Shaye's (2018, p. 70) words, "translations produced in a particular time and place may later become unsuitable for the new generation," as not only values and ideas but also language evolve, bringing in their wake the need to update the vocabulary in use (Sá, 2017).

³ The English version used throughout this article is the 2010 Penguin Books edition, which contains Salinger's work in its entirety.

However, this principle is not always active, since we can also have several retranslations in a short period of time. Berman's logic thus requires more investigation, particularly in the case of literary retranslation (Albachten and Gürçağlar, 2019; Cadera and Walsh, 2017; Saeedi, 2020; Van Poucke and Gallego, 2019; see Koskinen, 2018).

2.2 Behind the desire and need to retranslate

Ageing and interpretation are, as pointed out by Berman (1990), very simple aspects that justify the need for retranslation, though they are not enough by themselves. Thus, this need is deserving of further examination. After Berman's contribution to Translation Studies, other scholars have also played a role in the knowledge we have of this field. This section will therefore introduce other names that should not be overlooked and demonstrates how and why retranslation occurs. In this regard, three aspects stand out: editorial policies; error correction and new interpretations of the source text; and shifts in societal values. In order not to disregard other aspects that are just as important, I grouped them together under the subheading "Other Aspects".

2.2.1 Editorial policies

The reason why we retranslate is not always connected to the nature of the previous translation(s). We forget that, at times, the initiative to retranslate does not always begin with the author or translator (Feng, 2014); it also happens that publishers, their policies, and the entire market behind book sales are incredibly powerful agents when it comes to the decision to retranslate certain texts (Milton, 2001).

Besides the interest in literature, it is undeniable that commercial factors are involved (Koskinen and Paloposki, 2003). Throughout history, books have been treated by publishers as marketable commodities, the source of financial profit, as well as of cultural status and projection. It is therefore the publishers that tend to benefit most from retranslations (Sá, 2017, p. 32; Sironen, 2016, p. 10).

One motive has to do with their affordable production costs (Van Poucke and Gallego, 2019, p. 12). Considering the fact that publishers are recycling texts instead of selling new ones, production costs are reduced (Koskinen and Paloposki, 2003; Sá, 2017, p. 32), making this a low-risk investment (Lee and Liao, 2018).

Retranslations also remind the public of certain classics or books that might otherwise have been forgotten (Dastjerdi and Mohammadi, 2013, p. 175; Vanderschelden, 2000), which attracts some customers and plays in the publishers' favour.

2.2.2 Error correction and new interpretations

One of the reasons that a new translation is undertaken in the first place is often because the last one is viewed as unsatisfactory and/or of low quality (Dastjerdi and Mohammadi, 2013; Lee and Liao, 2018). Though this may have to do with linguistic lapses and imprecision in the depiction of the source text (Sironen, 2016, p. 5), what "low quality" might also suggest is a need for a new interpretation of a given work. This results from the

“impermanence” of the original (Sironen, 2016): translations age and may not be as well assimilated by the most recent generations, both in terms of their form and content (Lee and Liao, 2018).

In short, this subsection deals with feelings of discontent as regards a previous translation, resulting from a sense that it is unsatisfactory in terms of comprehension (Vanderschelden, 2000, p. 4) and/or because the translator has a different understanding of the work (Sá, 2017, p. 18). There is a final mission that consists in setting free the “truth” encoded in the source text (Brisset, 2004, p. 41), a truth that stems from the act of correcting and perfecting the mistakes made in previous translations through the recovery of certain stylistic and semantic aspects which the translator finds indispensable (Kruijthoff, 2013, p. 8; Sá, 2017, p. 17).

2.2.3 Shifts in societal values

As time passes, the sociopolitical and cultural reality of a given region inevitably changes and with it the values at its core: the “target norm” (see Lee and Liao, 2018) keeps changing and therefore there is a “changing target culture” (Mathijssen, 2007, p. 17). When translating a literary text, it is important to pay attention to this aspect because whether it is evident or not, it is always present. Therefore, it can be argued that to achieve a faithful portrayal of the ideas conveyed in the original work, “not only [is it] justif[iable] but actually necessary to have new translations” (Almberg, 2001, p. 928; see also Massardier-Kenney, 2015). We can then claim, quoting Susam-Sarajeva (2003, p. 5), that retranslation perhaps has more to do with “the needs and attitudes within the receiving system than any inherent characteristics of the source text which make it ‘prone to’ retranslations”.

In this way, we can understand that changes in language and culture (see Sironen, 2016) are crucial to the practice of retranslation. In this sense, the translator’s goal becomes “to interpret the source text according to a different set of values so as to bring about a new and different reception for that text in the translating culture” (Venuti, 2008, p. 100).

2.2.4 Other aspects

There are a few other aspects that also help explain why we retranslate. These are summarised below:

- Unfamiliarity with previous translations: this is assumed by scholars to be a very frequent occurrence – the translator is unaware of other translations that might have come before (Feng, 2014; Lee and Liao, 2018; Sá, 2017). A translation that is undertaken in such circumstances is, in Pym’s (1998) words, a “passive retranslation”.
- The competition factor: in all areas of the job market we find competitive workers and the world of translation is no exception. Sometimes, the newest translation may have been produced to prove itself superior to the ones produced before (Kruijthoff,

2013, p. 8), and a rivalry might start: this translation, according to Pym (1998), is an “active retranslation”.

– The evolution of science and technology: in the domain of non-fiction (Sironen, 2016, p. 9), new translations help build a more accurate and factual translation largely thanks to technological devices which allow us access to new information. It is observable that, from the moment we make use of translation memory tools and updated critical bibliographies (Sá, 2017, p. 18), our intention is to improve a translation that was undertaken before such means were available.

– Strengthening the authority of institutions: retranslation may also help reinforce the power of certain institutions such as academic, feminist, and religious ones (Dastjerdi and Mohammadi, 2013, p. 175), in the sense that they assert their influence through the reiteration of an institutionalised interpretation of a canonical work. For instance, “in religious institutions, retranslations help to define and inculcate orthodox belief by inscribing canonical texts with interpretations that are compatible with prevailing theological doctrine” (Venuti, 2008, p. 97).

– Personal desire: finally, this is an aspect all translators can relate to – the urge to translate an already translated work without any specific motive (Sá, 2017, p. 19), that is, the translator takes on this task simply because he or she feels the desire to do so (Feng, 2014, p. 72).

3. Retranslation in practice: an analysis of two Portuguese translations of *The Catcher in the Rye*

Let us now take a look at how all of this takes place in practice. To that end, a comparison will be made of two Portuguese translations of J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951a). One is from 1962, therefore prepared during the Estado Novo regime, by João Palma Ferreira; the other is by José Lima and was produced in the 21st century, more precisely in 2005.⁴ In order to compare and analyse them in the light of what has been discussed in Section 2, I will especially focus on subsection 2.2.3, with the aim of underlining the differences between the two translations at this level. To do so, I will first briefly characterise the Portugal of the Estado Novo and that of the 21st century, later moving onto

⁴ To the best of my knowledge, João Palma Ferreira and José Lima were the only translators to publish translations of *The Catcher in the Rye* in Portugal. Several editions of both works have been published (Lima, 2005, 2010b, 2011, 2014; Palma Ferreira, 1951b, 1962, 1971, 1981, 1983). In this article, Lima’s first translation (2005) is used; regarding Palma Ferreira, the work here considered is the one published in 1962, as at the time I wrote this article I was unaware of Palma Ferreira’s 1951 translation, and believed his first translation of Salinger’s work had been produced and published in 1962. While out of the scope of this article, it would be interesting to see what kind of changes were made in all of Palma Ferreira’s translations, from 1951 to 1983, as to understand Portugal’s transition from dictatorship to democracy. It is also interesting to note that Lima’s 2010 and 2011 translations were published within a one-year span, but with different publishers.

aspects that will be examined more meticulously: religion, family, affective and sexual intimacy, and, finally, good manners associated with language.

3.1 A general sociocultural perspective of Portugal: from the Estado Novo to the 21st century

When António de Oliveira Salazar became *Presidente do Conselho* (today's prime minister) in 1932, the liberal ideals linked to the First Republic came crumbling down. In their place and to replace them, five principles now aimed to command the everyday life of the Portuguese: they were God, Fatherland, Authority, Family, and Work (Reis, 1990, p. 333). Their utmost importance is confirmed and made official in the Government Gazette:

Deve ser objeto de justificação e glorificação tudo quanto se tem feito através dos oito séculos de História de Portugal, no sentido de fortalecer os seguintes factores fundamentais da vida social: a *Família*, como célula social; a *Fé*, como estímulo da expansão portuguesa por mares e continentes e elemento de unidade e solidariedade nacional; o *Princípio de Autoridade*, como elemento indispensável do progresso geral; a *Firmeza do Governo*, espinha dorsal da vida política do País; o *Respeito da hierarquia*, condição básica da cooperação dos valores; a *Cultura literária e científica*....Tudo quanto, pelo contrário, tem sido elemento de dissolução nacional, de enfraquecimento da confiança no futuro, falta de gratidão para com os esforços dos antepassados deve ser objecto de censura. (*Diário do Governo*, 1932, p. 625)⁵

We can therefore consider Salazar's regime – known as “Estado Novo” [New State] – as fascist, based on a solid nationalism (Mandić, 2018, p. 5). This background, as also highlighted in the previous block of text, does not allow one to truly benefit from cultural freedom, a freedom that is linked to the practice of translation. Surveillance and censorship were not only found in the political spectrum; rather, they were engraved in the private and social life of citizens: This is the so-called “Política de Espírito” [Policy of the Spirit] (Xu, 2018, p. 8).

From the time Salazar got to government until his death (even though slight changes at a sociocultural level started to be felt around the late 1960s and early 1970s), Salazar saw culture as a means for propaganda and used it to praise the nation; everything that went against the country or encouraged revolt and obscenity was prohibited (Figueiredo, 1975, p. 151). For this reason, “creative automutilation” (Xu, 2018, p. 10) was a recurring practice in the translations produced throughout the Estado Novo as a way to escape censorship.

In the Portugal that followed the revolution of April 25, 1974, and namely in 21st century Portugal, we can assert that the ideals previously discussed no longer apply (see Vala, Cabral, and Ramos, 2003). After 40 years since the “Revolução dos Cravos” [Carnation Revolution], the perspective that follows characterises, in general terms, the country today:

⁵ Decreto n.º 21.103, de 17 de Abril de 1932. *Diário do Governo*, Ministério da Justiça e dos Cultos. Available at: <https://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/6460.pdf>, p. 352 (Accessed: 13 April 2021).

A sociedade portuguesa tem vindo a conhecer um significativo processo de modernização, traduzido em domínios tão diversos como a transformação das estruturas económicas e empresariais, o desenvolvimento da ciência e da tecnologia, a escolarização das novas gerações e a recomposição socioprofissional, a feminização e progressiva terciarização do trabalho, a urbanização da população e dos espaços, a alteração dos padrões demográficos e de vida familiar, a democratização das estruturas políticas, a mediatização do espaço público e o alargamento do acesso tecnologicamente suportado à informação. (Cardoso, Da Costa, Coelho, and Pereira, 2014, p. 5)

This shift in sociocultural values had an undeniable impact on (re)translation: but how? To answer this question, I will use as illustrative examples the two already mentioned Portuguese translations of *The Catcher in the Rye* with the aim of exploring how two different sociopolitical and cultural backgrounds that are more than 40 years apart have an influence on the practice of translation and the values that emerge in both.

3.2 Comparing societal values in the two translations

3.2.1 Religion

Even though there was a formal separation between State and Church, Catholicism was recognised as the “traditional” religion of the Portuguese under the Estado Novo (Pintassilgo and Hansen, 2013, p. 31). It was part of the everyday life and all other forms of religious practices were forbidden; in this way, the freedom to worship always played in favour of Catholicism (Simpson, 2012, p. 98). At school, for instance, the authority of religion was ingrained in the students, as pointed out by Grilo (2011, p. 202): “A boa conduta levada a cabo pelos heróis, chefes e líderes... não podia deixar de ter sido movida pela sua Fé, pela sua crença em Deus e nos valores cristãos”. Despite the fact that an opposition to the church started forming during the 1950s and intensified in the 1960s (Hamann and Christopher Manuel, 1999), the truth is that religion was still deeply rooted in the Portuguese society of the time.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that the passage “I said Jesus probably would've puked if He could see it – all those fancy costumes and all. Sally said I was a sacrilegious atheist. I probably am” (Salinger, 2010a, p. 149) was translated to “E eu respondi que o Bom Deus, se regressasse à Terra, vomitaria as entranhas só de ver aquelas parvoíces. A Sally disse que eu era ateu, e provavelmente não se enganou” (Palma Ferreira, 1962, p. 157). We can see that “Jesus” is now “o Bom Deus” (“the good God”), which emphasizes His figure: not only is He God, but also a good one. The expression “regressasse à Terra” (“came back to Earth”), which was added in the target text, also validates this approach: it is almost a confirmation that God did in fact exist, because if He had not, He could not come back. Regarding “sacrilegious atheist,” it now simply reads “ateu” (“atheist”), which tones down the original message – Holden is still an atheist, but no longer a sacrilegious one: that would go against the doctrine of the regime even more.

Lima’s translation (2005, p. 150), on the contrary, conveys Salinger’s message without altering its parts or meaning: “Eu disse que se o amigo Jesus visse aquilo era capaz de vomitar – aquelas roupas de Carnaval e tudo. A Sally disse que eu era um ateu sacrílego.

Provavelmente sou”. Unlike Palma Ferreira’s translation, here “Jesus” was not translated to “Deus” (“God”) nor “Bom Deus” (“a good God”), but it is curious that Lima decided to add the word “amigo” (“friend”). When it comes to “sacrilegious atheist”, we see that its translation – “ateu sacrílego” – conveys Salinger’s intention with precision. Lima’s translation thus reflects the changes inherent to the place of religion in 21st century Portugal that began after the Revolution, especially in the mid-1980s.

In this decade, the mentality regarding the position of religion in society started to change. The 1986 Education Act (*Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo*) illustrates this idea well, since it allowed students from public institutions to choose whether they wanted to take religious education classes or not (Pintassilgo and Hansen, 2013, p. 31). Around the time of the publication of Lima’s translation, there was a generalised decline in religious practice in Portugal, as in the rest of Europe (Da Silva, 2011, p. 159). In Portugal, in the last few years younger people have abandoned religion more often than older individuals, in contrast to what happened in the Estado Novo where both younger and older people held strong religious beliefs (Da Silva, 2011, p. 160).

This perspective allows us to understand another extract about religion in *The Catcher in the Rye*:

He was telling us all about what a swell guy he was, what a hot-shot and all, then all of a sudden this guy sitting in the row in front of me, Edgar Marsalla, laid this terrific fart. It was a very crude thing to do, in chapel and all, but it was also quite amusing. (Salinger, 2010a, p. 18)

Two aspects in this paragraph that go against the ideals of the State can be underlined: one of them is the word “fart”; the other, the fact that this took place in a “chapel.” As previously discussed, behaviours that strayed from what were considered good manners were strongly repressed by the Salazar regime. It is therefore understandable that Palma Ferreira (1962, p. 26) chose to replace the offending term “fart” with the Portuguese word for “burp”: “Contava-nos ele que era um tipo todo fixe quando, de súbito, o rapaz que estava sentado mesmo na minha frente, Edgar Marsalla, deu um tremendo arrote. Foi uma coisa horrível, ali na capela, mas, mesmo assim, foi divertido”. Even though the word “arrote” (“burp”) is not something the Estado Novo would take kindly to, it is nevertheless softer than “fart”. In this way, the disrespect for the chapel and, consequently, religion, is attenuated in the 1962 translation (which could always be subject to censorship). Were the translator to have retained Salinger’s wording, it is likely that the officials responsible for censoring books and other foreign works would have removed this part of the narrative (for more on translation and censorship in the Estado Novo see Marques, 2009 and Seruya, 2018).

When we get to Lima’s translation (2005, p. 26), the scene created by Salinger is transported much more faithfully into Portuguese:

Estava a contar-nos o gajo bestial que ele era, o manda-chuva que era e tudo, quando de repente o tipo sentado na fila à frente de mim, o Edgar Marsalla, mandou um peido do caraças. Foi uma coisa bastante grosseira, na capela e tudo, mas também bastante divertida.

With these two passages, it is possible to identify a bigger respect for religious authority in Palma Ferreira’s translation and an openness regarding the individual’s behaviour in Lima’s, with both translations mirroring the status of religion at the time they were published.

3.2.2 Family

We now move onto another societal value that holds substantial significance in the Estado Novo: family. With the comparison that follows of the notion of “family” in the Estado Novo and 21st century Portugal, I do not intend to state that nowadays family does not matter; rather, I aim to emphasise that it was one of the cornerstones of society in Salazar’s time and had more influence on the individual’s life than it does today.

The importance of family to Salazar can be found in the several measures that were taken with the purpose of strengthening its value. Among these we find the creation of the “Código de Família” [Family Code] in 1939 – with the goal of addressing the demographic crisis – and the Child Benefit in 1942 (Pereirinha, Arcanjo, and Carolo, 2009). After the State, the family was the institution that most symbolised order and power, in which ruled the father’s authority held supreme. As for women, they were discouraged from working outside the home (Mandić, 2018; Mendes, 2010, p. 46) and expected to devote themselves to raising children and doing household chores (Freire, 2016, p. 74).⁶

This traditional role of women and the importance of family members can be detected in Palma Ferreira’s translation. For example, the phrase “She looked like she might have a pretty damn good idea what a bastard she was the mother of. But you can't always tell – with somebody's mother, I mean. Mothers are all slightly insane” (Salinger, 2010a, pp. 59-60) is rendered “Possivelmente sabia que o filho era um idiota chapado. Mas nunca se sabe o que pensam as mães. São quase sempre palermas” (Palma Ferreira, 1962, p. 70), which softens the insult, since “palermas” (“silly”) is not at all as strong as “insane”. With this choice, it is as if the respect for family is reinforced, given that the offence was less harsh.

Lima (2005, p. 67), on the other hand, opts to keep all the power of the original passage: “Tinha ar de quem podia saber muitíssimo bem o cretino que tinha como filho. Mas nunca se sabe – com uma mãe, digo eu. As mães são todas ligeiramente loucas”. We then go from “palermas” (“silly”) to “loucas” (“insane”), which represents an increase in the weight of words used.

⁶ To reinforce this role, initiatives were organised such as “Obra das Mães pela Educação Nacional”, “Assistência Social da Legião Portuguesa”, “Jornadas das Mães de Família”, and the “Instituto Maternal da Subsecretaria da Assistência Social”, designed to educate mothers into the desired role (Mendes, 2010, p. 47).

As touched upon initially in this subsection, this does not mean that the union and respect among family members is lost nowadays; rather, it shows that family does not have the same sacred value that it did during the Estado Novo (see Pinto, 2011).

3.2.3 *Affective and sexual intimacy*

Whereas religious and family values were celebrated in the Estado Novo, there were some issues that were anathema, such as affective and sexual intimacy (Mendes, 2010, p. 47). Until the Revolution, sensuality was not viewed favourably, and that is captured in the following excerpt:

Genericamente, até finais de 1960, organizações do estado, Igreja, família, escola e media convergem na missão de aconselhar crianças, jovens e mulheres adultas (solteiras e casadas) para o escondimento do corpo, o apagamento da sensualidade, a proibição do erotismo e a diabolização do prazer. (Freire, 2016, p. 74)

This situation can be further understood when taking into account the fact that Portugal and the Portuguese were isolated from the European cultural scene due to the censorship in place, which did not allow for the dissemination of new ideas and the formation of an informed public opinion on the matters presented above (Figueiredo, 2001, p. 25).

The Catcher in the Rye is full of sexual expressions, so I thought it would be interesting to see how the two translations differ from one another in the passage that follows: “Most guys at Pencey just talked about having sexual intercourse with girls all the time – like Ackley, for instance – but old Stradlater really did it. I was personally acquainted with at least two girls he gave the time to” (Salinger, 2010a, p. 51). Unsurprisingly, Palma Ferreira chooses to weaken the promiscuous tone of the last sentence: “A maioria dos rapazes estava sempre a falar de casos sexuais com raparigas. Ackley, por exemplo. Mas o Stradlater era dos que não falavam, mas fazia tudo isso. Conheci pessoalmente duas raparigas, pelo menos, com quem ele tivera coisas” (Palma Ferreira, 1962, pp. 61-62). We can observe that we go from an explicitly sexual mental picture – “gave the time to” – to a less powerful depiction of Salinger’s words through the expression “tivera coisas” (“had things with”).

By 2005, the way in which the human body and sexual relations were perceived was totally different, and Lima’s (2005, p. 59) translation corroborates this statement: “A maior parte dos gajos de Pencey andavam sempre a *dizer* que tinham tido relações com miúdas – como o Ackley, por exemplo –, mas o amigo Stradlater tinha mesmo. Eu conhecia pessoalmente pelo menos duas miúdas que ele comeu”. Lima decided to just use “relações” (“relations”) instead of “relações sexuais” (“sexual relations”), which might have to do with the fact that this is no longer such a sensitive topic; on the other hand, “que ele comeu” (“that he banged”) is much closer to Salinger’s choice of words than Palma Ferreira’s “tivera coisas”, with the former keeping the verbiage of the source text.

Though it is true that the affective and sexual principles endorsed by the Estado Novo lost strength by the end of the 1950s, by 1962 the mentality in this respect had not yet suffered significant changes, as Freire (2013, p. 56) observes: “Até à Revolução dos Cravos, a contestação da moral sexual e de género é lenta, pontual e circunscrita a certos setores sociais”.

In the mid-1970s, the study of sexuality and mixed-gender education shook all previously known norms, and today sexual education in Portuguese schools is part of the curriculum (Pontes and Ribeiro, 2015). Indeed, from the 1980s onwards, policies aimed at repressing affective and sexual intimacy were starting to be taken more lightly (Freire, 2013, p. 56), as shown in the figures brought by Pontes and Ribeiro (2015, p. 6): “Nos anos 1960, 80% dos jovens portugueses consideravam a sexualidade pré-conjugal perigosa e repreensível, o que só acontecia em cerca de 18% nos anos 1980; a concordância com o planeamento familiar passa de 30% nos anos 1960 para 90% nos anos 1980”.

With Lima’s (2005) translation, we observe how affective and sexual intimacy in the 21st century is no longer a taboo subject and can be a socially accepted topic of conversation (see Ramiro, 2013).

3.2.4 *Good manners associated with language*

As demonstrated, being a virtuous individual with good manners is extremely important at the time of Palma Ferreira’s translation, and it is not only behaviour that needs to be exemplary; vocabulary too. Salinger’s work defies the spheres of religion, family, and intimacy, and language is not an exception (see Schmitz, 1998, 2012).

An example that can frame the previous paragraph concerns the use of the expression “fuck you” in the source text: “I sat down for a second, and then I felt better. But while I was sitting down, I saw something that drove me crazy. Somebody’d written ‘Fuck you’ on the Wall” (Salinger, 2010a, p. 216). As might be anticipated, this part is softened in Palma Ferreira’s (1962, p. 223) translation: “Sentei-me durante alguns segundos e senti-me melhor. Mas quando estava sentado vi uma coisa que me deixou varado. Alguém escrevera na parede: ‘Vai à merda’”. This does not have the same power as Salinger’s; the harshness of the original passage has unquestionably decreased. However, it is true that the insult was not omitted, which was a bold move on the translator’s part when we take into consideration the censorship established. We might even consider this act rebellious, but when the expression “Fuck you” reappears this idea falls short: “I went down by a different staircase, and I saw another ‘Fuck you’ on the wall. I tried to rub it off with my hand again, but this one was scratched on, with a knife or something. It wouldn’t come off” (Salinger, 2010a, p. 217). In order not to repeat the obscenity and, in this way, not undermine the importance of good manners, this time Palma Ferreira (2005, p. 224) chooses to use “novos palavrões” (“new swear words”) instead: “Desci por outra escada e voltei a encontrar novos palavrões pelas paredes. Tentei apagá-los, mas estavam gravados a canivete. Não saíam da parede”.

Comparing these two instances in the 1962 translation with the 2005 translation, we see that Lima does justice to Salinger’s vocabulary and clearly avoids weakening its impact, both in the first instance – “Sentei-me por um segundo, e senti-me logo melhor. Mas quando estava ali sentado, vi uma coisa que me ia deixando doido. Alguém tinha escrito na parede ‘Vai-te foder’” (Lima, 2005, p. 214) – and in the moment Holden comes across the expression again: “Desci por outras escadas e vi outro ‘Vai-te foder’ na parede. Tentei também apagá-lo com a mão, mas este estava gravado, com um canivete ou coisa assim. Não saía” (Lima, 2005, p. 215).

Despite this situation, there are two occasions in which it is possible to highlight the presence of a few words that could have been deemed offensive in the *Estado Novo*. The first example, which can be found in the translation of “Life is a game, boy. Life is a game that one plays according to the rules. ‘Yes, sir. I know it is. I know it.’ Game, my ass” (Salinger, 2010a, p. 9), and that was transported into Portuguese by Palma Ferreira (1962, p. 17) as “– A vida é um jogo, rapaz. A vida é um jogo que só se pode praticar segundo as regras. – Sim, senhor, eu sei. Eu sei muito bem. ‘Um jogo, grande asno!’”. The last part, “grande asno!” (“what a buffoonery!”⁷), is interesting in two ways: On the one hand, it represents a distance from the harsher “my ass”; on the other hand, this is a mental response to what Holden’s teacher had told him, and given that teachers were extremely important and authoritarian figures it is curious to note that, although the expression was toned down, it is still there. It could also be that “grande asno” is not a very offensive thing to say or that, if it is rude after all, those responsible for the proofreading failed to notice and censor this part of the text.

Surprisingly, we could expect to find in Lima’s (2005, p. 17) text a literal translation of “my ass”, but that is not what happens: “– A Vida é um jogo, meu rapaz. A Vida é um jogo que se joga segundo as regras. – Pois é, senhor professor. Eu sei que é. Eu sei. Um jogo, uma ova”. The translator has opted for a functional translation that is much softer in its effect. What might explain this decision may have to do with the idea of “political correctness”, which in 2005 and especially nowadays is something taken into consideration quite often.

The “politically correct” is present in another of Lima’s (2005, p. 127) translation: “E a mãe da amiga Sally Hayes, Deus me livre. Essa, a única maneira de ela andar por aí a pedir esmola com um cestinho na mão era se todos lhe lambessem as botas quando davam alguma coisa”. Indeed, the saying “lhe lambessem as botas” (“lick her boots”) does not get close to the image depicted in the original text, as the action created by Salinger (2010a, p. 123) is figuratively more explicit: “And old Sally Hayes's mother. Jesus Christ. The only way she could go around with a basket collecting dough would be if everybody kissed her ass for her when they made a contribution”. What we could perhaps anticipate from Lima’s text is, again surprisingly, found in Palma Ferreira’s (1962, p. 133) words: “E a mãe da Sally

⁷ Please note that the expression “grande asno”, at least in European Portuguese is, to the best of my knowledge, not used nowadays. Therefore, “What a buffoonery” was the closest set of words I could think of.

Hayes! Meu Deus! Só consentiria em fazer um peditório com um cesto de Natal se em paga lhe beijassem o rabo!” Despite holding a proverbial connotation, Palma Ferreira still generates a mental image that is far stronger than Lima’s, who discouraged the use of an expression that could result in negative stereotypes (see O’Neill, 2011).

4. Final remarks

Retranslation, a phenomenon that is still under research, is a field that keeps growing. Throughout the last 30 years, significant advances have been made in this area of Translation Studies, especially since the publication of Berman’s Retranslation Hypothesis (1990). Regarding literary retranslation in particular, Cadera and Walsh (2017) have gathered several studies in their book *Literary retranslation in context* very recently.

The two Portuguese translations of *The Catcher in the Rye* help us understand not only the sociocultural evolution of Portugal from a country under dictatorship – with Palma Ferreira’s translation (1962) – to one led by democracy – with Lima’s (2005) – but also how the depiction of societal values such as, for instance, religion and family, may move closer or further away from the ideas in the original work depending on the time period in which a translation is undertaken. Indeed, one year after the publication of Palma Ferreira’s (1962) translation, Brás (1963, p. 194) commented: “Boa tradução de João Palma Ferreira, que conseguiu transpor para a nossa língua o estilo propositadamente ingramatical de Salinger, embora com o senão de ter atenuado certas expressões bem mais fortes no original”.

Curiously – and though Lima’s (2005) work was praised for staying true to the intensity of Salinger’s novel and retaining the harshness of the vocabulary (‘Rebelde por uma causa’, 2005 and Naves, 2005) – neither Palma Ferreira nor Lima have their names on the covers of their translations. On that note, we might wonder whether the study and practice of (literary) retranslation could also function as a catalyst for the recognition of the work done by translators across time and space? In an ever-globalised world, one would very much hope so.

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About the author: Tiago Cardoso works at Cogitatio Press and is an MA student of Translation at NOVA University of Lisbon. He has a BA in Languages, Literatures, and Cultures from the same institution. In his research he seeks to understand history through literature and translation, focusing especially on the United States and Australia. His MA thesis discusses the (in)visibility of the translator in 19th-century United States, using Edgar Saltus' work as a case study.