

**What happened to God and the angels: H.W. Dulcken's translations of Hans  
Christian Andersen's stories in Victorian Britain**

**OR**

**An Exercise in Translational Stylistics**

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**Abstract**

The paper which follows uses a set of translations by Henry William Dulcken of stories written by Hans Christian Andersen and published in Danish between 1835 and 1866 as the object of an exercise in translational stylistic analysis. Section 1 presents the author, section 2 discusses translational stylistics, section 3 sets the scene for the stylistic study by outlining the impact of fairytale translations on the literary polysystem in Britain in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the reception in Victorian Britain of Andersen's stories, and by introducing the translator and comparing his translations briefly with other early translations. Section 4 is devoted to the stylistic study, while section 5 suggests that translational stylistics can be an important component in comparative cultural studies.

**Key terms:** style, stylistics, translational stylistics, critical linguistics, Hans Christian Andersen, fairytales, Victorian Britain, Mary Howitt, Henry William Dulcken.

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## An Exercise in Translational Stylistics

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### 1. Introduction

Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) was a Danish writer of prose, poetry and drama, whose authorship extended far beyond the stories for which he is now best known both in Denmark and elsewhere. His fame in Britain originates with Mary Howitt's translations (from the German versions) of his three novels, *The Improvisatore, or, Life in Italy*, and *Only an Fiddler; and O.T., or, Life in Denmark. By the Author of the Improvisatore, or, Life in Italy*, all published in 1845. The popularity of these provided a linchpin for Howitt's selection of translations of the stories, published in 1846: *Wonderful Stories for Children. By Hans Christian Anderson* [sic], *Author of 'The Improvisatore' etc.* Since this introduction of the stories into English, new translations have appeared regularly, providing a rich resource for investigations of re-translation, comparisons of different translator's treatment of the same source across time, or contemporaneously, or both, and for much besides. In this paper, I should like to use one particular set of translations of Hans Christian Andersen's stories into English to carry out an exercise in what I once, loosely, referred to as translational stylistics (Malmkjær 1994). I would like, first, to tighten up my definition of that activity.

### 2. Stylistics and Translational Stylistics

I assume, with Short (1994: 170), a supra-descriptive understanding of stylistic analysis which ascribes to it a concern with the semantics of text: “the linguistic analysis of (literary) texts” aimed mainly at explaining “how, when we read, we get from the structure of the text in front of us to the meaning ‘inside our heads’”. This semantic concern distinguishes stylistics from the study of style, if style is defined as a consistent and statistically significant regularity of occurrence in text of certain items and structures, or types of items and structures, among those offered by the language as a whole (Malmkjær and Carter 2002: 510). Obviously, a study of the latter can be carried out without any considerations of meaning.

Stylistic analyses may be made with more or less explicit reference to the psycholinguistics of text processing (see *e.g.* Werth 1999) and it may be carried out on any text, whether translated or not (and whether literary or not). It informs translational stylistics explicitly or implicitly, but it is not to be confused with translational stylistics.

It is possible, in any exercise in stylistics, to proceed from the stage of analysis directed towards explaining how the text means what it does, to a second stage which seeks to explain, not only *how* the text means what it does, but also *why* a writer may have chosen to shape the text in a particular way. This why-stage of stylistic analysis cannot be carried out without reference to extralinguistic factors which constrain a writer’s freedom to make selections among the choices offered by a given language at a particular point in its evolution – factors such as genre conventions and the obvious issue of what it is that the writer wants to say. In fact, these constraints are often taken for granted in stylistics, except when it is used for pedagogical purposes. In the teaching of a language for Special Purposes, for example, an emphasis on genre constraints is invaluable; but if the focus is on the linguistic tactics of a writer of historical novels, the conventions of the genre within which the writer works are, naturally enough, taken as a

given. Beyond these constraints on freedom, however, answers to the why-question is often provided in terms of factors which are to a greater or lesser extent within the writers more or less conscious control, such as *e.g.* political persuasion or ideological or gender position (Chilton 1982, 1985; Fairclough 2000, Fowler *et al.*, 1979; Mills 1995). Studies with one or more of these foci are often considered to exemplify critical linguistics or critical discourse analysis (see Fairclough 2002).

In translational stylistics with a focus on why a text means as it does, there is one constraint which (a) never plays a role in non-translational stylistic but without consideration of which (b) translational stylistics cannot proceed: A writer's linguistic choices are restricted by genre conventions and by what he or she want to say; but a translator's linguistic choices are limited, further, by what the original texts said. So while the scope of why-oriented stylistics can be stated simply in terms of an explanation of why (given what the writer wants to say and the conventions of the genre within which he or she writes) a text has been made to mean in the way that it does, translational stylistics, as I understand it, is concerned to explain why, *given the source text*, the translation has been shaped in such a way that it comes to mean what it does. In the search for an answer to this question, reference typically needs to be made to extra-linguistic constraints far beyond the relationships between the languages involved, *e.g.* translation norms (Levy 1963; Even-Zohar 1971, 1978; Toury 1977, 1980, 1995) and the target text *skopos* (Vermeer 1978, 1983, 1986; Reiss and Vermeer 1984), and often also to *e.g.* translator voice (Hermans 1996), the kinds of issue that interest critical linguists, or, as in the case of the present paper, other, more general historico-cultural conditions.

To begin, I return to my text corpus, focusing on its reception in Victorian Britain and on the nature of the early translations.

### **3. Andersen's stories in Victorian Britain**

In Britain, fairytales were outlawed during the Calvinistic Puritan period which followed the Revolution of 1688 (Zipes 1987: Preface) and it took a certain mellowing of attitudes, along with translations of French and German traditional stories and of Andersen's literary fairy tales, to enable the genre to begin to re-establish itself more than a century later, as English-language authors began to write their own fairy and fantasy stories. In some writers, the influence from Andersen is very obvious, for example in some of the short stories of Oscar Wilde, who caricatures Andersen severely (see Malmkjær: 1995), and in George McDonald, who uses themes from Andersen sparingly but to great effect.

Andersen's stories became extremely popular almost immediately upon publication, and they were very well received by the critics. In the two years after the publication of Mary Howitt's selection of 1846, six different translators published nine selections including, between them, forty four different tales (Bredsdorff, 1954). Since then, the pace of publication has slowed a little, though new translations and versions continue to appear regularly.

According to Bredsdorff (1954: 520) all of the early translations of Andersen's stories were poor, though he singles out the sets of translations produced by Madame de Chatelain, Augusta Plesner and Henry Dulcken as the best: "These three translators have at least done their best to reproduce Andersen's text loyally, and they do occasionally manage to reproduce his tone as well" (my translation). Of these three, Henry William Dulcken (1832-94) stands out as the only translator whose versions have remained in print until as late as 1983, and whose collection is more complete than any other collections published in Andersen's lifetime. Further interesting characteristics will be listed below.

Dulcken's mother was a German concert pianist domiciled in England, where

Dulcken was brought up and educated. He worked for a time as a publisher's consultant in London, and translated several books and songs into English from German. His Andersen translations, however, were made directly from Danish. He also authored some works himself (Bredsdorff: 1954: 521).

Dulcken's Andersen publications began in 1864 with *Stories and Tales* followed in 1865 by *What the Moon Saw, and other tales*. In 1866 these, together with seven other stories, making a total of 111, were all published in one volume with the title *Hans Christian Andersen's Stories for the Household*. This volume was re-issued as *The Complete Illustrated Works of Hans Christian Andersen* in 1983, published by the Chancellor Press in London. Andersen continued publishing new collections of stories until 1872 and his total output in this genre is more than 160 stories, so it is something of an exaggeration to call the Chancellor Press re-issue 'the Complete Works'. Nevertheless, the volume is a very nearly complete and carefully annotated representation of what Andersen had produced in the story genre by 1866.

A number of commentators have pointed to a general tendency among translators to edit out material which might be considered offensive and unsuitable for a child audience (see *e.g.* Hjørnager-Pedersen, 1995: 56), and this tendency is especially clear in early collections. Dulcken's collection, however, is once again remarkable in retaining a good deal of what others discard, as the following examples illustrate:

- (1). Where Howitt (1846: 4-5) renders a term that means 'the spittoon' with the term 'the old doormat' (thereby clearly illustrating the need, referred to in section 2 above, to consider factors other than intralinguistic relationships in explanations in translational stylistics), Dulcken (1866: 104) uses 'spittoon'.

2. The opening of the story, *Tommelise* (1835), may be glossed as follows:

There was once a woman who would like to have a little tiny child, but she had no idea where she could get one from; then she went to see an old witch and said to her: “I would so very much like to have a little child, won’t you please tell me where I can get one from?”

“Yes, we’ll get around that all right!” said the witch. “There’s a corn of barley, it is nothing like the kind that grows on the farmer’s field or that the chickens are given to eat, put it in a flower pot, and wait and see what’ll happen!”

Howitt (1846: 33) writes:

Once upon a time, a beggar woman went to the house of a poor peasant, and asked for something to eat. The peasant’s wife gave her some bread and milk. When she had eaten it, she took a barley-corn out of her pocket, and said - “This will I give thee; set it in a flower pot, and see what will come out of it.”

Dulcken (1866: 35) writes:

There was once a woman who wished for a very little child; but she did not know where she could procure one. So she went to an old witch, and said,

“I do so very much wish for a little child! Can you not tell me where I can get one?”

“Oh! That could easily be managed,” said the witch. “There you have a barleycorn: that is not of the kind which grows in the countryman’s field, and which the chickens get to eat. Put that into a flower-pot, and you shall see what you shall see.”



These two examples suggest that Howitt is concerned to avoid terms suggestive of unpleasant habits such as spitting, or likely to set her readers' minds wondering about improper subjects such as procreation, while Dulcken is unaffected by such considerations. Similarly, improper sentiments, such as vengeful thoughts, are censored by Howitt, but retained by Dulcken (compare their treatment of the final scene from *Storkene* 'The storks', 1839, too extensive to cite here). However, as further investigation shows, there are limits to even Dulcken's liberalism:

(3). In the story, *Rosenalfen* 'The rose elf' (1839), a young man says to his woman friend: "*Farvel min søde Brud, for det er Du mig dog!*", which might be glossed as "Goodbye my sweet bride, for that is what you are to me, nevertheless!". Howitt (1846: 56) omits this remark in her translation, while Dulcken (1866: 376), skillfully, provides "Farewell, my sweet bride, for that you shall be!".

The selection of *shall be*, indicating future time, as the translational equivalent of the simple present tense form, with obvious present time reference, of the Danish verb of being, allows Dulcken to avoid any implication of a sexual relationship between the young unmarried couple while remaining closer to the source text than Howitt's avoidance tactic permits. Further examples illustrating Dulcken's restraint, albeit less clumsily enacted than Howitt's, abound, *e.g.*:

(4). In *Paradisets Have* 'The garden of Paradise' (1838), which is a story about temptation, we find the following description: "*De skønneste Piger, svævende og slanke, klædte i bølgende Flor, saa man saae de deilige Lemmer, svævede in Dandse*" 'The most beautiful girls, floating and slender, dressed in waving gauze so

you could see their lovely limbs, floated in dances’.

Howitt’s (1846: 86) rendition is clipped: “The most beautiful maidens floated in the dance”, while Dulcken’s (1866: 648) retention of the gauze at least allows scope for the reader to imagine the deleted limbs: “The most beautiful maidens, floating and slender, clad in gauzy mist, glided by in the dance”.

Dulcken’s relative permissiveness, the relative completeness of his set of translations, Bredsdorff’s relatively positive view of his efforts, the longevity in print of his translations, and the general subtlety of his manipulations, to be discussed further below, makes him a tempting subject for stylistic investigation.

The study to be reported in the following section set out to establish whether nothing in Andersen’s originals, apart from the most blatant sexual imagery, had proved too much for Dulcken: His collection is, after all, entitled, *Stories for the Household*. The limits to his tolerance which the study appears to highlight seem, however, to be drawn on the basis of criteria which (a) I had not anticipated from the outset and which (b) I do not think would have been easily identifiable except in the course of a detailed study of a large amount of text.

The study remains work in progress: Of the 111 stories in Dulcken’s collection, I have examined around 60 in detail, that is, just over half, including translations of almost all of the stories published in Danish up until 1855.

#### **4. An Exercise in Translational Stylistics**

Consider the following extracts from two stories, *Reisekammeraten* ‘The travelling companion’, published in 1835 and *De vilde Svaner* ‘The wild swans’, published in 1838.

I reproduce below, first the Danish original, then a gloss, and finally Dulcken's translation of the relevant passages. The annotations in brackets which precede the Danish text extracts refer to the volume, page and lines where the extract is to be found in Dal's edition of the stories; the annotations which precede the relevant passages from Dulcken's translations refer to the page numbers in the edition of the stories published in 1866:

From *Reisekammeraten* 'The travelling companion'

Extract 1

(I, 68, 31-39)

Tidlig næste Morgen pakkede *Johannes* sin lille Byldt sammen, gjemte i sit belte hele sin Arvepart, der var 50 Rdlr. og et Par Sølvskillinger, dermed vilde han vandre ud i Verden. Men først gik han hen paa Kirkegaarden til sin Faders Grav, læste sit "*Fader vor*", og sagde: "Farvel Du kjære Fader! Jeg vil altid være et godt Menneske, og saa tør Du nok bede den gode Gud, at det maa gaae mig godt!"

(Gloss 1)

Early the next morning Johannes packed his little bundle together, hid in his belt his entire inheritance, which was 50 dollars and a couple of silver shillings, with that he intended to wander out into the world. But first he went to the churchyard to his father's grave, recited the "*Lord's Prayer*", and said: "Goodbye my dear father! I will always be a good person, and then you will dare to ask the good God that things will go well for me.

(Dulcken, 47)

Early next morning John packed his little bundle, and put in his belt his whole

inheritance, which consisted of fifty dollars and a few silver shillings; with this he intended to wander out into the world. But first he went to the churchyard, to his father's grave, to say a prayer and to bid him farewell.

#### Extract 2

(I, 74, 33-35)

“Du gode vor Herre! Jeg kunde kysse Dig, fordi du er saa god mod os allesammen, og har givet os al den Deilighed, der er i Verden!”

(Gloss 2)

“Our dear Lord! I could kiss you, because you are so good to us all, and have given us all the splendour there is in the world!”

(Dulcken, 51)

“How kind has heaven been to us all, to give us all the splendour that is in this world!”

#### Extract 3

(I, 77, 32-35)

*Johannes* var slet ikke bedrøvet for, hvorledes det vilde gaae ham, han var just fornøiet, tænkte kun paa den deilige Prindsesse, og troede ganske vist, at den gode Gud nok hjalp ham,

(Gloss 3)

Johannes was not at all unhappy about how it would go with him, he was only merry, thought only of the lovely princess, and believed quite certainly that the good God would

surely help him.

(Dulcken, 54)

John was not at all anxious as to how he should fare. On the contrary, he was merry, thought only of the beautiful princess, and felt quite certain that he should be helped;

Extract 4

(I, 80, 36)

Nu skulde *Johannes* til at gjætte, hvad hun havde tænkt paa. Gud hvor hun saae venligt paa ham,

(Gloss 4)

Now Johannes was going to guess, what she had thought about. God what a friendly way she looked at him,

(Dulcken, 57i)

Now John was to guess what she had thought of. Oh, how lovingly she looked at him!

Extract 5

(I, 81, 5-9)

Reisekammeraten blev ogsaa fornøiet, da han fik at vide, hvor godt det var gaaet af; men *Johannes* lukkede sine Hænder sammen og takkede den gode Gud, der vistnok vilde hjælpe ham igjen de to andre Gange.

(Gloss 5)

The travelling companion too became merry when he was told how well it had come off; but *Johannes* closed his hands together and thanked the good God, who probably would help him again the two other times.

(Dulcken, 57ii)

The travelling companion was very glad too, when he heard how well matters had gone. But John felt very grateful; and he was sure he should receive help the second and third time, as he had been helped the first.

Extract 6

(I, 84, 9-10)

*Johannes* bad fromt til vor Herre, og lod vandet tredie Gang spille hen over fuglen

(Gloss 6)

*Johannes* prayed devoutly to our Lord and let the water for the third time pour over the bird.

(Dulcken, 59)

John let the water close for the third time over the bird

From: "*De vilde Svaner*":

Extract 7

(I, 128, 30-34)

Natten blev saa mørk; ikke en eneste lille Sanct Hansorm skinnede fra Mosset, bedrøvet lagde hun sig ned for at sove; da syntes hun at Trægrenene oven over hende gik til Side

og vor *Herre* med milde Øine saae ned paa hende, og smaa Engle tittede frem over hans Hoved og under hans Arme.

(Gloss 7)

The night grew so dark; not a single little glowworm shone from the moss, sad she lay down to sleep; then it seemed to her that the tree branches above her moved aside and our Lord with mild eyes looked down at her, and little angels peeped out above his head and under his arms.

(Dulcken, 562)

The night came on quite dark. Not a single glowworm now gleamed in the grass. Sorrowfully she lay down to sleep. Then it seemed to her as if the branches of the trees parted above her head, and mild eyes of angels looked down upon her from on high.

Extract 8

(I, 133, 5-35)

“Gid jeg maatte drømme, hvorledes jeg skulde frelse Eder!” sagde hun; og denne Tanke beskjeftigede hende saa levende; hun bad saa inderlig til Gud om hans Hjælp, ja selv isøvne vedblev hun sin Bøn; da forekom det hende, at hun fløi høit op i Luften, til Fata Morganas Skyslot, og Feen kom hende imøde, saa smuk og glimrende, og dog lignede hun ganske den gamle Kone, der gav hende Bær in Skoven, og fortalte hende om Svanerne med Guld kroner paa...

... Og hun rørte i det samme ved hendes Haand med Nælden; den var som en brændende Ild, *Elisa* vaagnede derved. Det var lys Dag, og tæt ved, hvor hun havde sovet, laae en

Nælde, som den, hun havde seet i Drømme. Da faldt hun paa sine Knæ, takkede *vor Herre*, og gik ud af Hulen, for at begynde paa sit Arbeide.

(Gloss 8)

“I wish I could dream how to save you!” she said; and this thought occupied her so vitally; she prayed so sincerely to God for His help, nay even in sleep she continued her prayer; then it appeared to her that she flew high up into the sky, to Fata Morgana’s cloud castle, and the fairy came towards her so beautiful and shimmering, and yet she looked just like the old woman who gave her berries in the wood and told her about the swans with the gold crowns on...

...And she touched at the same time her hand with the nettle; it was like a burning fire, *Elisa* woke up at it. It was bright day, and close by where she had slept lay a nettle, like the one she had seen when dreaming. Then she fell on her knees, thanked *our Lord*, and went out of the cave to begin her work.

(Dulcken, 567)

Heaven grant that I may dream of a way to release you,” she replied. And this thought possessed her mightily, and she prayed ardently for help; yes, even in her sleep she continued to pray. Then it seemed to her as if she were flying high in the air to the cloudy palace of Fata Morgana; and the fairy came out to meet her, beautiful and radiant; and yet the fairy was quite like the old woman who had given her berries in the wood, and had told her of the swans with golden crowns on their heads...

...And she touched her hand with the nettle; it was like a burning fire, and Eliza woke



with the smart. It was broad daylight; and close by the spot where she had slept lay a nettle like the one she had seen in her dream. She fell upon her knees and prayed gratefully, and went forth from the cave to begin her work.

#### Extract 9

(I, 136, 4-6)

“O, hvad er Smerten i mine Fingre, mod den Qval mit Hjerte lider!” tænkte hun, “jeg maa vove det! Vor Herre vil ikke slaae Haanden af mig!”

(Gloss 9)

“Oh, what is the pain in my fingers compared to the misery my heart is suffering!” she thought, “I must dare it! Our Lord will not disown me!”

(Dulcken, 570)

“Oh what is the pain in my fingers to the torment my heart endures?” thought she. “I must venture it, and help will not be denied me!”

#### Extract 10

(I, 137, 11-17)

Fra de prægtige Kongesale blev hun ført hen i et mørkt, fugtigt Hul, hvor Vinden peeb ind af det gittrede Vindue; istedetfor Fløiel og Silke gav de hende det Bundt Nelder hun havde samlet, det kunde hun lægge sit hoved paa; de haarde brændende Pantserskjorter, hun havde strikket, skulde være Dyne og Teppe, men intet kjærere kunde de skjænke hende, hun tog igjen fat paa sit Arbeide og bad til sin Gud.

(Gloss 10)

From the wonderful royal halls she was led to a dark, damp hole, where the wind whistled in through the barred window; instead of velvet and silk they gave her the bundle of nettles she had gathered, she could put her head on that; the hard, burning mail shirts she had knitted should be her cover and blanket, but nothing dearer could they have granted her, she took up her work again and prayed to her God.

(Dulcken, 571)

Out of the gorgeous regal halls she was led into a dark, damp cell, where the wind whistled through the grated window; instead of velvet and silk they gave her the bundle of nettles which she had collected; on this she could lay her head; and the hard burning coats of mail which she had woven were to be her coverlet. But nothing could have been given her that she liked better. She resumed her work and prayed.

I think it is pretty obvious from these examples, that Dulcken seems reluctant to use religious terminology that refers directly to the deity:

In extract 1, a term whose closest equivalent is *The Lord's Prayer* is translated as “a prayer” and the term *Gud* ‘God’ has not been translated at all; In extract 2, the direct address form and the emotional outburst, *Du gode vor Herre! Jeg kunde kysse Dig*, ‘Our dear Lord! I could kiss you!’ is represented by the restrained “How kind has heaven been to us all” in which the de-personalised, *heaven*, is preferred to the more obvious equivalent of *Herre, Lord*; in extract 3, an active voice *Gud* ‘God’ is edited out in a passive voice “that he should be helped”; in extract 4, an exclamatory *Gud* ‘God’ has not been reproduced; in extract 5, Johannes’ gesture of prayer has gone and his overt

expression of gratitude to God becomes a certainty that “he should receive help” by an unmentioned agent; in extract 6, Johannes’ prayer to the Lord has gone; in extract 7, the Lord has been replaced by the angels; in extract 8, overt mentions of the Lord and God have gone; in extract 9, *Vor Herre vil ikke slaae Haanden af mig!* ‘Our Lord will not disown me!’ becomes the agentless “help will not be denied me!”; and in extract 10, Elisa’s prayer to her God becomes merely a prayer.

This pattern seems somewhat surprising in the light of the role played by Christianity in the Victorian age, and it merits further investigation which, in fact, shows that religious language and the religious sphere both have parts to play in Dulcken’s translations. But they play rather different parts there than they do in the originals, and some of their roles in the originals are not repeated at all in the translations. Some of these differences can be explained by reference to linguistic good manners, which we might consider to be a purely surface-level social phenomenon; but other differences are better explained, I think, as reflecting differences between what Danish and English society in the first half of the 19th Century were able to accept as appropriate conceptions of the relationship between humanity and the divine.

### **Linguistic good taste and manners**

In Andersen’s representation of ordinary, everyday language use, the name of God is taken in vain very regularly. There are eight instances in the data where he uses the word *Gud* ‘God’ as (part of) an exclamation in contexts like the one we saw in extract 4 above. Dulcken *never* translates such instances literally. His choices are: *Mercy*; *Heavens*; *Oh*; *Alas*; *Ah*; *Good gracious* and OMISSION (twice).

There is one instance in which Andersen lets a character address God with the expression *Du min Skaber* ‘You my creator’ as an exclamation, which Dulcken deals with as “Good heavens!”, and there are two occasions on which Andersen lets a character refer to Jesus in an exclamation, where Dulcken uses, respectively, “for mercy’s sake” and “O kind Heaven”.

There are eleven uses in the originals of the very popular expression, *Herre Gud*, in contexts such as the following:

Original: Herre Gud, hør den Uskyldiges Røst

Gloss: Lord God, hear the innocent’s voice

For these, Dulcken provides: *Mercy*; *Good heavens* (2); *Gracious powers*; *On my word*; *Good gracious*; INTENSIFICATION (2; “just hear”; “what in the world”); or OMISSION (3).

There are ten instances of the expression *Gud bevar* / *bevare os* ‘God preserve us’, for which Dulcken selects: *Heaven save us*; *Heaven preserve us* (3); *Goodness preserve us*; *Mercy preserve us*; *Preserve us*; *Yes, certainly*; and OMISSION (2).

There are two instances of the expression *Gud veed* ‘God knows’, of which one is OMITTED and the other is translated as “Goodness knows”.

There are three cases of the expression, *Gud skee Lov* ‘God be praised’ which are translated as, “I’m grateful”; “I am glad”; and “Heaven be thanked”.

Finally, there are two instances of straightforward swearing, using the contracted form of *så Gud (hjælpe mig)* ‘so help me God’, *s’gu*, which Dulcken renders with “really”.

It is unsurprising that none of these thirty nine uses in the Danish data of the name of the deity is reproduced in the translations. They can all be considered as instances in which the name of the deity is taken in vein, and to reproduce them in the translations would be to run counter to what is considered linguistic good taste and/or good manners. It was, and to an extent still is, more common and less offensive to use the name of God in this way in everyday speech in Denmark than in England.

However, there is another set of uses of the name of the deity where the non-occurrence in the translations of a straightforward translation is more surprising, namely in contexts of simple mention and in expressions of gratitude and supplication.

### **Mentioning, thanking and praying to God**

In four instances of thanking God and eight of praying, Dulcken simply omits the recipient of the thanking and the praying, as in *e.g.* extracts 5 and 6 above; and in twenty three instances of mention of God in other contexts in the original, there is no mention in the translation, *e.g.*

Original:       Guds Himmel

Gloss:           God’s heaven

Dulcken:        heaven

In fourteen instances, *Gud* ‘God’ or *vor Herre* ‘our Lord’ is replaced by *heaven*, as in:

Original: hendes Sjæl fløi paa Solskin til Gud  
 Gloss: her soul flew on sunshine to God  
 Dulcken: Her soul flew on the sunbeams to heaven

So in addition to the thirty nine instances of taking the deity's name in vein in exclamations and swearing, there are fifty nine cases in which God is simply mentioned in the original texts and simply not mentioned or replaced by his abode in the translations. These cases invite investigation, as it is by no means obvious why it should be considered improper to thank, pray to or mention God in stories "for the household".

### **In Search of an Explanation**

We could potentially explain these fifty nine curiosities with reference to genre restriction; in fact, another translator of Andersen's stories, Charles Boner, writes to Andersen (November 4, 1847; in Bredsdorff, 1954: 127):

With regard to your new novel, I should advise you most decidedly *not* to choose "Natur und Bibel", not for England at least. ... Such a title would do no harm in Germany, but in England *I am sure* it would displease. When I tell you that many, very many, persons did not buy my "Tales of Denmark" because they happened to see in "The Angel" the word "God", and were shocked to find that name in a book of fairy-tales, you will understand that many might find fault at seeing "the Bible" connected with a novel. Moreover, many would be sure to fancy that the book in question was polemical, and some would imagine it deistical, others perhaps atheistical.

The trouble with this explanation is that in addition to the instances of non-mention or replacement which we have just counted, there are a significant number of instances in which the originals' references to God *are* translated. The cases, their translations and the numbers of instances are as follows:

Term in the original	Gloss	Translation	Number of instances
<i>vor Herre</i>	our Lord	God	9
		Providence	7
		One above	1
		the (heavenly) Father	2
		the good / our Lord	2
<i>Gud</i>	God	Creator	4
		the Almighty	2
		the Father	2
		Lord	1
		God	17
<i>Herren</i>	the Lord	the Lord	1
<i>Jesus</i>	Jesus	Christ	2
<i>Christ(i)</i>	Christ('s)	Christ	2

The total number of translated instances is fifty two which competes sufficiently well with the fifty nine instances of untranslated mentions (not including exclamations and swearing) to disqualify the genre-oriented explanation.

A related explanation would seek to link translatability to story topic, and this is

right at a certain rather abstract level of understanding of the notion of “topic”. Andersen wrote about things, animals, plants and people, but there is no one-to-one correlation between these character-types and translatability-into-English of the vocabulary of the sacred: The factor which appears to determine when Dulcken will and when he will not let a divine mention get through to his English readership operates on a grander scale than this.

### **Everything in its right place ...**

Consider, again, part of the extract from *De vilde Svaner* ‘The wild swans’ (I, 128, 32-34) which we met above and glossed as follows:

... that the tree-branches above her moved aside and our Lord with mild eyes looked down at her, and little angels peeped out above his head and under his arms.

Dulcken (562) provides

... as if the branches of the trees parted above her head, and mild eyes of angels looked down upon her from on high.

The differences between the two scenes which these extracts present illustrate an effect which Dulcken seems to seek both linguistically, physically and metaphorically. In terms of the physical aspects of the scenes, it is clear that the translated scene distances the dreaming girl further from the angels who observe her from “on high” than the original’s girl is removed from the Lord who looks at her from just where the branches of the tree are parting above her.



Metaphorically, the distance (in terms of familiarity, humanoid characteristics and formality of demeanour) between the divine participants in the original scene – the deity and the little angels who gambol about his body like children around an avuncular adult – and the human participant is clearly less than in the translated scene which has the angels (alone) engaging in nothing more physical than some downward eyemovements.

Linguistically, these distances are reinforced by the absence from the translation of the name of the deity.

Dulcken's concern appears to be to the presentation in his translations of a universe in which the secular world and its inhabitants with their concerns are kept at a respectful distance from the heavenly regions. One way of creating this sense of distance is by not making God too familiar, as in the play-uncle image presented in original extract 7 above and as he would appear if humans went about contemplating the possibility of kissing him, as in original extract 2. Another is by not allowing humans to drive bargains with God, as Johannes appears intent on doing in original extract 1.

However, in order to be able to account for all of the censored examples, it is necessary to attribute to Dulcken an urge to maintain a proper distance, not only between the divine and the secular world, but, in addition, between the divine and a third sphere which seems to be devoted to departed mortals who remain active in human affairs (and where Johannes's dead father may perhaps reside) along with a variety of supernatural beings and powers including the fairy Fata Morgana, of whom Elisa dreams in extract 8. Above all, it seems, this metaphysical sector of the fictional universe has to be prevented from mingling with the other, where divinity resides. This is why Johannes cannot be permitted to believe that God will help him to win the princess in extracts 3 and 5, or to pray in extracts 5 and 6: The princess is bewitched, and God cannot be seen to interfere in witchcraft; and the solution to the spell (pouring water over the bird/princess three times)

has been told to Johannes by the travelling companion, who is probably the incarnation of the spirit of a person whose dead body Johannes has protected from desecration by some people the dead person owed money to. Similarly, the fairy Fata Morgana cannot be allowed to appear to Elisa as a result of a prayer to God, and nor can Elisa therefore be permitted to thank God for allowing her to do so (extract 8). Again, since Elisa's finger-blistering knitting activities are advised by an old woman who bears a remarkable similarity to the fairy as the way to break a spell that a witch has cast on Elisa's brothers, all thought of not being disowned by God or of praying to him must be dispelled from the English-language Elisa's mind (extracts 9 and 10).

What is permitted is *e.g.* to hear God's word (Dulcken 47; 185); contemplate "how good God is" (Dulcken, 93) and "all the splendour God has created" (Dulcken, 95) and, in general, to mention God in the proper context as operating within his own sphere without any direct involvement with individuals in the human world.

The mingling of the divine and the secular spheres in Andersen, and their apartness in Dulcken's translations, is made very clear, also, in passages where there is movement between them. In such passages, as in example (3) in section 3 above, Dulcken manipulates English in such a way that he gives the impression of faithfulness to the source text when in fact he is altering the nature of the events being narrated radically to suit his view of the proper relationship between the secular and the divine.

Consider the following passage from *Engelen* (1844) (The Angel):

ST: Og Barnet aabnede ganske sine Øine og saae ind i Engelens deilige,

GL: And the child opened completely its eyes and looked into the angel's lovely

DU: And the child opened his eyes and looked into the glorious happy

ST: glade Ansigt, og i samme Øieblik vare de i Guds Himmel, hvor der

GL: happy face, and at the same moment were they in God's heaven, where there

DU: face of the angel; and at the same moment they entered the regions where there

ST: var Glæde og Lyksalighed. Og Gud trykkede det døde Barn til sit Hjerte, og da

GL: was joy and bliss. And God pressed the dead child to his heart, and then

DU: is peace and joy. And the Father pressed the dead child to his bosom, and then

ST: fik det Vinger som den anden Engel og fløi Haand i Haand med ham; og Gud

GL: got it wings like the other angel and flew hand in hand with him; and God

DU: it received wings like the angel, and flew hand in hand with him. And the

ST: trykkede alle Blomsterne til sit Hjerte, men den fattige, visne Markblomst kyssede

GL: pressed all the flowers to his heart, but the poor, withered fieldflower kissed

DU: Almighty pressed all the flowers to his heart, but he kissed the dry withered field

ST: han, og den fik Stemme og sang med alle Englene, der svævede om Gud,

GL: he, and it got voice and sang with all the angels, that floated around God,

DU: flower, and it received a voice and sang with all the angels hovering around -

In this passage, where Andersen has: *og i samme Øieblik **vare** de i Guds Himmel* ‘and at the same moment they **were** in God's heaven’, Dulcken has: “and at the same moment they **entered** the regions where there is peace and joy”. In other words, where Andersen has a change of state from not being in Heaven to being in it; Dulcken has a

change of position, an entering. The change of state is immediate and simultaneous with the child's opening its eyes **completely**. This is the third step in a process of developing vision which begins earlier in the story when the child hears "as if in a dream" the angel's story, continues when the angel kisses the child and "the little one half opened its eyes". Dulcken reproduces these two steps faithfully enough, but by not translating *ganske* 'completely', he does not connect this full vision of the angel with the two earlier, less clear perceptions of the angel.

The original story presents a three stage process of developing visionariness (hearing as if in a dream, half seeing, seeing fully) the last stage coinciding with a metamorphosis of place. The translation presents an opening of the eyes that coincides with entering one region from another, separate regions.

Once in this region, Andersen's child has wings 'like the **other** angel'; i.e., the child is of the same order of being as the angel; Dulcken's angel remains unique.

The transformation in Andersen also makes the child winged and the flower voiced. The Danish verb *at få*, although it can mean to be given something can also mean to develop into the kind of person who has something, as in: *Vi har fået hund/bil/fjernsyn* (as opposed to *Vi har fået **en** hund/bil/**et** fjernsyn*); the most similar type of expression in English is probably 'to be a two car/one car/etc family'.

In contrast, Dulcken's child **receives** wings and the flower **receives** a voice. Dulcken's almighty is a benevolent God in whose gift it is to bestow things on these creatures. But Andersen's God can transform them with a kiss and an embrace.

## 5. Explanation once removed?

In the study presented in section 4, textual analysis was used to ascribe to the translator a wish to keep three regions of the fictional universe presented in his stories strictly apart.

This assumes, of course, that the translator manipulates his texts consciously, an assumption which deserves discussion, which, however, it will not receive here, beyond a reference to the clear patterning of the choices of translational equivalent (or not) for religious terminology according to the thematic context in which the terminology appears.

Nevertheless, my argument, in common with any argument arising from a study in translational stylistics, would be considerably strengthened if good reasons could be found for why Andersen could whereas Dulcken could not countenance the blending of spheres which we find in the originals but not in the translations. Such an argument might be made with reference partly to the two writers' personal histories, and partly with references to general socio-cultural aspects of their two societies.

Andersen's father was a rationalist free-thinker who believed in Christ as "a human being like us, albeit an unusual human being" (Andersen: 1942: 19 quoting his father; my translation) and his mother freely appealed to both folk-superstitions and primitive Christian beliefs whenever she felt the need for metaphysical intervention in her life (Albech *et al* 1971: 544). Andersen himself considered that the concept of God could be perceived in everything. For example, in contemplating the railway, Andersen feels that he comes face to face with God (*En Digter's Bazar*, quoted in de Mylius, 1993:57). At this stage in his life, Andersen's near-pantheistic religious understanding has been further confirmed by his admiration for the Natural Philosophy propounded by the scientist H. C. Ørsted (1777-1851).

Information about Dulcken is harder to come by, but we may assume that he was motivated, in his choices of translational equivalents, by what he knew about his projected audience's attitude to Christianity and to its potential relationship with other metaphysical phenomena. He may have reasoned that the Victorians, who had recently freed themselves of what they considered superstition in Christianity (Houghton, 1957:

49): “the story of creation in *Genesis*, the incarnation, the virgin birth, the vicarious sacrifice, and all of the Biblical miracles and supernatural rites and ceremonies of the Church”, would not be prepared to see their newly cleansed creed associated with such base, folk superstition as Andersen’s other supernatural forces might seem to them to constitute. Or, perhaps Dulcken was influenced by the so-called Oxford movement, said by Newman to originate with John Keble’s Assize Sermon on July 14 1833 (Elliott-Binns 1936/1946: 92 and 95) with its predilection for the abstract over the individual and with its aversion, for example, to the personalising and secularising tendencies of Coleridge and Wordsworth (Fraser 1986:15).

If it could be shown that this is the case, then it would be possible to suggest that this set of originals and their translations constitute an interesting illustration of the effects on the nature of (literary) texts of socio-cultural conditions around them. Sets of translations and originals illustrate this more clearly than sets of originals, because of the need to retain in texts created for the culture receiving the translations motifs originally written as suitable for another culture, a need which is likely from time to time to lead to potential offense or misunderstanding and, therefore, to evasive action. Translational stylistics can therefore play an important role in comparative cultural studies.

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