

# **The reception of H.C. Andersen in Russia**

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## **Abstract**

The article deals with some aspects of Hans Christian Andersen's reception in Russia and primarily with translation of his fairy tales, which started in Russia more than 150 years ago. Anna and Peter Hansen's translations made in the end of the 19th century are still the ones mostly published. The reception of H.C. Andersen's fairy tales has been changing depending on the epoch and its demands, but we argue that there is kind of an "invariant core" in different versions of translations. We present both extra-linguistic and linguistic approaches to reception and analyze Hans Christian Andersen translations in Russia in the context of literary reception and on the ground of documents dating back to the Soviet epoch, critical articles about the children's literature in the Soviet Union as well as on the ground of the comparative analysis of translations of his fairy tales published after the revolution of 1917. We argue that the issue of changes in H.C. Andersen's texts in the Soviet Union is closely related to the history of self-censorship. The paper also investigates specific features of translation, which are essential elements in a text reception, as well as peculiarities of different translation methods used by Anna Hansen and modern translators.

## **Introduction**

The process of reception of Hans Christian Andersen in Russia was never "linear", for the attitude to his works changed depending on the tastes and demands of each epoch. Peculiarities of Andersen's reception in Russia cannot be contemplated without the historical context because in the Soviet time his translations would be repeatedly subject to ideologically motivated omissions or changes. The analysis of publishing practice and translation cases determined by the time of publishing makes it possible to identify four major periods in the history of Andersen's reception in Russia:

1. The period before the revolution of 1917 characterized by the process of integration of Andersen's fairy tale works in the national cultural space and formation of a unique image of the "Russian Andersen" (Orlova, 2017);
2. The period after the revolution of 1917 connected with an ideological discussion about the role of literature in children's upbringing in the 1920s;

3. The later Soviet period (starting with the end of 1950s) when fragments omitted in the earlier Soviet period were restored in the editions of Andersen's fairy tales;
4. The post-Soviet period when new full translations of Andersen's fairy tales were published.

The history of translations of Andersen's works into Russian covers a period of over 150 years. It is only natural that during this time editions and reprints of his works, his biography, literary and reader-response criticism, etc. were duly reflected in publications devoted to him (Braude, 1983; Chekanskii, 2007; Erkhov, 1997; Orlova, 2010; Pilipoveca, 2017; Sergeev, 2005; Zharov, 2006). However, the same does not apply to translations themselves, namely to their analysis and evaluation against Andersen's originals. Many reception aspects related to specific features of translation, which are essential elements in a text reception, as well as peculiarities of different translation methods still remain open to discussion. Neither ideologically motivated omissions in the historical context, nor the role of censorship and self-censorship in publishing practice have ever been the topic of a separate study, while, undoubtedly, the texts that had reached the reader in the Soviet time differed tremendously from the original.

Besides reception per se, the study of intercultural relations involves such aspects as comparativism (Veselovsky and Bakhtin) and hermeneutics. During the past decades, however, the latter two have become part of reception theory. As is well known, the fundamental principles of this theory were formulated in the late 1960s by Hans-Robert Jauss and developed in his later works (Jauss, 1982, 1989). Jauss is considered to be the founder of the reception theory who had introduced the term reception in the literary studies. Unlike the earlier term influence (largely obsolete nowadays) focusing on the text and ignoring the reader, it describes the reader as an active agent of creative process responsible for a unique interpretation of a particular text.

The response of a particular reader, which constitutes for that reader the meaning and aesthetic qualities of a text, is the joint product of the reader's own "horizon of expectations" and the confirmations, disappointments, refutations, and reformulations of these expectations when they are "challenged" by the features of the text itself (Abrams, 1999, pp. 262-63).

In Russia, the very notion of reception (although not the term) goes back to Aleksander Veselovsky (1838 – 1906), the renowned historian of literature, known for his contribution to comparative studies. As early as in 1889, he pointed out that no influence occurs without a counter flow ("vstrechnoe techenie") in the target culture (Veselovsky, 1889, p. 115). This idea was further developed by scholars who said that translations belong to a broader context that includes

historical, literary and cultural tendencies typical of a certain period in the history of the recipient culture.

For instance, according to Mikhail Bakhtin, philosopher and theoretician of literature, outstanding works of literature “break through the borders of their own time to start living in Eternity, that is, in great time and frequently (with great works, always) their lives there are more intense and fuller than are their lives within their own time” (Bakhtin, 1986a, p. 350). There are meanings that exist in a latent form revealing themselves only in favourable cultural contexts of later periods. One of Bakhtin’s most interesting ideas is that a culture can be seen most clearly “through the eyes” of another culture. Indeed, questions that one asks when studying a different culture may never arise in connection with one’s own culture. In *On the Methodology of the Humanities*, Bakhtin emphasized that “A text lives only due to a contact with another text (with context). It is in the point of the contact between texts that a light may flash, illuminating both the past and the future, making the text a dialogue” (Bakhtin 1986b, p. 384).

Closer to the theme of Hans Christian Andersen is Marina Tsvetkova’s suggestion that reception includes two aspects: one is connected with the text per se (its translations, adaptations, publications, reprints and editions, respectively the effect of editing/publishing, censorship history, authors’ biographies, readers’ response, etc.); the other aspect is related to the use of the text by other authors in the form of epigraphs, quotations, allegories, reminiscences, borrowing, literary controversy, stylizations, imitations, parodies, etc. (Tsvetkova, 2003).

Based on understanding of translation as a dialogue between cultures in the Bakhtinian sense and following Tsvetkova, we will present both extra-linguistic and linguistic approaches to reception and analyze Hans Christian Andersen translations in Russia in the context of literary reception and on the ground of documents dating back to the Soviet epoch, critical articles about the children’s literature in the Soviet Union as well as on the ground of the comparative analysis of translations of fairy tales published in the above-mentioned periods. The primary focus will be on three later periods as the specifics of Andersen’s perception at the turn of the 20th century and in the pre-revolutionary period were thoroughly enough described in the academic literature (Braude, 1983; Orlova, 2010, 2017). The study of editions and reprints, literary criticism, and history of translation shows that it was during this period that Andersen underwent the process of cultural adaptation and became a part of Russian cultural space.

### **The period after the revolution of 1917**

The task of analyzing translations in the second period is complicated enough, for, although Russian editions of Andersen bear the name Anna Hansen (or Anna and Peter Hansen) as the

translator/translators, many of their translations are known to have been changed by the censors. We can still find different versions of Andersen's texts both in the old Soviet editions and in electronic libraries and other online resources, but it is impossible to attribute these translations as the editors did not include the translator's name on the front page.

In February 1918, the Council of People's Commissars of Soviet Russia adopted the Decree on Separation of Church from State and School from Church and deprived religious organizations of the right to own any property and legal status. It laid the foundation for the deployment of atheistic propaganda and atheistic education. During the anti-religious campaign of 1921-1941, which formed the basis of the USSR's efforts to eliminate religion and replace it with atheism supported with a materialist worldview, thousands of churches were closed and thousands of priests were executed. The Russian Orthodox Church was considered to be part of the former political and ideological system, and, therefore, had to be destroyed. As for the literature domain, all references to religion, God and the Bible both in re-editions of old books and in new books were subject to censorship. The state organ responsible for the censorship of printed materials in the Soviet Union "The Main Directorate for Literary and Publishing Affairs" (Glavnoe Upravlenie po Delam Literaturny i Izdatelstv), known as Glavlit, was established in 1922 and existed until 1991 under different names. The severity of censorship varied with the political climate and the current agenda.

It is against this historical background in the late 1920s that fairy tale editions appear where censors (or maybe the editors) industriously remove not only the words which have a somewhat distant relationship with religion, but frequently whole passages. The most typical omissions are listed below – evidence from "The Snow Queen", "Ole Lukoie" and "The Little Mermaid".

#### *The Lord*

Nu ville de også flyve op mod Himmelen selv for at gøre nar af englene og "Vorherre."  
Eng. Then they wanted to fly up to heaven itself, to scoff at the angels, and our Lord.  
Rus. Then they wanted to fly up to heaven itself.

#### *The Christ Child*

Og de små holdt hinanden i hænderne, kyssede roserne og så ind i Guds klare solskin og talte til det, som om Jesusbarnet var der.

Eng. The children held each other by the hand, kissed the roses, looked up at the Lord's clear sunshine, and spoke to it as if the Christ Child were there.

Rus. The children held each other by the hand, kissed the roses and were happy for the sunshine.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

... han ville læse sit fadervor, men han kunne kun huske den store tabel.

Eng. He tried to say his prayers, but all he could remember was his multiplication tables.

Rus. omitted

### *Angels*

Alle drømmene kom igen flyvende ind, og da så de ud som Guds engle, og de trak en lille slæde, og på den sad Kay og nikkede...

Eng. and all the dreams came flying back again. They looked like angels, and they drew a little sled on which Kay sat.

Rus. ...and the dreams came again to the bedroom, but now drew a little sled on which Kay sat.

### *An immortal soul*

“Vi har ingen udødelig sjæl, vi får aldrig liv mere, vi er ligesom det grønne siv, er det engang skåret over, kan det ikke grønnes igen! Menneskene derimod har en sjæl, som lever altid, lever, efter at legemet er blevet jord; den stiger op igennem den klare luft, op til alle de skinnende stjerner! ligesom vi dykker op af havet og ser menneskenes lande, således dykker de op til ubekendte dejlige steder, dem vi aldrig får at se.” “Hvorfor fik vi ingen udødelig sjæl?” sagde den lille havfrue bedrøvet.

Eng. “We have no immortal soul, no life hereafter. We are like the green seaweed - once cut down, it never grows again. Human beings, on the contrary, have a soul which lives forever, long after their bodies have turned to clay. It rises through thin air, up to the shining stars. Just as we rise through the water to see the lands on earth, so men rise up to beautiful places unknown, which we shall never see.” “Why weren't we given an immortal soul?” the little mermaid sadly asked.

Rus. omitted

*Pious*

en god from tanke

Eng. A good, pious thought

Rus. a good thought

*Death*

“Men Døden er jo den dejligste Ole Lukøje!” sagde Hjalmar, “ham er jeg ikke bange for!”

Eng. “Why, Death is the most beautiful Ole Lukoie,” Hjalmar exclaimed. “I’m not afraid of him.”

Rus. omitted

In some cases, when the religious motif has the functional meaning in the passage and it is impossible to delete one word, the whole passage is abridged.

Da bad den lille Gerda sit fadervor, og kulden var så stærk at hun kunne se sin egen ånde; som en hel røg stod den hende ud af munden; ånden blev tættere og tættere og den formede sig til små klare engle, der voksede mere og mere, når de rørte ved jorden; og alle havde de hjelm på hovedet og spyd og skjold i hænderne; de blev flere og flere, og da Gerda havde endt sit fadervor, var der en hel legion om hende; de huggede med deres spyd på de gruelige snefnug så de sprang i hundrede stykker, og den lille Gerda gik ganske sikker og frejdig frem. Englene klappede hende på fødderne og på hænderne, og så følte hun mindre, hvor koldt det var, og gik rask frem mod snedronningens slot.

English: It was so cold that, as little Gerda said the Lord’s Prayer, she could see her breath freezing in front of her mouth, like a cloud of smoke. It grew thicker and thicker, and took the shape of little angels that grew bigger and bigger the moment they touched the ground. All of them had helmets on their heads and they carried shields and lances in their hands. Rank upon rank, they increased, and when Gerda had finished her prayer she was surrounded by a legion of angels. They struck the dread snowflakes with their lances and shivered them into a thousand pieces. Little Gerda walked on, unmolested and cheerful. The angels rubbed her hands and feet to make them warmer, and she trotted briskly along to the Snow Queen’s palace.

Russian: However, Gerda bravely walked on and finally reached the palace of the Snow Queen.

The whole passage at the end of “The Little Mermaid,” with “The kingdom of God,” is also omitted:

“Om tre hundrede år svæver vi således ind i Guds rige!”

“Også tidligere kan vi komme der!” hviskede én. “Usynligt svæver vi ind i menneskenes huse, hvor der er børn, og for hver dag vi finder et godt barn, som gør sine forældre glæde og fortjener deres kærlighed, forkorter Gud vor prøvetid. Barnet ved ikke, når vi flyver gennem stuen, og når vi da af glæde smiler over det, da tages et år fra de tre hundrede, men ser vi et uartigt og ondt barn, da må vi græde sorgens gråd, og hver tåre lægger en dag til vor prøvetid!”

English: “This is the way that we shall rise to the kingdom of God, after three hundred years have passed.”

“We may get there even sooner,” one spirit whispered. “Unseen, we fly into the homes of men, where there are children, and for every day on which we find a good child who pleases his parents and deserves their love, God shortens our days of trial. The child does not know when we float through his room, but when we smile at him in approval one year is taken from our three hundred. But if we see a naughty, mischievous child we must shed tears of sorrow, and each tear adds a day to the time of our trial.”

Consequently, the words “hymn”, “Bible” and “prayer” were also omitted, sometimes involving omission of the whole sentence where they were used. The whole hymn “Roserne vokser i dale, der får vi barn Jesus i tale.” “Where roses bloom so sweetly in the vale, There shall you find the Christ Child, without fail.” was also omitted.

No God, no devil! So the devil had also to disappear from H.C. Andersen’s fairy tales. The sentence “Det var udmærket morsomt, sagde “djævelen” is omitted. The “devil incarnate” in the beginning of “The Snow Queen” is used as an epithet.

However, at the same time the reason for some changes (not motivated by ideological reasons) was a stereotypical notion of Andersen as exclusively a children’s writer and, at that time, a widespread opinion that children’s literature should be simple, easy to understand and reflect the reality as it is. One of the strong supporters of this notion was Nadezhda Krupskaya (Vladimir

Lenin's widow) who had influenced the formation of a new paradigm for evaluation of children's literature in Russia, that, from her point of view, should serve as a means of communist education. In her article "On Evaluation of Children's Books" Krupskaya repudiated fairy tales "imbued with mysticism, belief in God, and miracles, (...) that preach monarchism," and criticized wonder-stories as deleterious. Such fairy tales, in her opinion, "hinder the child from comprehending the environment, develop superstitions, affect their nerves, causing a sensation of fear, nourishing morbid fantasy, stupefying a sense of reality" (Krupskaya, 1927, p. 30-31). According to S. Maslinskaya, Krupskaya's criticism of children's literature led to concrete organizational consequences and was also used in later conceptualizations of Soviet children's literature (Maslinskaya, 2017, p. 172-173). Krupskaya was the deputy education commissar (government minister) from 1929 to 1939, so the editors had to follow her instructions.

Undoubtedly, many of the omissions were made because the censor or the editor tried to achieve simplicity and clearness (Andersen had to be a children's writer!). Here are some examples of omissions – the evidence from "The Snow Queen".

Det var naturligvis også en krage hans kæreste, for krage søger mage, og det er altid en krage.

Eng. Of course his ladylove was also a crow, for birds of a feather will flock together

"De blev både sultne og tørstige, men fra slottet fik de ikke engang så meget, som et glas lunket vand. Vel havde nogle af de klogeste taget smørrebrød med, men de delte ikke med deres nabo, de tænkte, som så: Lad ham kun se sulten ud, så tager prinsessen ham ikke!"

English: "They got hungry and they got thirsty, but from the palace they got nothing – not even a glass of lukewarm water. To be sure, some of the clever candidates had brought sandwiches with them, but they did not share them with their neighbours. Each man thought, "Just let him look hungry, then the Princess won't take him!"

... og den lille pige trak en lang kniv ud af en sprække i muren og lod den glide over rensdyrets hals; det stakkels dyr slog ud med benene, og røverpigen lo og trak så Gerda med ned i sengen.

English: From a hole in the wall she pulled a long knife, and rubbed it against the reindeer's neck. After the poor animal had kicked up its heels, the robber girl laughed and pulled Gerda down into the bed with her.

Røverne sad rundt om ilden, sang og drak, og røverkællingen slog kolbøtter. Oh! det var ganske grueligt for den lille pige at se på.

English: The robbers sat around their fire, singing and drinking, and the old robber woman was turning somersaults. It was a terrible sight for a little girl to see.

The examples above illustrate that many of Andersen's philosophical observations, his irony and humor were omitted by the editor. Children's literature had to be simple and easy to understand.

Another question which arises is whether the changes and omissions at that period were made by the editors, by the translators or by the censors. We can hardly get an unambiguous answer to the question. Neither editors, nor translators, let alone censors were eager to comment on their work in those days. However, we argue that the question of changes in H.C. Andersen's texts in this period is closely related to the history of self-censorship in Soviet Union, which deserves a separate examination in relation to Andersen's fairy tales.

It should be noted that the editors had to take into consideration both "ideological guidelines" and the new model for evaluation of children's literature. The necessity of self-censorship was an important factor that exerted influence upon the whole publishing policy in the Soviet Union. Self-censorship manifested itself in three forms: the self-censorship of publishers who had to be very careful in choosing new titles or reprinting old ones, the self-censorship of translators who picked out the "right" words (consciously or unconsciously) and sometimes had excluded lines or whole passages from texts before the typescript was submitted to the editor, and the self-censorship of the editors who had to omit the "improper" words in the translations or substitute them with the "right" ones (Blum, 2000). We argue that many changes in H.C. Andersen's fairy tales were made because the editors tried to protect themselves from potential problems. They had also to supply editions with "proper" forewords. According to A.V. Blum (Blum, 2000, p. 39), the history of "Marxist forewords" dates back to the 1930s when Glavlit prescribed to supply all publications with critical forewords. H.C. Andersen was a well-known writer, so the presentation of his authorship was not necessary, but "the rules of the game" demanded the foreword that would describe his poor childhood and his hard life. These forewords contributed to creating certain stereotypes and generalizing certain clichés: Andersen is a great

fairy tale teller, his fairy tales are imbued with kindness, he “exposes the evils of society” and he is undoubtedly “a defender of the poor”.

Later, a great number of cartoons, feature films and stage productions based on his fairy tales supported these clichés; they constitute a prism through which notions of Andersen characters are formed often differing greatly from the original text.

The analysis of the Soviet editions shows also some completely unmotivated omissions, for example the omission in the third story “The flower garden of the woman skilled in magic”, where Gerda is talking to the flowers. In the early Soviet translation there is only one talk with one flower – dandelion (actually H.C. Andersen wrote about a buttercup, but in Anna Hansen’s translation Gerda talks to a dandelion).

The editors of Soviet editions also closely followed a choice of words that, from their point of view, should be clear to a child. The Lapp woman is not “dowdy” (“grumset” in Danish), but “fat”, Kaj and Gerda do not live “in the attic”, but “in a small room”, instead of “Finmark” we see “Finland” and “a little triumphal arch of greenery and flowers” altogether disappeared from the text.

It is interesting that the editors consecutively removed many diminutive forms from Anna Hansen’s translations (for example, for these words: heart, nestling, birds, grass, flower, shoes, head, snow, sun, bed, pillow, girl, eyes, hands etc.). It should be mentioned that diminutives (these forms can be translated with additional word “little” in other languages) are an inherent part of Russian language and can express endearment, intimacy and warm feelings. At the same time, the use of diminutives is a pervasive feature of child-directed speech. The omission of diminutives can signalize that the editor worked towards realistic, grown-up oriented literature.

However, it should be recognized that sometimes the old Soviet editing was quite reasonable considering that over fifty years had passed between the time the translation had been done and the time of publishing. The editors removed many archaic words and phrases and elevated style in order to bring the form of a translation closer to the recipient.

### **The later Soviet period**

There is no doubt that the change in the political climate of the country at the beginning of the 1960s and an increasing interest in foreign literature had influenced the literary policy. Already in 1955 appeared an edition where some of the religious motifs were restored (Andersen, 1955). Every year after that several collections of Andersen’s fairy tales would be published in translations by T. Gabbe, A. Liubarskaya, Yu. Yakhnina, K. Telyatnikov, and others. Almost all of the omitted places were restored in the 1960s-80-s in different editions and first of all in the prestigious series of “Literaturnye pamyatniki” (Literary Monuments) collected by Ludmila

Braude and Inna Streblova and edited by Irina Kupriyanova (Andersen, 1983). The edition mostly included translations from the Russian four-volume edition published in the 1890s. However, Inna Streblova, a great-great-granddaughter of Anna and Peter Hansen, re-edited the fairy tales having checked them against the original as well as against the texts published in the collection of Andersen's works of 1894-1895 and the "Academia" edition of 1937. Besides, she considered corrections introduced by A. Hansen in many editions. I. Streblova, having sometimes discarded expressions that sounded illiterate or vulgar, preserved certain obsolete words and expressions from Anna and Peter Hansen's translations. However, in some cases she would not follow the Russification of names characteristic of their earlier translations. It was one of the first academic editions supplied with detailed text comments, the history of publication of Andersen's fairy tales in Denmark and the history of his publication in Russia; also represented in the book was a historical survey of the literary criticism in Russia at the end of the 19th century. Reviews of Andersen's literature that appeared in Russia at the 19th century are an important source for the research of reception and for the investigation of cultural insight into Andersen's work.

### **The post-Soviet period**

The problem with well-known translations by Anna and Peter Hansen is that the translators considered the fairy tales (even those that had been intended for both adults and children) exclusively as reading for children. Trying to adapt their translations to children's perception quite often they would wander from the text even towards retelling. Besides, it was necessary to correct some inaccuracies in the translation, as well as archaisms and outdated expressions. That is why the Vagrius Publishing House made a decision to include Andersen's stories and fairy tales in new translations in his jubilee collection of works.

The study of Andersen's reception in Russia is impossible without taking into account these modern translations. In 2005, the Vagrius Publishing House published a 4-volume collection that included all Andersen's tales, except for two (Andersen, 2005). The translators were experienced professionals who had been working with Scandinavian languages for many years. They included 155 fairy tales in the collection. The first two volumes contained Andersen's fairy tales in new translations, the third volume was "The Fairy Tale of My Life", actually it was the first complete edition of the work in Russian because the previous, Hansens' translation had had many omissions and inaccuracies. The fourth volume contained the first Andersen's autobiography that he had written before the fairy tales, when he was 25-26 years of age. A doubtless achievement of the project is that the four volumes contain quite diversified material presenting Andersen not only as a writer, but as a personality.

The discussion about challenges when translating texts of other historical epochs is not new. Translatology scholars trace it to Schleiermacher who in 1813 wrote that “Either a translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him, or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him” (Schleiermacher, 1992, p. 149). However, only for the last two decades the problem of historical distance and the strategy of historical stylization have attracted the attention of linguists. (Venuti, 2014). Translatology scholars agree that when translating works that were created more than a century ago the translator should use a combination of archaization along with moderate modernization. The fairy tale is, of course, a very special genre and translation of a fairy tale with its specific characteristics needs a special approach, different from the approach to translation of the historical novel, but at the same time, it is obvious that “moderate modernization” in new translations could only be welcomed.

It should also be taken into account that if the time of writing of the original text and the time of the publication of a translation is significantly remote from the modern reader, the perception of the work can be rather complicated. As a rule, it is said that a new translation of a classical work must be done every fifty years, otherwise it will be too far from the modern reader.

In the context of Andersen’s translations, the temporal distance and the problem of historical stylization have been underestimated. A priori it is believed that Andersen’s stories (in particular, in translations by Anna and Peter Hansen) are of a universal, timeless value. But we argue that a new translation is not only actual but can also contribute to new aspects of Andersen’s reception in Russia.

The analysis of the new translations of Andersen’s fairy tales of 2005 demonstrates a tendency to bring the text closer to the reader and at the same time preserve some distance of time.

The translators of the last edition would not use archaic words; they preferred to replace them with neutral ones. It should be noted that Anna and Peter Hansen sometimes chose archaic and colloquial words or expressions in the places where H.C. Andersen had a neutral word, which could be the result of the method of compensation aimed to render stylistic or emotional implications of the original.

The new translations “move the author towards the reader” by introducing Danish realia in the text (for example, “skillinger” instead of “polushki” – a formerly used monetary unit of Russia equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  kopeck in Anna and Peter Hansen’s translation). The respect for words and expressions with culture-specific meaning differs from many of Anna and Peter Hansen’s translations. Modern translators of H.C. Andersen use many colloquial phrases and simple syntax facilitating the perception of the text for children.

A. Nadymova, a student of the Department of Scandinavian and Dutch Philology at St. Petersburg State university investigated different translations of “Thumbelina” (Nadymova, 2017). She points out that the modern translation of this fairy tale is characterized by a choice of colloquial speech, use of different epithets, which “disappeared” in old translations, and a broad use of realia that had previously been replaced by Russian words. Unfortunately, the new translations of 2005 are not very well known because it is much easier to use old translations than to pay royalties to translators.

The reception of Hans Christian Andersen in translation is a complicated subject not limited solely by literary criticism. The question of how different versions of translation have influenced the perception of Andersen in Russia requires a thorough research. Obviously, not only the exclusion of religious motifs from Andersen’s fairy tales had an impact on the perception of the fairy tales. The return of Andersen’s subtle philosophical observations, his irony and humor in the academic Soviet edition and in the modern translations of 2005 undoubtedly influenced the reception. Andersen is gradually becoming not just an author for children but is increasingly attracting the attention of adults.

Nowadays all the translations from the four periods described are present in the modern cultural space, and it looks like they don’t impede each other. One can find electronic publications analogous to print versions of the first editions, editions from the early Soviet period and the corrected editions from 1983. In social networks, we can find debate about different versions and some participants even argue that the early Soviet editions were not so bad. The reason of coexistence of different translations in the same culture lies in the fact that all translations of H.C. Andersen’s texts have a kind of an “invariant core” – some stable, constant semantic elements, and that transformations, or variants, only influence the expressive form, but do not modify the invariant of meaning.

Widespread and varying interpretations of texts by Hans Christian Andersen have promoted the second aspect of reception, according to Tsvetkova (Tsvetkova, 2003) and Andersen’s texts are now widely used by other authors in the form of epigraphs, quotations, allegories, reminiscences, borrowing, literary controversy, stylizations, imitations, parodies, etc.

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