

## Introduction

Frank Herbert's *Dune* is a text which presents with heavily foreignized features. This is the case both within its source culture and the target culture of Norway. While the novel was written in English originally it employs Arabic allusions, religious motifs and naming conventions. The Norwegian translation produced by Torstein Bugge Høverstad, *Sand*, maintains these features despite their foreignness to the target culture. Though the target text also features domesticating efforts on behalf of the translator. Within translation studies the topic of domestication and foreignization is one fraught with tension and argument, ranging from the prescriptive to the descriptive branches of research. The strategies surrounding foreignization and domestication are often related as a dichotomy of binary pulls on what is least often a spectrum. But are such dichotomies useful when examining *Dune*—a text featuring foreign and exotic elements both to its source culture and to its target culture? Could *Dune* be considered a hybrid text? How does *Dune* fit into the broader discussion of foreignization and domestication, and how do we best describe the translation strategy and even translator who maintains the strictly foreignizing elements in their production while also employing strategies of domestication? In this thesis I will attempt to examine the Norwegian translation of *Dune* in comparison to its source text to explore these research questions. I will utilize the descriptive translation studies (DTS) approach of Gideon Toury to examine the linguistic features of *Dune* as they pertain to my research questions. Further, my findings will be examined through the lens of Even-Zohar, Pym, Aixelá, Adab & Schäffner, among others.

## Theory and background

As summarized by Munday (17), the descriptive branch of theoretical translation research may be product-oriented, function-oriented or process-oriented. The focus of this thesis will primarily be a product-oriented analysis. As mentioned above the chosen parameters of this thesis concerns itself with Gideon Toury's Descriptive Translation Studies and the theories therein. Toury (23) assesses that translations are "facts of target cultures," which may occupy different positions within the social and literary systems of said target culture. This is to say that given the status of translation within a target culture the various strategies generally employed by translators will differ. The considerations here are twofold; the *norms* or expectations a translator may be beholden to, and the idea of status. As status relates more to Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory we will examine this relationship later.

Toury (74) offers that through studying the translated product, the prevailing norms of the ST and TT segments will reveal the decision making process of the translator. Perhaps most important to us is what Toury refers to as the "initial norm," which can be summarized as the translator's choice to either subject their translation to the norms of the ST, or conversely prioritize the norms of the target culture in their production of the TT. These "regularities of behavior" allows us to discern the decision making process of the translator.

Crucially, Even-Zohar's (3) polysystem theory concerns itself with translation as part of a system "of various systems which intersect with each other and partly overlap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are independent." According to Even-Zohar, all literature exist within a multiple system of hierarchies all competing for dominance within the literary canon—translation being no different. Even-Zohar (193-94) summarizes the position of translation within

this polysystem as in flux, which is to say that at different historical moments the *status* of translation may occupy a *primary* position, or a *secondary* one. One may also refer to these positions as strong or weak respectively. Referring back to Toury's DTS, another way of phrasing this is to say that the given norms and expectations governing translation differs as a result of its status in its contemporary literary context. The polysystem theory, Even-Zohar (194-95) continues, assesses that the status of translation within a given culture determines to a reasonable extent whether the text will be subject to conservative or innovative norms. Put succinctly, if translation occupies a higher strata it trends towards innovation and may subsequently be foreignizing; if it has low status the translation skews more conservative and trends towards domestication.

While Toury's DTS and Even-Zohar's Polysystems theory are useful tools for examining the translation process of Dune; to explore the broader research question concerning the role of domestication, foreignization and hybridity we will also need to define these terms to better relate them back to our text.

Within translation studies the dichotomy of domestication and foreignization is one fraught with discussion and tension. As they pertain to the overall strategy of a translated work, it stands to reason that their consideration is an important one. Munday (88) relates how "a strategy is an overall orientation of the translator (e.g. towards 'free' or 'literal' translation, towards the TT or ST, towards domestication or foreignization). A translator's strategy then, involves, among other things, the decision—whether deliberate or due his or her implicit biases—to favor the ST or TT when translating. That is to say, the translator favors the linguistic qualities of either the SL or the TL when choosing an overall translation strategy—choosing to preserve foreign linguistic features, or substitute them for features more familiar to the target culture. This results in the product being effectively

foreignized or domesticated respectively. As stated above these choices may occur as a result of the position of translation within the literary hierarchy of the target culture, and is according to Toury the “initial norm” considered by translators in their undertaking. Hewson & Martin (122) explain further how foreignization is the attempt by the translator to maintain the distinct qualities of the foreign text, even risking the non-comprehension of target language. Domestication on the other hand describes the efforts on behalf of the translator to situate the text within the target culture, removing or replacing those characteristics deemed too exotic or foreign to retain in the TT.

Within the study of domestication and foreignization there are several authors whom we will be relying on as we explore the research question in earnest. These authors being Aixelá, Venuti and Pym respectively. Aixelá (56) presents an extraordinarily useful term in the analysis of linguistically complex texts such as *Dune* in the form of *Cultural Specific Items* or CSI. Aixelá defines CSI as “usually expressed in a text by means of objects and of systems of classification and measurement whose use is restricted to the source culture.” Aixelá (57) goes on to specify that CSI are the strictly cultural components of a text, rather than those which are linguistic or pragmatic. As such their translation may pose problematic for a translator attempting a foreignizing strategy, as CSI can prove difficult to manipulate without relying on substituting methods. Their persistence in a TT is likely to be a deliberate decision. Beyond relying on CSI help us label the most foreignizing elements which have been preserved in the TT we will also be referencing Aixelá further in the discussion part of this thesis—particularly in regards to methods of manipulating such CSI as will seem evident in *Dune*.

Lawrence Venuti will become relevant to our discussion as well, particularly how his ideas relate to the treatment of foreignizing elements in the production of a TT. While

domestication or domesticating strategies are seen as valid by some, Venuti (5) decries this as an attempt to create an illusion of a text without a translator. As he extrapolates from Schleiermacher, Venuti (5) coins the phrase “invisible translator” as a pejorative to denote the trend of translation often observed in the anglosphere—wherein the standard of translation is to produce a text so fluent and domesticated it renders the translator’s role in its production invisible. This invisibility of the translator is something Venuti relates as being solely a benefit to the target culture—who will often be a dominant culture—to the detriment of the culture of the SL.

Anthony Pym approaches the subject of foreignization and domestication with a more amenable disposition, though in opposition and criticism to the propensities displayed by Schleiermacher and later Venuti towards what he calls *binarism*. Pym (7) asserts that translators have a tendency to categorize strategies in binary dichotomies. Pym (7) lists ‘formal versus dynamic’, ‘overt versus covert,’ among others as categories of these established dichotomies. Pym does admit that many scholars would argue that his examples do exist on a spectrum, though argues the binarism remains. Embedded in the culture of translation then is the lesson of Schleiermacher in delineating into opposites, and Venuti’s contentions are one in a long line of this binary categorization. In opposition to this binarism, Pym purports there exists a hidden middle ground, which he refers to as a living translator. These translators would fit into his mold of *blendlinge*—or translators whose multicultural leanings would prevent them from falling into either arbitrary side of a binary. To that end Pym’s position can be summarized as an embrace of the multicultural and increasingly globalized framework of translation and its studies.

Finally, the last two bodies of work to consider before extrapolating further in the discussion section that of Adab & Schäffner and Mary Snell-Hornby, and they both relate

to the notion of hybridity. Schaffner and Adab (169) posits that a hybrid text is one which results from the translation process, and contains features which are ‘out of place’ or foreign to the receiving culture. A features of a hybrid text is not due to any translational incompetence on behalf of the translator, but the result of a deliberate choice to preserve these foreign elements. Further, hybrid texts are features of intercultural communication, and occur as a result of languages coming into contact.

Snell-Hornby (208) extrapolates from Schaffner and Adab, and relates the idea that the notion of the hybrid text “reflects the reality of our world today, itself a hybrid world,” and beyond this the hybrid text is a “result of our international, intercultural, globalized lives.” Though she agrees on this point, Snell-Hornby eyes hybridity with more concern than Adab & Schaffner. She cautions that the interference of two languages in contact may result in a production which fails its purpose as a text. Further, Snell-Hornby joins a host of scholars who largely treats hybridity as a postcolonial term, and extends this term to texts with and without intertextual translation. Though cautious, Snell-Hornby (216) does look towards hybridity and its ability to provide the scope for “creative, innovative and dynamic interaction.”

The above constitutes the layers of theoretical foundation we are to broach the analysis section of the thesis with. Put succinctly the excerpt from Dune will be analyzed with the intention of situating the text within the target culture. Though more on the methodology below.

## Method

The analysis portion of this study will be on excerpts from pages 69-73 in *Sand, del 2* as translated by Torstein Bugge Høverstad. While perhaps broad in scope, there are several

sentences spread out over the course of these pages which encapsulate the translation strategies employed by the translator. The pursuit of this analysis is to identify and measure the strategies related to domestication and foreignization, to relate these items back to the stated theory and relate how they fit into the broader scope of a hybridized text. In accordance with the DTS framework laid out by Toury, methodology for examining the ST and TT will be coupled pairings. In accordance with the framework provided by Toury's DTS I have elected to break down the chosen excerpt from *Dune* into a series of coupled pairs.

## Data/analysis

The status of *Dune* as a science fiction classic has no doubt influenced its translation into Norwegian. In an interview with *Dagbladet*, Høverstad relates both his efforts to domesticate the translation while preserving its foreign qualities. We will make the case in this preamble then that most if not all foreignizing element is preserved due to the novel's status within both ST and TT as a science fiction and cult classic. Høverstad argues for how the foreignness of the novel's setting and worldbuilding is one of its greatest strengths, and the product itself reveals a similar ideal. Though domesticating efforts have also been taken, as Høverstad also relates how certain features does require the effort so as to not be "meaningless" to the target culture—referencing the title of the novel as an example. The title of the Norwegian product "Sand" translates back to English not as dune, but as exactly sand as well, as the possible title of "Dyne" is more closely associated with a duvet in Norwegian. In this analysis section we will attempt to illustrate these foreignizing and domesticating efforts, and through the method which is laid for us

by the DTS method we will be utilizing coupled pairings to illustrate the shifts, and most pertinent to us the lack of them, in establishing *Dune* as a hybridized text featuring deliberately maintained CSI.

ST: Are you going to call him out, Muad'Dib

TT: Vil du utfordre ham, Muad'Dib.

In our first coupled pairing there is one feature which immediately leaps out, though first we should mention what is an obligatory shift from the English idiom of calling out into the more generalized Norwegian verb “utfordre,” or challenge. The feature which speaks to us here is the naming of the character Muad'Dib, whose name is completely foreign to the target culture. The name Muad'Dib is borrowed directly from the Arabic, which is reflected both in the novel's ST and TT. The Arabic (مؤدب) is an older term referring to someone who is learned, a teacher or mentor. While the naming convention is foreign it does not necessarily qualify as a CSI. The naming of characters often escape classifications of foreignization, as names are rarely domesticated, and often criticized in the product. Our second coupled pairing however possesses unmistakable attributes of every pertinent feature.

ST: A deafening roar filled the cavern, echoed and re-echoed. They were cheering and chanting: “Ya hya chauhada! Muad'Dib! Muad'Dib! Muad'Dib! Ya hya chauhada!”

TT: Et øredøvende brøl fylte hulen, med ekko og ekkoers ekko. De Skrålte og sang: “Ya hya chauhada! Muad'Dib! Muad'Dib! Ya hya chauhada!”



The shifts in this translation are minimal and correspond almost exactly to the ST, which is to state that the phrase “Ya hya chouhada!” has been entirely preserved in the TT. The Arabic (يا حيي الشهداء) is once again directly borrowed and translates as “long live the martyrs.” The text preceding the Arabic borrowing leans heavily towards an ST-oriented translation as well, with few shifts in linguistic content and perhaps some amplification. As the CSI have been left exactly as they presented in the ST, this ends up creating a strong foreignizing effect in the target culture. If domestication had been the consideration of the translator this phrase would most definitely have been translated into something less exotic and alien.

ST: And she recalled another Bene Gesserit saying.

TT: Og hun mintes et annet Bene Gesserit ordtak.

Above is another example of the word-for-word borrowing typical of the exotic features of Dune. The construction of TT mirrors again closely the construction of the ST, this time exhibiting no shifts, reductions or much beyond a direct translation. What is curious here is the phrase Bene Gesserit is one not strictly borrowed from Arabic in its source text, same as Fremmen below.

Though quite a few foreign elements or CSI have been retained in the TT, we can identify domesticating efforts on part of the translator as well. The aforementioned Dune – Sand example fits neatly into this category as well.

ST: The voice of any Fremmen may be heard in Council.

TT: Hver Frimans stemme skal høres I rådslagningen.”

In the SL “Fremmen” is the chosen word for the nomadic desert people of Arrakis. While most of Herbert’s terminology is borrowed from the Arabic, this word is made up and has no Arabic equivalent. It is curious then that the translator chose this word to domesticate—having it conform to Norwegian grammatical construction through employing the plural ‘-s.’

TT: Prophets have a way of dying by violence.

ST: Profeter har det med å dø for sverd.

This is an interesting shift in idiomatic content. While dying by violence possess no idiomatic content in the SL, the translation “dø for sverd” does in the TT. The phrase is an uncommon idiom in the TT almost never seen outside of a biblical context. This particular choice of domestication will be further examined in the discussion part of the thesis.

## Discussion

In the analysis section we illustrated the foreignizing and domesticating efforts of the translator, though we are still operating with language centered around the dichotomy of domestication and foreignization. While the strategies pertaining to domestication and foreignization explained by Hewson & Martin are conveyed in relatively neutral terms—same as Even-Zohar and Toury further above—some scholars heavily scrutinize the idea of domestication as something to avoided entirely. Venuti concerns himself with the

ethical effects of domestication, and offers an argument to its opposition. Venuti (5) asserts that “The dominance of transparency in English-language translation reflects comparable trends in other cultural forms” and concludes that in accordance with these trends translation ending up any different would be difficult. Venuti (20) relates the two choices of domestication and foreignization as an “ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values” and an “ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text” respectively. The former bringing the author home, the latter allowing the reader to travel abroad. *Dune* is certainly not lacking in ethnodeviant content, and does bring the reader out of their cultural comfort zone. While Venuti might certainly favor the preservation of CSI in the TT of *Dune*, his ethical approach is altogether quite prescriptive, albeit useful as a springboard to explore the contention of domesticating strategies and why there may be a need to justify *Dune*’s attempts.

Venuti and Pym both extrapolate from Schleiermacher, but reach different conclusions. Where Venuti mostly continues and reiterates on Schleiermacher’s binary Pym takes objection. Pym (5) offers that there may exist a middle ground which circumvents the need for what he refers to as a series of binary translation theories. In fact, Pym argues that such “binarisms might thus be seen as silencing middle terms,” and parts the way to discuss these strategies as more than a simple dichotomy. This is more useful to as it helps us broach the topic as to what kind of translator may produce a hybridized text such as *Dune*. Pym offers the term *blendlinge* to describe those translators who embrace the intercultural because they are part of the intercultural. Their presence is not just textual or theoretical, but present in the translation process. Pym finally offers that “Venuti fails to see that the study of living intercultural subjects might be the most

fruitful exit from Schleiermacher” in moving away from a fatal binary.

If we have then managed to identify the role of the translator in *Dune* as a person, not invisible, though certainly no Schleiermacher, and capable of utilizing foreignization and domestication in tandem we may finally move away from the binary and towards the notion of hybridity. If *Dune* can be justified as a hybrid text. Because *Dune* is of course not entirely foreignized, nor does it feature exclusively foreignizing strategies. Its translation exhibits some curious domesticating elements as well. The word-for-word borrowing from the Arabic, while also a feature of the ST are maintained in their entirety, and as such could be classified by Aixelá (61) as *repetition*, though the definition stipulates an attempt to maintain ‘as much as they can’ and refers most strongly to an active translation strategy. These borrowings are however surrounded by interesting linguistic features—as in one coupled pairing above. “Dø for sverd” is the Norwegian translation of “Dying by violence,” and while similar the TT introduces idiomatic content where there was none before. The Norwegian idiom is an uncommon one, and rarely seen out of an archaic—though more pertinently—biblical context. This effect may act to reinforce the religious qualities of the text, though interestingly in a place where the ST is broadly referring to prophets—which appear in all Abrahamic religions—and not does not possess any intrinsically Islamic qualities. In this regard the translator has made efforts to “bring the reader home” while maintaining the specific borrowings which renders the text foreign. The CSI of phrases such as “Bene Gesserit” and “Ya hya chouhada” exists alongside text deliberately domesticated to exhibit more Christian idiomatic content. This translation strategy is an interesting one, and once again we will rely on Aixelá to attempt its dissemination. Aixelá (63) relates how *limited universalization* is an attempt by the translator to locate another reference more familiar

to the target culture which also belongs to the source culture, Although Aixelá refers specifically to the CSI being translated, not the substituting of surrounding neutral linguistic expressions for idiomatic content more familiar to the target culture. Here the reference is to prophets, but the reference is rendering a neutral phrase in the ST an implicitly idiomatic one in the TT. Perhaps this is one way in which the translator approached the issue of domestication in *Dune*. A holistic approach to translation wherein more universally Abrahamic allusions are used to reinforce the overarching religious themes in a way that is most familiar to the target reader, while leaving the strictly Arabic and Islamic elements as is.

What can we then conclude about a text such as *Dune* where CSI are left as they are, and Aixelá's limited universality may at best be extended to the linguistic and idiomatic content *surrounding* the CSI rather than the cultural components themselves. Aixelá does provide us with a useful term, and a unique way of understanding the decision-making of *Dune*'s translation process. The text is undeniably intercultural in its TT, and going by the holistic approach we may affirm the text as effectively hybridized as a result of the strategies which resulted in such a product. Though can we justify the use of hybridity—a term usually reserved for postcolonial criticism—in regards to *Dune*, which is a text exhibiting foreignized content in its own ST?

Snell-Hornby offers an interesting perspective on a holistic translation strategy in her review of effectively hybridized texts. The scenes-and-frames approach of translation exhibited in the German translation of the *Moor's Last Sigh* is one which the hybridity has been maintained through the framing of exotic words maintained in the TT. Such a claim may also be extended to the approach we have observed in *Dune*—wherein foreign borrowings rub shoulders with domestication strategies. Though this presupposes that

Dune is a hybrid text, which we will need to look towards Adab & Schäffner to justify. Adab & Schäffner (169) relate that in order to be considered a hybrid text, the TT must contain features which are considered out of place, alien or foreign to the receiving culture. We have observed several instances of this in our analysis. Whether those features are also out of place or foreign to the source culture bears little to no difference on this particular definition. While some would argue that hybridity is a primarily postcolonial term, Dune still satisfies this definition. Thus, hybridity is a valid term for Dune's translation, and a viable term for a text exhibiting linguistic complexity.

## Conclusion

Snell-Hornby agrees with Schäffner and Adab's assertion that hybrid features are deliberate, and consciously chosen by the writer. This correlates well with the status of Dune's original text, its translation itself and the translator's take on the product. A hybrid text may be seen as a globalized product—one which has seen its linguistic and stylistic content expertly translated, though its exotic features remain due to its translator's deliberate choice to preserve these features. Ultimately, what the translation of Dune reveals is at least in part a concerted effort on behalf of the translator to slip between the strictest boundaries of foreignization and domestication, towards a narrow middle ground in which foreignization is preserved in earnest—though domesticating strategies are employed deftly to nudge the surrounding language further home. To this end, Dune's translator and translation may well fulfill what Pym describes as the living translator; a hidden middle ground between the binary of domestication and foreignization—wherein the blendings may relate the intercultural text freely among those who can appreciate an effectively hybridized product such as Dune.

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