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Fantasy in Translation: a study of the Italian versions of Sanderson's The Stormlight Archive

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INTRODUCTION

Translation is a broad concept with different characteristics and viewpoints, which make it difficult to define accurately on a global scale. One way to describe it is as a process that deals with the replacement or reworking of textual material in one language, referred to as the Source Text (ST), by the equivalent textual material of another language, called the Target Text (TT), while keeping the same message and purpose of the original work. Translators have to implement the transfer of meaning, that is to say that they need to transfer the meaning of the source text as faithfully and authentically as they can in the target text. Translation has made it possible for people around the world to enjoy not only literary works, but academic materials and studies, making them accessible to a vast audience while opening the gates for knowledge in a broader sense and propagating ideas. It is undeniable how translation has facilitated communication and connections on a large scale. The concept of translation has evolved drastically, even when bearing mind that Translation Studies is a fairly new field, which was born and developed from the 1950s, but forms of translations were present much earlier, for instance with the Greek civilization and the Roman Empire. Different ideologies were born along with translation studies and schools of thought started to differentiate in multiple concepts that dealt with translation and the figure of the translator. Translators have a hard task at hand and many think that they should be invisible in their own work, while many others believe that this lack of visibility could damage the profession and take something away from their work. Some translators strive for a text that is faithful to the source text whilst others want their text to seem as natural as possible to readers.

This dissertation deals with translation in the fantasy field, a genre that gained fame with Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, targeted to adult audiences, and even more with J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter series*, which had an unprecedented global success, triggering the increase in sales of the original text and the translated versions as well. Chapter One of the dissertation discusses the field of translation. Initially it gives an overview of the theoretical approaches taken by different scholars, and then the issue of equivalence and the depiction of the figure of the translator are considered as well. Furthermore, the chapter gives emphasis to translation strategies, and it focuses on the approaches to translation known as foreignization and domestication. Chapter Two gives

an outline of the meaning of fantasy fiction and its sub-genres. The chapter defines the elements and characteristics of fantasy fiction, and it gives an overview on the historical origin and popularity of this genre. The translation of fantasy and the challenges it poses to translators are analyzed in the last part of the chapter. To conclude, Chapter Three focuses on the presentation and analysis of translation issues in *The Stormlight Archive* and a brief introduction to the author and the series is given at the beginning. Then, the chapter analyses the translation of names, places, neologisms, and compounds that I found during the reading of the original text and the Italian translated text. In the last part it focuses on the analysis of the translation of the title from English into Italian and in which way it could be considered misleading to some TT readers.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

TSA The Stormlight Archive

TWOK Way of Kings

TL Target Language

TT Target Text

SL Source Language

ST Source Text

CHAPTER ONE: TRANSLATION

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the concept of translation and to present various lines of thought from different scholars in the field, to understand how translation is not considered a new concept at all, in which way equivalence is important when talking about translating a text and the weight it has in the subject. The figure of the translator will be introduced, the difficulties they face when translating a text and how it is still a complex job that requires fast and efficient skills. Various translation strategies will be introduced as well as the concepts of domestication and foreignization, as they are two extremely widespread methods in the translation field.

1.1 Theoretical approaches

There have been many concepts concerning translation and translating over the years which have always been subject of constant changes mainly because of the different schools of thought present over the years. Viewpoints, definitions, and opinions on how scholars approach the topic differ widely, for instance according to Catford (1965: 20) translation is “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)”. The author mentions one approach used for translation, which is replacement, and equivalents are also mentioned, which we will cover further on Colina (2015: 1) defines translation as “an activity, a product and the scholarly field that studies both the activity and the product(s)”. Steiner (1975: 236-238) even divides the literature of theory, practice, and history of translation into four parts and presents several theories, starting from Cicero’s precept not to translate *verbum pro verbo* to the early 1960s, where translation became essential for connecting different existing and newly discovered disciplines. According to another definition, translation can be considered as “the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language” (Jakobson 1959: 232) or as “the transposition of messages between tongues” (Barnstone 1993: 227); most of the time linguists approach translation from a scientific and objective point of view, but translation can also be seen as a form of art (Bell 1991: 4).

It is generally agreed that a translated text needs to be readable and comprehensible to the reader while also conveying the source text's meaning and intentions. For this reason, Venuti (1995: 1) argues that translated texts are considered acceptable only if fluency and the illusion of transparency are present, making the translator almost invisible. As seen from these theories there is no universal agreement on what translation is and what is its purpose. For this reason, the task of scholars in translation studies is a hard one. None of these theories could be applied to all fields of translation theory and form a unilateral consensus of all theorists.

Translation is considered an old concept: we can trace it back to the first encounter of two different cultures and it exists solely because humans speak different languages. Yet at the same time approaches to it have changed drastically, moving from issues of power and even inequality to something that is necessary to understand and communicate with one another. People are constantly moving around the globe and the need for translation and translators is inevitable in a multicultural and multilingual world. So, translation can be described as: "not just the transfer of texts from one language into another, it is now rightly seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures, a process during which all kinds of transactions take place mediated by the figure of the translator" (Bassnett 2014: 6).

1.2 Equivalence in translation

One issue that needs to be addressed and that is one of the main causes of controversies in translation is the nature of equivalence. In this field, too, we can find a vast number of scholars who have studied its meaning and its relation with translation. We can look at equivalence as the main goal of a translator, trying to reach a certain level of similarity between the source text (ST) and the translated target text (TT). Catford (1965: 21) mentioned the concept of equivalents and equivalence, saying that "the term 'equivalent' is clearly a key term" meaning that we can consider equivalence as one, if not the most important matter when we talk about translation. The author says that equivalence can be used as a means "to define some broad types or categories of translation in terms of extent, levels, and ranks" where he respectively includes full vs. partial translation, total vs. restricted translation and a translation that is ranked either by a grammatical or

phonological hierarchy. The main problem lies in whether total equivalence can be achieved or not. Catford (1965: 27-33) goes on to further explain that we need to make a distinction between textual equivalence and formal correspondence.

Textual equivalence is explained as any part of a TL text that is the equivalent of a given part of a SL text through commutation. Instead, in formal correspondence, any element of the TL can be said to hold almost the same meaning of the portion of given SL, which gives formal correspondence an approximate level of equivalence. If total equivalence was attainable, then machine translation could be completely trustworthy and successful, unlike the reality that we experience (Colina 2015: 16). Different types of equivalence are extremely frequent in textbooks, such as semantic (of meaning), pragmatic (of effect), and functional (of function) equivalence and the focus is mainly on the latter, but even in functional equivalence “perfect equivalence is problematic” (Colina 2015: 16). Bell (1991: 6) says that “It is apparent, and has been for a very long time indeed, that the ideal of total equivalence is a chimera. Languages are different from each other [...] so why should anyone be surprised to discover a lack of synonymy between languages?”. This goes to further show how languages are, by nature, different from one another and why finding a total equivalence or “sameness” is almost impossible, especially when dealing with idioms, dialects, and culturally bound features. During the translation process something is likely to be lost even if the same concept exists in multiple languages. The choice of searching for the most appropriate translation is up to the translator and even then, if a portion or an entirety of a SL text was given to two or multiple translators the results would have slight changes for each one of the TL translated texts.

1.3 The figure of the translator

“What to one reader is ingenious interpretation may to another be a howler.”

(Barnstone 1993: 117).

As seen in the previous sections, translation carries as many notions and concepts as contradictions and clashing ideologies and so does the figure of the translator. There is no “how to” guide on translation but everyone has conflicting convictions on how it should be done and what rules to follow, and because of these contradictions the depiction

of the translator was seen as inferior to the ST author, a view that started around the 19th century and carried on for a while.

Extreme examples of how being a translator was a dire job to do, are those of William Tyndale and Etienne Dolet, both burnt at the stake (Newmark 2001: 22). Tyndale was a talented linguistic, whose work of the English Bible was later used as a basis for the King James one, he was executed in the Netherlands. Dolet was a French humanist charged with blasphemy and condemned by the faculty of Sorbonne, accused of not believing in immortality after adding in his translation of one of Plato's dialogues the phrase *rien du tout*, which means 'nothing at all', in a passage that implicated what existed after death (Newmark 2001: 22). All this goes to show what were the implications of being a translator in the past. Nowadays the consequences may result as harsh as they were in the past, especially in for those who work in conflicts; the translator still has to carry great responsibilities because their translations will inevitably influence the audience that the translation is aimed at. There is not real definition as to what makes a translator "good" or "bad", but we cannot deny the importance that their work represents for us.

One keyword that we must remember is the word "invisibility" which, according to Venuti (1995: 1) is "the translator's situation and activity in contemporary Anglo-American culture". One clear contradiction of this ideology is a particular translation strategy involving the presence of the translator, since through comments and footnotes their presence is evident and draws the reader's attention (Chesterman 2016: 108). Venuti (1995) further explains that this invisibility is determined by several phenomena which include the illusion of transparency and the concept of authorship. The illusion of transparency is achieved in the moment that the translator becomes invisible in his own work, thanks to the effect of fluent discourse: "the translator works to make his or her work 'invisible', producing the illusory effect of transparency that simultaneously masks its status as an illusion: the translated text seems natural, i.e., not translated." a good translation must seem an original work (Venuti 1995: 1-5).

The other concept is that of authorship, which views the text as an original and transparent self-representation of the author, without the interference of any determinants which could possibly affect the author's originality, and this greatly disadvantages the

translator since it carries on the idea that the translated version of a text is fake or a false copy of the original (Venuti 1995: 6-7). This way the relationship between the original author and the translator is always looked at as subordinate because the translated TL text is seen as an “adaptation or derivative work based on an original work of authorship” (Venuti 1995: 8). Bell (1991: 14-16) affirms that anyone who communicates, who receives signals containing messages, is a translator but how does a translator differ from a normal communicator? The author specifically says that “the translator decodes messages transmitted in one language and re-encodes them in another. It is this re-encoding process which marks the bilingual translator off from the monolingual communicator.” (Bell 1991: 14-16) which is a process three times harder, because a translator is working with a message that is not originally in the language of the target group receivers, so they must mediate and make their work adequate for the audience and at the same time convey the intentions of the original author.

As regards Tymoczko and Gentzler (2002: xxii) affirm that “translation is thus not simply an act of selection, assemblage, structuration, and fabrication [...] translators, as much as creative writers and politicians, participate in the powerful acts that create knowledge and shape culture.” This confirms how translations are crucial for global communication and understanding because they allow the circulation of ideas, ensuring they do not remain limited to just one audience. Bassnett (2014: 106) says that “a translation is therefore the manifestation of one reader’s interpretation of a text, the final product of a creative process that may involve many stages of rereading and rewriting.” Because translating is not a simple task, it involves trial and error during its process.

“Translators and interpreters are voracious and omnivorous readers [...] they are hungry for real-world experience as well” (Robinson 1997: 22): they are extremely skilled individuals, some people may be able to do translation as a full-time job and some others keep it as a job to the side, avoiding getting burnt out from it, but the majority are interpreters with remarkable skills which make them reliable and efficient. What makes a good translator, especially from an internal point of view are professional pride, income and last but definitely not least enjoyment (Robinson 1997: 22). A faithful translation is also of huge importance, as the work must be precise and as close as possible in meaning with the source being translated. Yet it also needs to be “beautiful”, in other words it has

to adapt and achieve “the closest possible aesthetic and cognitive rapport with the reader, in order to create an original work of art in the target language” it has to be to be accepted in domestic literature and be a work of value (Levý 2011: 60). Translation may seem like a simple task, but plentiful work of which we are unaware goes behind it. There is no right or wrong way to translate; it is indeed a physical process, but for the most part an internal one, that can only be described as complex and intricate. It is a phenomenon that concerns ethics, balance, and controversies but this does not imply that the translator should be seen as inferior to the author of the SL text.

1.4 Translation strategies

Translating a text often means finding and studying different procedures to achieve the closest and most suitable translation of the ST. In literature each scholar categorizes translation strategies differently, and they even address them with different names (procedures, techniques, methods, rules and so on). Lörcher (1991: 76) says that “a translation strategy is a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language into another”. This means that the decision is made after recognizing which solution would be most suitable when faced with an issue in translation and that the translator is able, through expertise and skills, to find which strategy to use when translating. Levý (2011: 60-67) says that there should be two main norms in translation: the reproduction norm and the artistic norm, which can lead to a contradiction between translation fidelity and freedom. The author also says that “A translated work is a composite, hybrid configuration. It is not a monolithic work but an interpermeation, a conglomerate of two structures”, meaning that both the semantic value of the source text and the artistic features of the target language are what contributes to a translation. Yet these are often in tension, which is a crucial issue when talking about the theory and practice of translation.

So how can a translation be precise and faithful to the original work? Debates have focused on defining what can be considered a ‘translation’ and what is instead ‘original’. These debates divided into different lines of thought, one more traditional, which sees translation as a betrayal of the original work; the other line of thought views translation as the “after-life”, a reviving of the ST (Bassnett 1998: 25). When it comes to translating,

the most obvious form that comes to mind is that of analogy, since it “slants the culture of origin toward the receiving culture” (Bassnett 1998: 8).

When translating literary works the main issues that present themselves are the dialectic of the general and the unique, since one focuses more on the general meaning, both conceptual and emotive terms, and on the general form, counterposed to the unique and the specific, which is what a faithful translation concentrates on a closer level (Levy 2011:84). The author specifies that there is a tendency towards the unique because “Issues of translation practice focus on the sphere of the specific, which follows logically from the fact that the range of the specific is narrower than the range of the general” because generally the range of general attributes can be shared by various social groups and languages, as opposed to the specific which can be assigned to a specific culture, and it is this sphere that suffers the most when being adapted in translation works (Levy 2011:84). Levy (2011:85) presents multiple examples of adaptation, such as Sterne, who used the method of substitution, changing the original’s text humorous themes from English to French; or the localization that is still practiced in Molière’s plays. Chesterman (2016: 85) affirms that as much as translation strategies differentiate between translator, we can say that some are widely recognized and used and passed from generation to generation, always changeable through time.

Chesterman (2016: 89-90) proposes a classification of translation strategies: comprehension strategies and production strategies. He states that “comprehension strategies have to do with the analysis of the source text and the whole nature of the translation commission [...] production strategies are the results of various comprehension strategies: they have to do with how the translator manipulates the linguistic material in order to produce an appropriate target text.” It is clear that production strategies concern the linguistic or text-linguistic side of a translation and is based on “changing something” that we are not satisfied with because it seems or sounds unnatural, so the source text is being changes in the process of its translation, which often happens in this field. This dissatisfaction and the need to “change something” while translating has progressively led to different strategies being applied and seen as “transfer operations or formal shifts from source text to target text” (Chesterman 2016: 90).

Chesterman (2016: 90-109) divides strategies into three main groups which can and usually overlap: syntactic/grammatical (G), semantic (S) and pragmatic (Pr). Syntactic strategies usually change the form of the source text and some of these are: literal translation (G1) which is usually the closest translation of the ST; loan/calque (G2) described by the author as “the borrowing of individual items and the borrowing of syntagma”; transposition (G3) which happens whenever there is a change of word-class during a translation; unit shift (G4) used by the theorist Catford in 1965; phrase structure change (G5), clause structure change (G6), sentence structure change (G7) as to say changes that happens in the respective levels of units; cohesion change (G8) which inherently changes the intra-textual meaning of the original text; level shift (G9) such as changes in morphology, phonology, syntax and lexis; scheme change (G10) that Chesterman (2016) explains that “the kinds of changes that translators incorporate in the translation of rhetorical schemes such as parallelism, repetition, alliteration, metrical rhythm etc.”.

Semantic strategies mainly include change changes on a lexical level and aspects of clause meaning, and as mentioned, multiple of these strategies come from Vinay and Darbelnet’s theories. These strategies are synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, converses, abstraction change, distribution change, emphasis change, paraphrase, trope change and other semantic changes. At last, we can find pragmatic strategies which Chesterman (2016: 104) states them to be “those which primarily have to do with the selection of information in the TT, a selection that is governed by the translator’s knowledge of the prospective readership of the translation.” They are the ones which involve some of the biggest changes in the process of translation because they have to deal with the message itself of the ST and convey it in the TT successfully, most times these also integrate syntactic and semantic processes as well. The author identifies 10 main pragmatic strategies:

- Pr1: Cultural filtering → naturalization, domestication or adaptation. This strategy is often used to change the cultural meaning of specific elements of the SL into cultural equivalents of the TL. Exoticization is the opposite procedure.

- Pr2: Explicitness change → whether some elements are change from explicit to implicit or vice versa, connected to information change. Something made implicit can also be a form of omission from part of the translator.
- Pr3: Information change → this technique deals with the addition or omission of information from the ST to the TT which can either be seen as relevant information that the reader needs to refer to or irrelevant since the reader would be able to understand even with the omission of some information.
- Pr4: Interpersonal change → “anything that involves a change in the relationship between text/author and reader.” It alters the style, the formality level and also the involvement and emotiveness.
- Pr5: Illocutionary change → this strategy usually implies a change at level of speech act, for example changes from the indicative verb form to the imperative one or changes in classes of speech acts.
- Pr6: Coherence change → a strategy that involves the change of logical arrangement of information in the TT.
- Pr7: Partial translation → this strategy can contain any type of partial translation, from summaries to transcriptions.
- Pr8: Visibility change → this strategy involves any type of change made visible by the translator. Their intrusion is made obvious by any kind of comment, footnote or explanation that can possibly highlight their presence.
- Pr9: Transediting → this strategy contains any type of editing and re-editing that translator have to do if a ST is badly written.
- Pr10: Other pragmatic changes → these changes entail any other revision and variation made from ST to TT, such as changes in the layout or dialect changes.

Strategies are essential when dealing with non-equivalence present between the SL and the TL; what type and level to use depends on the translator’s choice and the nature of the non-equivalence. Context and purpose influence to a great extent which strategy to use and favor and they all have advantages and disadvantages (Baker 2018: 19).

1.5 Foreignization and Domestication

We can study and explore translation from a different perspective if we talk about “foreignization” and “domestication”. These two translation approaches have been for a long-time topic of intense debate. Both are context-bound and should be discussed considering the historical, the progressive dynamical aspect and the social circumstances overall. A very important figure that needs to be mentioned is Lawrence Venuti and his works *The Translator’s Invisibility* and *The Scandals of Translation* where he discusses these two methods in depth. Venuti (1995: 17) affirms that translation is a process in which the SL text signifiers are replaced by the TL signifiers, and this whole process is a result of the translator’s interpretation. Both the foreign text and the translation derive from several linguistic and cultural aspects and because of this “a foreign text is the site of many different semantic possibilities that are fixed only provisionally in any one translation, on the basis of varying cultural assumptions and interpretive choices”.

A successful translation is made when produced and read in relation to its social and cultural circumstances. This raises an important concern that Venuti (1995: 18) sees as a type of violence that “resides in the very purpose and activity of translation: the reconstitution of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs and representations that preexist it in the target language” for a better perception of the translated text. It is a replacement made by force to accommodate the TL reader. The author states that the risk of trying to produce a familiar and recognizable translation for the target audience is a “domestication” of the foreign text, and to some extent it forces the communication of the foreign text into being limited.

Venuti (1995: 19-20) mentions Friedrich Schleiermacher, a German theologian and philosopher, who, during a lecture in 1813 while talking and theorizing the different strategies and methods of translation declared that “there are only two. Either the 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”, stating that neither is more adequate than the other, Schleiermacher let the translator decide between a domesticating method and a foreignizing method, but nevertheless he advocated for the foreignizing method: it meant exposing the TT reader to the

“strangeness” of the ST language and cultural aspects. Lawrence Venuti gave concrete terminology to these two methods in 1995 in *The Translator’s Invisibility*: “foreignizing method” and “domesticating method” respectively.

A foreignizing translation is considered more desirable by Venuti since it seems to prevent and limit the ethnocentric violence of translation (Venuti 1995: 20). In his words “foreignizing translation in English can be a form of resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism, in the interests of democratic geopolitical relations”(Venuti 1995: 20). A foreignizing method pursues cultural diversity and “foregrounds the linguistic and cultural differences of the source-language text and transforms the hierarchy of cultural values in the target language”. Venuti advocates a future where differences, cultural forms and cultural relations are accepted (1995: 308-313). He opposes the domesticating method of Anglo-American culture, which try to reproduce an illusion of transparency and fluent translations by masking them as semantic equivalence, when truthfully, they are made by partial interpretation from the translator, conveying a ethnocentric violence distinctive of this method. The author makes a direct connection between this method and the translation strategies pursued and theorized by Eugene Nida, translation consultant to the American Bible Society (Venuti 1995: 21).

Nida considers domestication as a major factor for a fluent translation: this can be deduced not only by his theorization of “dynamic and functional equivalence” made in 1964, but also by the great number of books and articles regarding the topic (Venuti 1995: 21). Nida (1964: 159) declares that “A translation of dynamic equivalence aims at complete naturalness of expression and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture”. He states that a translator needs to convey the clear message of the original text by going over the linguistic and cultural differences (Nida and de Waard 1986: 14). An obvious reference to domestication is made by valorizing the English language when he asserts that “an easy and natural style in translating” is what it’s essential to convey a similar message of the ST and obtain a subsequent similar response from the TL readers (Nida 1964: 163). It questions whether a non-domesticated translation can elicit both these responses.

Nonetheless domesticating strategies have been used especially in the past, as cultural, and linguistic exchanges took place between civilizations like the Romans, Egyptians and Persians leading to the findings of numerous works of translation interpretation of authors like Cicero and of many historical documents (Baker and Saldanha 2020: 10). Translation of foreign texts was also seen as a form of conquest, as Tarek Shamma declares that “in discussing English translations of the Sanskrit literature of colonized India [...] these texts went through a process of “‘naturalization’, in which the culturally specific is ‘sanitized’, subordinated to a European norm, thereby inherently limiting the ‘artistic achievement’ of the colonized” (Baker and Saldanha 2020: 101). Many theorists and scholars in the field advocate and underline the importance of foreignization as it is the method that manages to respect and value cultural differences while building knowledge of a foreign culture to TL readers.

This chapter aimed to introduce translation theoretically and the different viewpoints and ideologies scholars have in the matter. It focused on the concept of equivalence, as it is the main goal a translator strives for, and how it is extremely difficult to achieve total equivalence between the ST and the TT. The chapter also dealt with how the translator is seen and the ideas of invisibility and authorship that heavily influence the result of a translation. Translation strategies and their categorization were explained as well as the difference between domesticating and foreignizing strategies, each of them preferred for various reasons by theorists and scholars, especially foreignization since it helps to advocate for differences and cultural diversity.

CHAPTER TWO: DEFINING AND TRANSLATING FANTASY LITERATURE

The aim of this chapter is, firstly, to introduce some features of the Fantasy literary genre, to explain the several categories of the genre and what differentiates them from each other. In this first part, the genre will also be presented from a historical point of view, in order to understand how it has changed and what made it develop into the literary genre that we know today. The second part of the chapter will be dedicated to the translation of this genre and what problems can be encountered, as it is a genre that particularly strays from reality, and what goes into making an effective translation taking into consideration these challenges.

2.1 Fantasy literature: definition and subgenres

The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines the term ‘fantasy’ in various ways such as “the power or process of creating especially unrealistic or improbable mental images in response to psychological need; a creation of the imaginative faculty whether expressed or merely conceived: such as a chimerical or fantastic notion and also an imaginative fiction featuring especially strange settings and grotesque characters” but Fantasy as a literary composition nowadays is a broad category and is perceived as an independent genre. Furthermore, Fantasy fiction is not regarded solely as children’s literature but has expanded in many fields such as YA Fantasy and even horror Fantasy. J.R.R. Tolkien (1947) was one of the firsts to differentiate between fantasy fairy tales for children and Fantasy as a genre in his essay *On Fairy-Stories*.

This genre is usually associated with the imagination and this feature is what has made it so difficult to define, but it is in this quality of Fantasy literature and its escapist nature that resides its value since this literary genre is not bound to the limits and conventions of realistic texts (Jackson 2009: 1). This detachment from reality gives a sense of resistance against categorization and it is what makes this broad genre difficult to specify. Although Fantasy seems like a modern concept and genre, it has been around for a long time, tracing back to the Latin term *phantasticus* which means to make visible or manifest and in a general sense it’s “fantastic” anything that is born from imaginary activity

(Jackson 2009: 8). The term “fantasy” has been ceaselessly used to refer to any category of literary form that does not put the representation of reality as a priority: “myths, legends, folk and fairy tales, utopian allegories, dream visions, surrealist texts, science fiction, horror stories, all presenting realms ‘other’ than the human”.

One of the most frequent characteristics correlated to literary Fantasy is the violent refusal of the “real”, possibly causing assumptions threatening to undermine and subvert what is considered normative, but as Jackson (2009: 8) states “it would be naive to equate Fantasy with either anarchic or revolutionary politics” but it does indeed disturb the artistic and literary rules of representation of what is considered “real”. “The Oz and Harry Potter books are not loved merely because they teach how to deal with good and bad mothers, sub- and superhuman helpers, personal wishes and fears inside the self, but because they show how to deal with weird and complicated worlds outside” (O’Keefe 2004: 18). More than being a mere escape from reality, Fantasy literature and books give a sense of pride and psychological fulfillment in identifying with characters described as “brave and resourceful” while sharing their joys and their sorrows, the stories teach lessons.

Related to the notion of Fantasy, Tzvetan Todorov (1973: 25-31) describes it as an uncertainty between the imaginary and reality. *Fantastic* is the phenomenon where an individual experiences something uncanny and hesitates in front of this supernatural event while knowing the laws of nature, of reality. The hesitation of the hero, the main character, whether or not to believe what they are experiencing and the integration of the reader into this world, inevitably finding themselves to have a distorted and ambiguous perception of the story narrated, are the distinctive elements of the fantastic. Through the supernatural elements, the impossible transforms and becomes possible, achievable, it transcends the rules of our reality. Tolkien (1997: 132) mentions the concept of “sub-creation”, a situation in which whoever is telling the story successfully builds a Secondary World where the reader’s mind can enter and everything inside it is viewed as real, even the laws of that world become possible and the reader believes in that reality as if it was their own; but the moment disbelief arises, Tolkien (1997) states that “the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed.”.

The first categorization of Fantasy fiction worth mentioning is children's Fantasy and adult's Fantasy. Now more than ever adults and children are reading the same Fantasy books. O'Keefe (2004: 13) claims that these two categorizations are "collapsing together" because both children and adults read the same Fantasy compositions, from Harry Potter to Tolkien, just as much as they did in the past where narratives were read by people of all ages. As it is a broad genre, it has expanded and evolved during the years Fantasy fiction has developed numerous sub-genres and forms, and I can point out some essential ones, such as High and Low Fantasy, Magical Realism, Dark Fantasy, and Urban Fantasy.

Regarding High Fantasy, also called Epic Fantasy, Fabrizi (2016: 13) says that "High Fantasy is an inherently conservative genre, often revolving around the preservation or restoration of a status quo.". Usually, it is a world with its own rules and physical laws and the hero is a well-developed individual through the whole story (Brown 2021). In High Fantasy there usually is a war between a conquering force and the heroes which most times have the same characteristics "white, heterosexual, and male" (Fabrizi 2016: 13). Plentiful work has been conducted in this category and we can pinpoint to some of the most famous High Fantasy compositions such as J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* series, which undoubtedly impacted all following works in the same field. Low Fantasy is set in our own real world, where magical and out of the ordinary elements appear, but "the emphasis is placed on maintaining realism" (Morrow 2017); J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* and Studio Ghibli's *Spirited Away* are some primary examples.

Magical Realism is similar to low Fantasy, but here the characters of the story accept otherworldly capabilities as normal, such as telekinesis or time-travelling (Brown 2021). This literary form has developed in depth especially in Latin America and critics of the country see it as "a certain combination of a political, social and mythical reality that creates what is known as magical realism" (Sieber 2012: 168). One of the most famous and important pieces of work of Magical realism is *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez. Dark Fantasy is a genre that has developed in the last two decades and its taxonomy is still considered as a work in progress. In the *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997) John Clute questions whether the term was convenient as it was often used interchangeably with "Gothic Fantasy", but the consistent growth of paranormal and

dark Fantasy allowed the term to establish itself (Kaveney 2012: 214-215). Dark Fantasy is the combination of the characteristics of the Fantasy genre with elements of the horror genre, whose aim is to “unnerve and frighten readers” (Brown 2021). Finally, Urban Fantasy stories are usually set in an urban setting in the present day, with the additions of fantastical and supernatural creatures and characters; some examples are vampires, werewolves, wizards, and witches (Brown 2021). This genre is what was once called pastoral and heroic Fantasy, which were slowly brought into an urban environment or overall contemporary setting, and the city where the story is set is itself a literary artifact and should be read accordingly (Irvine 2012: 200-201).

Other sub-genres worth mentioning are Superhero fiction, Paranormal Romance, Sword and Sorcery, Fables, and Dystopian Fantasy (Brown 2021). As said before, these are only some of the existing sub-genres that make up the large genre that is Fantasy literature, without counting the many more that are emerging and developing and the ones that may develop in the future.

2.1.1 Common elements and characteristics of the Fantasy genre

It is almost impossible to determine precise lines and characteristics that a Fantasy composition should have, but there are a few similarities which we can find in a large number of these stories. Fantasy stories prove coherent because the laws created inside the imaginary world appear acceptable; the magical aspect needs to be presented and explained in a convincing way. Some type of magic system is what is essential, meaning that the events of the story could never happen in the real world, such as witchcraft, sorcery and the supernatural; it is the key part of the story and everything else is built around it (Bradshaw 2019). Tuttle (2005: 25) explains that Fantasy worlds are obviously different from our own but the trait that stands out the most is that it does not need to seem logical or possible to the reader and it is a result of the imaginary. The setting is crucial, and it can either be the real world or a whole “new and fleshed out world” (Speyer 2018). The “real world” of Fantasy is never the world as we know it, there is always some element out of order.

The process of creating the setting is usually referred to as world-building, it is long and complicated but some stories can have only surface-level world-building and direct all the attention to the characters and the events taking place. In Fantasy J.R.R. Tolkien is viewed as the expert and one of the greatest world-builders; the world created in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, “Middle-earth”, is one of the most complicated and detailed settings to this day (Bradshaw 2019). The creation of a society and the development of strong and complex characters are vital elements of a Fantasy story. Hierarchy, new languages, and laws inside a Fantasy story are what keeps the reader interested and entertained (Speyer 2018). Furthermore Swinfen (1984: 76) says that “the inhabitants and affairs of a secondary world will awaken an interest in the reader only if he can feel some underlying comprehension of and sympathy for them”; characters in some way have to appeal to who is reading the story and, even as imaginary characters, the reader needs to feel a connection to be immersed in the story. Moreover, a compelling plot is necessary for any story, and a conflict, be it inner conflict within the characters, small-scale or large-scale conflict between good and evil, should be explored within the story and captivate the reader. This is what creates and makes the events evolve and what drives the characters away from their own values and beliefs (Bradshaw 2019).

Throughout the years books and sagas have been translated into multiple languages and several have been classified as “bestsellers” all over the world. It should be noted that some of the most famous bestsellers are part of the Fantasy category, namely *The Fellowship of the Ring* (J.R.R. Tolkien 1954), the *Harry Potter* saga (J.K. Rowling 1997), *The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe* (C.S. Lewis 1950), *Through the Looking Glass* (Lewis Carroll 1871) and some recent works which have been circulating and spreading all over the internet like *The Atlas Six* (Olivie Blake 2020), *She Who Became the Sun* (Shelley Parker-Chan 2021) and the *Shadowhunters* saga (Cassandra Clare 2007), just to name a few. Lawrence Venuti in his book *The Scandals of Translation* (1998) explores the concept of “the bestseller”. Bestsellers cross the cultural borders between themselves since they must appeal to audiences of different backgrounds and social circumstances. They aim to reach the mass readership, in other words, they represent “a cultural form that hews to the popular aesthetic”. Venuti (1998: 126) argues that a bestseller prefers melodramatic realism, and its objective is to give the reader gratification through the

identification of the reader to the story. To do this “the narrative must be immediately comprehensible” even though this does not always happen, but aside from narrative, the decisive turning point is when the reader is able to identify with the values of the characters.

2.1.2 The emergence of Fantasy literature as a historical phenomenon

It can be argued that the Fantasy genre has been around for a long-time and it is one of the most enduring genres with higher demands and a rising approval and popularity from the masses. The emergence of the genre can be attributed as a response to Realism as a literary genre, but even so traces of Fantasy tropes can be noticed in earlier Greek, Roman and medieval compositions (Wolfe 2012: 7). Prickett (2005 :5) discusses how the term *Fantasy* has been used since the Middle Ages and it has its roots in the Greek word *phantasia*, which meant “a making visible”. Taking into consideration literary works like Homer’s *Odyssey* and Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* it is clear how these epic and heroic compositions blur the lines between the real and the imaginary. Without exception, the supernatural and mythical have always piqued interest in humankind. Barbarian tales and poems had little remained; *Beowulf*, which is one of the only epic poems we have from the heroic tradition of pre-Norman England and Snorri Sturluson’s *Prose Edda*, one of the Icelandic sagas that survived through time, have been translated and published to make them known to audiences in the 19th century. These stories are what helped the development of the English-language Fantasy as many notable writes, such as William Morris J.R.R. Tolkien and Alan Garner to name a few, were influenced in the making of their own compositions (Prickett 2005 :5). Ancient novels have only been recently recognized as a source of inspiration for modern Fantasy, despite being works with a strong component of Fantasy elements and melodramatic stories. Fairy stories and tradition, although they have changed and have been changing both in style and contents, are supposedly influenced by Celtic tradition; fae were seen as unpredictable, wild, and often evil creatures who kidnapped and tricked humans and this version of fairies can be seen in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Wolfe 2012: 10).

Near the end of the 17th century courtly fairytales became popular thanks to Charles Perrault and Madame d’Aulnoy, with themes that would see an increase of popularity by

virtue of the Brothers Grimm (Wolfe 2012: 10). In fae stories we can still see this vision of fairies but, in addition, fairies are presented with human-like characteristics and emotions. During the 19th century the concept of *Fantasy* changed completely, and new attributes were given to the genre. Prickett (2005: 6) says that “by 1825 something very extraordinary had happened. From being terms of derision, or descriptions of daydreaming, words like Fantasy and imagination suddenly began to take on new status as hurrah words”. The change in sensibility can also be credited to Romanticism; Fantasy and imagination were not target of derision any more or just described as simply “daydreaming”, they elicited interest in individuals and artists. Samuel Taylor Coleridge can be seen as the “barometer in this change of emotional climates” as he was what the imagine of the “Romantic poet” was supposed to be. In 1823 *German Popular Stories* by the Grimm Brothers was a success, after its publication in England for the first time; it was a time where fairy stories had become of value and “respectable” for everyone, from antiquarians to children (Prickett 2005: 6). Fantasy literature was often attributed to the children category, but it was not acknowledged until childhood was considered as a separate period of a human’s life. One of the most popular books that has a priority in this categorization is Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), a topic of animated discussions since it has been questioned as suitable for children, but its influence cannot be denied as it is a composition that still affects modern Fantasy fiction (Nikolajeva 2012: 50-51).

With reference to this literary genre, it is impossible not to mention J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* (1954); the entirety of the saga has had a great influence on thousands of writers and still does to this day. Many try to imitate him, and he was named “author of the century”; *LOTR* has been translated in all the major languages and even its film adaptation is one of the most profitable trilogies ever (James 2012: 62). C.S. Lewis’ Narnia books (1950-56) have had their popularity increase over the years but the impact they had was not quite the same as *LOTR*, but both authors need to be considered for the rise and explosion of the Fantasy genre. *LOTR* establishes the main elements of Fantasy and as Clute and Grant’s *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* indicates them, they are conventions of the genre; James (2012: 64) describes them as follows:

Middle-earth is subject to Thinning, a decline from its former state, partly due to the actions of Sauron, the *Dark Lord*. The sense of Wrongness in the world demands Healing, and that is the purpose of the Quest on which our heroes embark [...] In the course of this quest, the characters reach Recognition, an awareness of their own role in the story of the world, and finally achieve Eucatastrophe

This basic structure of Tolkien's books is found in following fantasies series, but the greatest achievement of the author was the normalization of a secondary world; all subsequent works of Fantasy fiction did not have to justify the existence of another world as if it were a dream or a tale of some sort, Tolkien was able to achieve sub-creation perfectly and bringing his vast knowledge of medieval literature into his stories.

In the last 30 years Fantasy has become one of the biggest businesses in literature and had an escalation with J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter Saga*, one of the most famous Fantasy compositions to date, read by both children and adults, with movie adaptations that reached over 7.7 billion people worldwide. Another mention goes to Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight saga*. The books had movie adaptations that took the world by storm in 2008. Undoubtedly, a vast area of popular fiction is taken up by Fantasy and it is important to state that not all works will be confined by the influence of past authors, but it is a genre that has many possibilities and many writing styles, with ideas yet to explore (James 2012: 68-77). It is a genre that gives the ability to go beyond the bounds of normal consciousness, and that's where its value lies (Hamilton 2013).

2.2 Translating Fantasy literature

As previously explored, Fantasy fiction had an explosion in popularity in the last 3 decades and many books of the genre reached the "bestseller" category. Venuti in *The Scandals of Translation* (1998) argues that publishers keep the volume of translations low solely because of the economic value that these considered "risky" translations have, as they could result in losses. Since the 1970s there has been a preference and drive from publishers to invest in the translation of bestsellers, but specifically in books that were already bestsellers or economically and commercially successful in their native countries (Venuti 1998: 124). The translation of Fantasy fiction is an arduous task, translators need to keep in mind who the target reader is and choose words carefully. Regarding Fantasy

fiction specifically, the most challenging task for a translator is having to consider that they are dealing with a world that comes from the imagination of the author: Tolkien invented entire languages for *LOTR* and most of the non-English names and places in the stories are in Quenya, or High-elven, Sindarin and Grey-elven (Hostetter 2022). Neologisms, invented languages, and the translation of proper names and made-up places are themselves a demanding task, without considering the translation of tone, register and the specific cultural background that may emerge in the stories.

2.2.1 Challenges in the translation of Fantasy fiction

Taylor (1998) states that “where the translation is out of the author’s mother tongue, in this case from English to Italian, the methodology adopted dispenses with the iconic representation of the ‘rolling’ approach” and as Taylor (1998: 158) explains, the ‘rolling’ method consists on filtering through the layers of meaning in the original text and adapting it to the target language; a first draft is made and the rest of the text ‘rolls’ further before adventuring in a deeper analysis. The value of a translation from English to Italian lies in the ability to recognize all the meanings and components of a SL text and create a TL text ‘in its image’, including all the relevant aspects to convey the closest translation of the ST (Taylor 1998: 160).

Furthermore, Taylor states that dealing with literary texts, two situations need to be considered: the communicative act between the author and his potential audience and the situation portrayed, since the closer a literary work gets to being the mirror of life that art strives to be, then the more important it will be for the translator to comprehend the background of said situation. Popular literature requires more attention, since the atmosphere created during the story is highly given by the context, which changes constantly and unexpectedly (Taylor 1998:162). The next sections will deal with the challenges that Fantasy fiction may present for translators, but it is important to assert that these obstacles are not exclusive solely to Fantasy fiction.

Cultural transfer

As previously stated, cultural filtering or cultural transfer is part of one of the main pragmatic strategies of translation and it can also be referred to as naturalization or

domestication. In this case culture-specific items are translated as functional equivalents in the TL text and the opposite strategy where these elements are kept the way they appear without any need for adaptation is foreignization (Chesterman 2016: 104). Foreignization is often preferred as it manages to reproduce and advocate for cultural differences. Fantasy fiction can have various effects on the reader as some Fantasy works have a complete foreignizing outcome on the reader's mind, both the source language reader and the target language reader, since the elements of fiction can and most times are completely imaginary. The foreignizing effect can be partial, like the *Harry Potter series*, because the story is set in a specific time and place, puns and cultural specific items can result foreign to the TL text readers, but the whole wizardly world has a foreignizing effect on both the SL and TL text readers.

Normally “the cultural and historical specificity of the source is substituted by the cultural and historical specificity of the target culture” (Levý 2011: 84) but what happens in literary Fantasy work such as In J.R.R. Tolkien's *LOTR* is that we have a complete foreignization effect on both the source and target reader's minds. The historical and cultural period may be inspired by real historical and cultural situations, but the entirety of the secondary world created by the author is foreign to all readers. Swifen (2020: 76) explains that “in addition to its own essential inner consistency, the secondary world, like all Fantasy, requires a firm basis in primary world reality”, implying that secondary worlds are influenced and take inspiration from the real world. However readers need to comprehend the fictional world and its laws so there can be a form of interest awakened in them, and even so, Fantasy worlds are the furthest removed from everyday real life and experiences. What is important is that the laws and elements of the secondary world are consistent and are able to give the reader a sense of belief of what they're experiencing while reading.

Neologism and names

Recreating the original author's new and imaginary world is probably one of the biggest obstacles for a translator; reproducing the intricate and detailed work of fiction without losing anything for the TL reader. A vast part of the world being narrated is foreign to both the SL reader and TL reader, as the terminology used can be new and bizarre.

Fictional names and neologisms are a recurring matter in Fantasy fiction. Neologisms can be categorized as a rare class of words; they are new words coined by original authors themselves to express characters or places of fiction. Kane (2000: 327) states that some of these words can be new, being a combination of phonemes and their coinage is onomatopoeic, to imitate sounds; they can be novel compound words, also called nonce compounds, as they are different from standard compounds. Furthermore, the author explains that “nonce compounds are usually hyphenated” meaning that they consist of several words attached together as one single word. Mattiello (2017: 25) makes a distinction between neologisms and nonce words, also referred to as occasionalisms: stable neologisms enrich the language while nonce words are stylistic devices, they’re seen as provisional, as often happens in Fantasy fiction, since words created don’t enrich the English language, but they are used primarily for the story narrated. As far as names are concerned, translators always face a challenge of whether change the names mentioned in the story or keep them as they are in the original work to ‘preserve the flavor’ of the original work. They then try to maintain the original English syntax to convey the same message rather than changing the word and giving it a completely different meaning from the original (Wechsler 1998: 125-126).

Languages of the fantastic

One challenge that may occur for a translator are constructed languages in Fantasy fiction. According to the *Collins Dictionary* a constructed language is “a language whose rules and vocabulary have been artificially invented”; Ludwik Lejzer Zamenhof (1859-1917) was a Polish physician who created and developed the most important international artificial language: Esperanto. Tolkien himself declared in his essay *A Secret Vice* (2006) of being a believer of artificial languages, but he does differentiate between auxiliary languages, built for communication, and artistic languages, also known as artlangs, built only for aesthetic pleasure. The languages of Middle-Earth reflect on this ideology, but Tolkien’s work went as far as creating the history of the languages used in his literary works, a challenge not only for himself but to translators.

Language in Fantasy also involves styles and how the English language is used. Gilman (2012: 134-137) says that fairy tales and philology have always been connected, and that

Fantasy “is a literature of immanence, of the indwelling or upwelling of an otherness: of time, of etymology” and that language is used to induce absurdity, irony, ecstasy in the readers, who have to immerse themselves in the alien world they are reading and the challenge for a translator lies not only in the translation of this stylistic language but also in conveying the same feeling of otherness and the uncanny.

Tone and register

When it comes to translating any text, it is something that implies more than simply translating word by word the ST into the TT. It is crucial to consider both tone and register, apart from the quality and accuracy of the translation. They might differ when translating, as something that may work in the ST language may not work in the TT language (Brown: 2021). Robinson (1997: 174) explains that a text is not something static and cannot be perceived objectively; it changes, depending on the situation and social action that is being partaken, and it conveys this dynamic through tone. Landers (2001: 67) asserts that the perception of tone is one of the most convenient and helpful abilities a translator can have, which helps avoiding the original author’s intent of the ST. It is extremely useful when dealing with puns, allusions and even slang. Landers defines tone as the “overall feeling conveyed by an utterance, a passage, or an entire work, including both conscious and unconscious resonance.” For example, humor, irony and generally any emotion and sentiment that surfaces from the text, which can change and shift even mid-paragraph. Kane (2000: 80-85) states that tone has three aspects: tone toward subject, which can imply a variety of attitudes, both objective and subjective; tone toward reader, where writers can express themselves in assertive or dogmatic ways toward their readers or have a rather intimate tone as if talking to a friend; and tone toward self, toward himself or herself the writer can use different tones and the exposition can be either impersonal or transparent.

As regards register, the meaning of the term varies from author to author. For English written text, it is generally made reference to Halliday’s variables of “field”, “mode”, and “tenor”. Field is the subject matter; mode refers to either written or spoken texts and tenor to the relations between participants; this allows to understand what level of both formality and familiarity are present in the text (Hewson 2011: 80). Theoretically, there

are as many registers as different activities, depending on the context and what a person is doing with language in that given context (Taylor 1998: 147). Landers (2001: 59) presents a variety of register categories, like technical and non-technical, urban and rural, formal and informal and substantially more; he states that a word may fall into more than one category.

This chapter aimed to present Fantasy literature and all the difficulties that may appear in the translation process of this genre. As presented, the Fantasy genre is a very intricate literary work with elements that are alien to reality. Worlds, languages, and character traits are more often than not implausible. The vast categorization of Fantasy literature makes it one of the most diverse genres in literature, and the difficulty for translators lies in trying to carry over all the fantastic elements back into the target language, trying not to lose the meaning of the original work in the process. Furthermore, in this analysis it is explained how the writing style and language used in Fantasy compositions can create a sense of “otherness” in the reader, along with the atmosphere created with all the components of the story, such as the world, the characters, and the social setting and this has to transfer in the translation to create that same sense of mystery and of the uncanny in the TL reader.

CHAPTER 3:

ANALYSIS AND EXAMPLES

The aim of this chapter is to introduce *The Stormlight Archive* by Brandon Sanderson and provide a brief analysis, taking into account what has been discussed in the previous chapters. The first part will give a presentation of Brandon Sanderson and how he became a bestselling author; his ideas and concepts will be explained and the series of novels *The Stormlight Archive* be presented. I will go on to analyse the Italian translation of *The Stormlight Archive* by Sanderson, published by the Fanucci publishing house. Nouns, character's names, place names, and neologisms will then be analyzed and placed side by side with the Italian version. The translation of the title of the book will also be investigated.

3.1 Introduction to the novel: *The Stormlight Archive*

All the information present in these following sections is taken from Brandon Sanderson's official website page¹ and from his wiki website page known as the Coppermind², which covers his works such as *Elantris*, *Mistborn* and *The Stormlight Archive*. Brandon Sanderson was born in December 1975 in Lincoln, Nebraska. During his teenage years, he became interested in epic fantasy and slowly discovered writers such as like Orson Scott Card, Melanie Rawn, David Eddings, Anne McCaffrey, and Robert Jordan.

Sanderson's majored at Brigham Young University and worked as a volunteer for BYU's science fiction and fantasy publication, The Leading Edge and worked as Editor in Chief. In May 2005, *Elantris* was published, which is still one of his most famous works, alongside the first book of the *Mistborn trilogy*, followed by the other two works known as *The Alloy of Law* and *Warbreaker*. Subsequently, Sanderson published *The Way of Kings*, the first book of an on-going ten-volume series called *The Stormlight Archive*.

¹ brandonsanderson.com

² <https://coppermind.net/wiki/Coppermind:Welcome>

Brandon is the only author to have been a finalist for the David Gemmell Legend Award eight times in seven years, winning it in 2011 for *The Way of the Kings*. He has also won the Romantic Times Reviewers' Choice Award for Best Epic Fantasy award twice and won the 2013 Hugo Award for his novel *The Emperor's Soul*. Lastly, he has been on New York Times bestsellers' list 15 times.

All of Brandon Sanderson books are set in a fictional world that he created, called *The Cosmere*. The author himself says that many of his novels, such as *Elantris*, *Mistborn*, *Warbreaker*, *The Stormlight Archive*, *White Sand*, and *Arcanum Unbounded* are all part of the Cosmere and he tries, throughout all his books, to make distinctions for each universe. All his novels develop and unfold both inside and outside the Cosmere (Brandon Sanderson 2020). Sanderson states that what connects all of his Cosmere books is a single creation myth, one same cosmology; that is what gives the novels and his stories inside the books the same theorem of magic. The basis of the magic system is the same one for all his books, what changes are little details. The magic inside the Cosmere is so vast and intricate that it cannot be summed up in one sentence but, as Sanderson (2020) says, “you can use this kind of hypertheorem to show how Cosmere's magic fits together”. All worlds in the Cosmere are connected, there are some characters from one series that may make an appearance in other series, yet it is not crucial read all series to enjoy his books and readers will not miss any details or important events if they do not notice or simply do not know about these different characters, but these “Worldhoppers” may make the experience even more enjoyable. In the following sections the main work analyzed will be his *The Stormlight Archive series*, set in the Cosmere as well, and attention will be given to the first book *The Way of Kings* (2010).

Brandon Sanderson's *The Stormlight Archive* is an ongoing fantasy series that can be classified as epic fantasy, or high fantasy. The first book was published in 2010 and the fourth and last published dates to 2020. What characterizes these books is that they are all set on the planet Roshar, the main continent and universe of the books. The series, as stated earlier on, is part of the Cosmere sequence. In the Cosmere there are sixteen Shards of Adonalsium, which are pieces of the power of Creation itself and three of these shards are located in the Rosharan System: Odium, Cultivation and Honor, whoever takes possession of these shards along with its powers, becomes its vessel. *The Stormlight*

Archive centers around the efforts of Odium to escape whichever force binds him to the Rosharan system.

What is distinctive about this series is that each novel has a similar internal structure, all split into five parts. The author's objective is to organize each book as if it was a trilogy in itself. Each part is separated by interludes with different points of view and set in different locations but what is interesting is that each book focuses on a different order of the Knights of Radiant, an organization of people from Roshar called Surgebinding, who can control and manipulate ten different forces known as Surges. In the first novel *The Way of Kings*, Brandon Sanderson presents three main characters: Kaladin, Dalinar and Shallan, and many minor characters explored through the interludes, but much importance and focus is given to Kaladin, the main character.

3.2 The Italian translation of *The Stormlight Archive*

The Italian translations of the series have been in the hands of Gabriele Giorgi since the first novelò. Initially, Brandon Sanderson's novels were published in Italy through the publishing house Fanucci. However, in 2018 Fanucci announced the termination of their relation with the author. In the same year, Mondadori bought the copyright of the third book, keeping Gabriele Giorgi as translator. At the moment, being a little-known series in Italy, the saga of *The Stormlight Archive* has no other translations to refer to; for this reason, the version of Giorgi will be the only one examined.

3.2.1 The translation of characters' names

In the Italian translation undertaken by Gabriele Giorgi in 2019, it can be noticed how the names of characters and places are left generally unchanged in the Target Text (TT). Neither adaptation nor domestication are adopted for these words, since most of them come from the author's imagination and the translator decided to transfer the words as they are without any change into the TT. In the following sections I will specify which translation techniques Giorgi made use of and the reason why those strategies may have been used instead of others. Nevertheless, it is important to state that the majority of invented names and places mentioned in the story are inspired by different cultures, and they are not names and places that would normally be found in the English etymology.

The Universe created by the author is extremely vast, regions have their own language, culture, and even linguistic rules that the author applies when thinking of characters' names. He affirms that for most of the names chosen, various linguistic quirks were used, such as repeating consonant sounds or simply he worked around linguistic paradigms of the setting that he was writing about. Some proper names examples that can be found in the books will be looked at in the following paragraphs.

ST	TT
Kaladin	Kaladin

Kaladin is one of the main three characters of the story, and major focus is placed on him. The name is a combination of “Kalak”, which in the story is described as one of the ten Heralds, and the suffix “-din” which comes from the Alethi language, one of the populations of Roshar. In this case the name in the Italian translation was kept the same as in the original text. Sometimes the names of characters are domesticated, making them look familiar to the target readers' cultural background, so as to permit an easy identification with the character. In this case, the translator used the opposite strategy, keeping the name as it appears in the original text as it has a clear and important meaning, even if in the first book is still hidden, so as not to alter the story and give the character's name a meaning that could potentially affect the idea Sanderson created about this character in later chapters and books.

With the majority of proper names of characters, we can see the same phenomenon happening, for example for one of the other protagonists of noble origins, *Shallan*, Sanderson made the decision to take inspiration from a holy word. He stated that “nobility will often change one letter to create a child's name to evoke the holy term, but not be blasphemous” (Brandon Sanderson 2018), since *Shalash* in TSA is one of the ten Heralds but is also known as a Syrian goddess in our reality. This happens with numerous other names such as *Dalinar*, *Adolin*, *Szeth*, *Rysn* and also names of Roshar's native populations such as *Alethi*, *Askarkii*, *Shin*, and *Aimians*. This is also the case for the name of places such as *Roshar* and *Urithiru*, which was a sacred city for the Radiant Knights, now abandoned and considered a myth; the name of the place was planned using linguistic paradigms such as the palindrome which is “a word, verse, or sentence [...] that reads the

same backward or forward” according to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, and in Roshar, palindromes are considered holy by the Alethi and Veden tongues, so translating it and adapting it into the TT language would have resulted in a loss of meaning and potentially damage to the story created by the author.

The second case of proper names a reader can encounter in the books are all the Shards’ names. As stated before, the *Shards of Adonalsium* are pieces of power of Creation itself and they are sixteen in total.

ST	TT
Odium	Odio
Endowment	Concessione

These two names are proper names of the Shards, and they were translated and adapted differently in the Italian translation, it can be said that the method of domestication was used to make it easier for the TL reader to read and understand the intrinsic meaning given to these characters’ names. As for the first name *Odium*, the character in the story is described as “most dangerous of all the sixteen”. He is responsible for the death of three other Shards and is the personification of hatred. In the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* the word is explained as “the state or fact of being subjected to hatred and contempt as a result of a despicable act or blameworthy circumstance” and its etymology comes from Latin. The Italian word *Odio* in the *Treccani Dictionary* is also described as “sentimento di forte e persistente avversione, per cui si desidera il male o la rovina altrui” which in English would translate as “feeling of strong and persistent aversion, whereby one desires the evil or ruin of others”. In this case the Italian translation does not change the meaning of the word but only adapts the name into the TL. The translator chose to use the Italian word “odio” instead of the Latin noun “odium” causing a level shift of the word, its morphological structure is different in Italian as in Latin the morphological unit of “-um” changes in the Italian translation, having only the suffix “-o”. “Odio” is also the literal translation of the Latin noun to which the Shard is referred to in the ST, so it is seen as the direct textual equivalent of the ST word. Giorgi’s choice was to adapt the character’s name and use the Italian noun using the equivalent that would have the same value as the one in the ST, as it would not change the final meaning behind the character’s name, since

both words express the same feeling and introduce the same ideological concept of “hatred”.

In the case for *Endowment*, its etymology comes from the Latin word *dotare* and in English it derives from the verb “endow” which means to “to furnish with an income; to furnish with a dower; to provide with something freely or naturally” (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*). It is made clear that Endowment is the Shard that usually donates or gives something to individuals, it provides someone with something, but in Italian is translated as *Concessione* which is slightly different from the English meaning. *Concessione* comes from the Italian verb *Concedere* which usually means to grant or to allow something, instead of donating and giving. Hence, the power dynamic is seen as different, it is not something that is given willingly but more as something given after an accord. Gabriele Giorgi chose the Italian noun “concessione” which is not the direct and literal translation of the English word “endowment” but he applied the translation strategy of synonymy, which falls into the category of semantic changes causing a change of lexical level of the word. As said, the direct translation would be “dotare” or “donare” but the translator used the closest synonym to the ST noun, which did not change the meaning of the name completely. Lexically speaking, he transformed the word giving it a slightly different connotation and causing a phonological, morphological and lexical level shift of the word, which would provoke in the TT readers a different conceptualization of the character and changing the power dynamic of what the character’s role might be in the story and how his name is perceived by other characters.

One case where there was a very drastic change in the translation of a name, precisely the name of an object, is with the word *Seld* which is a series of books, precisely 14 books, that exist in Roshar and they belong to a character named Jasnah Kholin; here are the English version and the translated Italian version:

ST	TT
Seld	Appunti di Jasnah Kholin

Trends of

seld

View usage for:



The word *seld* usually refers to something “rare” or “obsolete” (Collins Dictionary) but it is not a word used as commonly as in the past as the graphic above shows, but Sanderson used it to describe this collection of books which are considered rare in Roshar, as there is very little information about them. In Italian they were translated as *Appunti di Jasnah Kholin*, which in English translates as “Jasnah’s notes” or “The notes of Jasnah”. This gives more information about the books, but the information given could mislead the TL readers. The original author used a figure of speech known as the synecdoche, as one word “seld” refers to the whole rare collection of rosharian books. During the story it is explained that this collection are primarily epigraphs, but its authorship is unknown, Jasnah Kholin simply consults these books during the research that she pursues during the story, she isn’t the actual author of the collection, but the translated Italian text could lead into thinking that the authorship belongs to her when in reality the author remains a mystery for everyone. The Italian translator did not choose to keep the original name as the word was completely changed from English into Italian and even the meaning behind the word shifted the meaning.

Analyzing the Italian translation, from the point of view of syntactic strategies, it can be said that there was a complete unit shift during the process, as the morphological, phonological and lexical structure of the word were completely changed, from one word in the ST it became a 4-word noun phrase. As for semantic changes, there is an abstraction change of the noun: “seld” has an abstract conceptual meaning which leads readers to

think of the collection of books, but in Italian “appunti” refers to “notes” which are a concrete object of reality. Furthermore, pragmatic changes are the most visible changes for this example. The translator made explicit changes, information changes and what can be perceived as a domestication of the noun. Giorgi gives a translation that would benefit Italian readers, damaging the original meaning of the word as intended in the ST and this is where the domesticating method lacks accuracy. There is an explicit change, connected to information change, applied to the Italian translation. Giorgi made it explicit that the word “seld” stands for written texts with the word “appunti”, but he changed the intrinsic information and meaning of the word, as it does not refer to notes, but to a collection of books. In the TT it seems as if the character Jasnah was the author of these books through the Italian preposition “di”, which in English translates as “of”. This leads to a relevant change of information in the story, as it is made known that the author is anonymous in the ST.

3.2.2 The translation of neologisms

Sanderson’s books have a very detailed worldbuilding and for every realm and region presented in the story there are multiple nouns which, as the proper names of characters, cannot be translated or their meaning would fade, along with the original author’s initial intentions. Neologisms are a very recurring and common aspect of Fantasy fiction. Newmark (1988: 140) defines neologisms as “newly lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense” and he states that these units are professional translators’ biggest problem. The main issue with these words is that they cannot be found neither in ordinary dictionaries and newest specialized ones, and because of this it is crucial to understand the meaning of the neologism to translate it properly (Ibraheem 2020: 1).

Newmark (1988: 140) classifies neologisms, dividing them by new words or already existing words that took a new meaning. New words are classified as new coinages, derived words, abbreviations, collocations, eponyms, phrasal words, transferred words, acronyms and blending words. Already existing words are divided in words and collocations. Furthermore, Newmark (1988:81-83, 150) lists some procedures that can be used when dealing with the translation of neologisms. These are:

- Creation of a target language neologism
- Naturalization
- Recognized target language translation
- Transference
- Internationalism
- Use of a target language derived word
- Functional term
- Literal translation
- Through-translation

In the novel Sanderson makes great use of derived words, eponyms, and toponyms. A vast number of neologisms derive from ancient Greek and Latin by analogy which can be naturalized in the TL. Translators need to distinguish between serious derived neologisms from the “snappy ingenious derived neologisms” (Newmark 1988: 144) and consider what is their function before deciding whether to translate them in the TT or simply re-create them and report them as they appear.

Eponyms refer to any word that derives from a proper name, including toponyms, which derive from place names. When these words derive from people’s names, they tend to be easy to translate, but if they refer to an object, idea or place they are viewed as a new word and the translator should try to transliterate the word and not reproduce it in the TL (Newmark 1988: 146). However, the following analysis of the words present in the novel will show how coined words by Sanderson are simply reported and adopted in the Italian TT.

3.2.2.1 The translation of place names and conceptual nouns

Places names

ST	TT
Adonalsium	Adonalsium
Ahariatiam	Ahariatiam

It can be seen how these neologisms have been kept in the Italian version as they appear in the original text. All of them come from the author’s imagination but in this case it would be possible to domesticate them in the TT. Sanderson once stated that even if he invents all these nouns, he still bases them on “earth culture”, meaning that all these names are influenced by existing cultures that we can refer to while reading the story. For the nouns *Adonalsium* and *Aharietiam*, which respectively refer to a mysterious force and a land known as The Last Desolation, he took inspiration from Hebrew saying that “Adonalsium is derived from a Hebrew name for God, Adonai and Aharietiam was derived from the Hebrew/Jewish term for ‘the end of days’ *acharit hayamim* or אחרית הימים” (Brandon Sanderson 2018). There is a cultural influence, but the words used in the books do not exist in the English language which poses a challenge in their translation. Giorgi’s choice was to adopt the nouns as we see them in the ST, applying a literal translation from ST to TT not changing either structure, form, or style of the nouns. It can also be referred to as a transference of the SL word into the TL text without any change, which is the case for most place names that appear in the book. Giorgi could have naturalized and domesticated the nouns or transliterated the names as they do come from a concrete inspiration that Sanderson had but chose to report them in the TT without any semantic, pragmatic, and cultural changes.

Conceptual nouns

ST	TT
Spren	Spren
Fabrial	Fabrial
Nahel	Nahel

As well as place names, nouns that refer back to concepts belonging the Rosharian world are treated as neologisms in the Italian translation of the text. The word *spren* is a concept that designates creatures of nature, they take different shapes and forms and appear as concepts or cognitive ideas that may take personification over time. In a SFBook interview, Sanderson (2014) stated that “spren are partially based out of Shinto mythology, the idea that everything has a soul and a spirit to it”; he took inspiration from mythology to create the word that would appear as “spren”, but its etymology does not

exist in English vocabularies. The word appears repeatedly in the story attached to other words to form nonce compounds, but it is never translated in the Italian version of the book. Other words that manifest in the same way are *fabrial* and *nahel*. Both these words refer to concepts which were completely invented by the original author. Analogous to the first word *spreen*, in these cases the translator's decision was to report the word as it appeared in the original text to avoid changing the inherent meaning that the world already holds in English applying methods that belong to the translation of neologisms and syntactic strategies. Giorgi transferred the word in the TT, since even through an analysis of the words, it would be impossible to find an Italian equivalent of these concepts unless the translator applied the creation of a TL neologism.

3.2.2.2 The translation of nonce compounds

Compound words “are larger words with their own meaning that are made up of two or more smaller words” (Palmer 2022), which means that the word that results from combining two words will have its own meaning. Compounds are frequently used in the book and the author uses them to refer to animals or people endowed with different abilities and specific traits. To specify, the author makes use of nonce compounds, which were previously explained as different from standard compounds and a form of neologisms. The list below presents some examples of nonce compounds and how they were translated:

ST	TT
Truthless	Senzavero
Alespreen	Ebbrospreen
Axehound	Ascigugio
Stormblessed	Folgoeletto
Voidbringers	Nichiliferi

All compounds in both the original text and translated text lead to the same meaning but there are subtle differences in the choice of names used in the translated version.

For the first compound *truthless*, normally the word “truth”, which is an English noun, would be translated as the Italian noun “verità”, but in the translated version there is a change in word class where instead of “verità” there is the adjective “vero”; the same phenomenon happens with the word “less” translated as “senza” although the Italian translation would correspond to “meno”. Giorgi used different strategies to domesticate the words in Italian; firstly, he used a transposition change, as the word-class of the words shifted, “truth” as an English noun became “vero” which corresponds to an Italian adjective. The adjective “-less” that serves as a suffix that denotes a loss of quantity in English, was translated as the Italian preposition “senza”. Transpositions changes alter the grammatical structure of the word, falling into the category of syntactic strategies, which cause a unit shift of the words of the ST. The Italian translation made use of synonyms, which influence the structure of the lexicon while keeping a semantic relation between the ST words and the TT ones. Hence, the morphological and phonological aspects of the words were changed, while the meaning conveyed stayed the same.

Alespren is a compound formed of “ale” and “spren”. “Spren” does not have an Italian translation, but it is adopted as it appears. The noun “ale”, which would normally correspond to a type of brewed beer, is translated as “ebbro” and Italian adjective that in English would translate into “intoxicated”. The word “ale” was naturalized in “ebbro” in the Italian translation to accommodate the TL readers’ cultural situation, as many would not understand the meaning of the English noun. The translator used cultural filtering, using a partial equivalent that would convey the same concept in the TL, applying an interpersonal change as well to alter the involvement that TL readers would have with the text. Both semantic and syntactic changes are visible to the word “ale”, since Giorgi used synonymy change to translate the word as closest as he deemed correct and altered the word-class or the noun, shifting it into an adjective and undoubtedly changing its syntactic structure. The translator made use of a through-translation to transfer the meanings and concepts between the two languages as to facilitate the translation procedure and due to the differences between the SL and the TL.

The word *Axehound* refers to a fantastical creature in Roshar with dog-like traits. The English noun “axe” was changed into the Italian plural noun “asci”, when its singular form would be “ascia”. The English noun “hound” that would normally translate into the Italian

noun “segugio”, was cut and only the final part of the word, “gugio”, was kept for the compound. In this nonce compound the translator made not only syntactic changes but also visible ones. The translation of the nouns from ST to TT were translated using literal translation, meaning there was a direct transference of the words, but for “axe”, which is singular in English, in the Italian translation it appears as “asci”, resulting in a morphological change of the word, without changing its meaning on a semantic level. The English word “hound” appears in the Italian translation as “gugio”. The Italian translation of the word presents a grammatical change of the word on structure level. The word is cut and only two quarters of the noun is used, inevitably changing the original Italian unit resulting in a visibility change as well.

Stormblessed is the adjective used to describe and address Kaladin, the compound is formed by the noun “storm” which in Italian would translate into “tempesta” and “blessed” that directly translates into “benedetto” or “beato”, but in the Italian version they respectively appear as “folgo”, that refers to the word “folgore” which is an electric discharge, and “eletto” that changes the meaning of the original word as it means “elected”. The English version depicts Kaladin as someone who was blessed by the storm, but the Italian translation makes it look like he was chosen or picked out from a crowd. The strategy used to translate the English noun “storm” into the Italian noun “folgo” falls into the classification of syntactic and semantic strategies, as the morphological structure of the word is changed, especially in the Italian form, since the entire word “folgore” appears only partially and it is not the literal translation of the English noun. Hence, Giorgi chose to use synonymy in both cases, using a close synonym between “storm” and “folgo”. For the English adjective “blessed” he used a distant synonym that could potentially change the way TL readers interpret the word, differently from its original meaning in the ST. This change can be perceived as an interpersonal change by the translator. An example of hyponymy change can be seen in the translation process of the English noun “storm” as well, as it refers to a generic atmospheric term (hypernym), while the Italian translation “folgo” refer to a specific instance of the generic term (hyponym).

For last the word *Voidbringers* which are characters in the novel depicted as having a closer connection to *Oidium*, the Shard of hatred. The English noun “void” means and translates into the Italian noun “vuoto” and the noun “bringers” would normally mean

“portatore/portatrice” in its Italian equivalent. However, in the Italian version there is a complete visible pragmatic change. Giorgi applies various strategies such as interpersonal change, explicit change, visibility change as well as syntactic changes. The word “nichiliferi”, which does not exist in the Italian dictionary, derives from the philosophical ideology of nihilism or “nichilismo” in Italian. Nichilismo is “a belief that all political and religious organizations are bad, or a system of thought that says that there are no principles or beliefs that have any meaning or can be true” and it usually developed into individualism, anarchism, and immorality in those who followed this ideology (Cambridge Dictionary). Voidbringers in TSA are creatures whose only purpose is to force humankind to damnation and desolation, they do not wish for a peaceful life, but strive for catastrophes, which is one of the reasons why the translator decided to use this word in Italian instead of simply using “Vuotoportatore” in its place. Giorgi made syntactic changes on a morphological level and structure level of the word, since in English it appears as a compound, whereas in Italian it is translated as a noun. The visibility change shows in the way that the Italian translation of the word diverts completely from the one in the ST and the interpersonal change made by Giorgi leads to a different level of involvement and emotiveness for the TL readers as the word in Italian conveys the concept of “Voidbringers” with much more emphasis than what “Vuotoportatori” would convey. Giorgi created a target language neologism that would transport the same meaning as the English neologism, implementing and adding information to the noun.

3.3 TSA: an example of a misleading title translation

As regards to the title of the original and the translated version there are some differences that may go unnoticed unless one analyzes the words used in the Italian translation. The English original version’s title is *The Stormlight Archive: The Way of Kings* while the Italian version was translated as *Le Cronache della Folgo luce: La Via dei Re*. Sanderson named all the existing books of the saga each after an in-world literature and books that belongs to the Cosmere; the author’s main intent was to give a sort of archive of all the books present inside the story but the word The Archive of the books is also intended as a pun “on archived collection of books” (Sanderson 2017).

Sanderson's books lean more towards a science-fictional approach, this is why they were named TSA and "archive" meaning a collection of stories, or precisely "a place in which public records or historical materials (such as documents) are preserved; a repository or collection especially of information" (Merriam Webster Dictionary), so the saga is perceived as a place where all information about the fictional world and characters are stored since it is what an archive is usually meant for. In the Italian translation instead of "archive", the word that appears is "cronache". The word "cronache" means that the narrations of facts is done in chronological order, but that doesn't happen in Sanderson's books, since time jumps are very common between every prelude and starting chapters. "Archive" has a more scientific meaning while "cronache" tends to be more on the historical side, and while one does not have a specific order in which it has to be organized (archive), the other (cronache) needs to be in chronological order. An archive is seen more as the place where all documents are stored, it can be physical or, in the fantasy world, abstract, while chronicle can be one single document with all the information one needs.

The difference in meaning is very subtle but it is there, nonetheless. Giorgi's choice was made through syntactic approaches, as he changes the level structure of the English noun, but the very apparent change is primarily on a semantic level. The semantic change applied to the Italian translation by Giorgi was meant to find a synonymy between SL and TL, instead of providing a literal translation of the word. The translator deemed "cronache" as a better translation for "archive" as the book does narrate the story of the characters, but it would be perceived mistakenly by the TL readers as a chronological narrative and mere exposition of facts with no attempt to their interpretation, which is not what Sanderson executed in the ST and what intended for his book. Giorgi applied an information change, as the information added with the noun "cronache" is relevant in the way that it changes the perspective that the title will give to readers and a coherence change as the interpretation of the translator of the ST might transfer in an explicitness that might result redundant.

Stormlight is translated into *Folgo luce*, and while there is no issue in the translation of "light", since "luce" is the direct Italian translation, "storm" and "folgo" have different meanings. They are both nouns but, as previously stated, "storm" is a disturbance of the atmosphere, that usually involves thunder, rain, wind and lightning. In Italian it would be

translated either as “tempesta” or “temporale”, but in the Italian title it was translated as “folgo”, short for “folgore” which implies only the atmospheric phenomenon of lightning. Hence, only one of the elements that would be present during a storm, representing the hyponym of said noun. There is no shift in word class, but the translation done by Giorgi was not a literal translation as it implies an interpersonal change done by the translator, and a semantic strategy of synonymy between the nouns used. The translator created an Italian neologism to transfer the ST compound into an Italian equivalent that he deemed correct. There is no relevant change in meaning, but it can lead to different misinterpretations of the title, which is one of the most important elements of a novel.

This chapter aimed to give a brief presentation of the book in question and analyze the differences that one could notice when comparing the original English version by Sanderson and the Italian translation made by Giorgi. As regards nouns, the translation was clearly carried out considering the fact that some words did not need to be adapted in the TL, as they would lose their original intention and meaning, especially when dealing with neologisms used by Sanderson. Compounds were more often than not translated, since the words forming them had English etymology and it was easier and more efficient to domesticate them for the Italian readers, instead of simply adopting the word or using literal translation.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this dissertation was to explore and give a picture of the challenges that translators may find during the translation of fantasy fiction. Translation is a replacement of the SL textual elements with the TL textual elements, and it requires one to convey the message of the original text. This analysis was made with reference to different translation strategies, which correspond to various viewpoints of experts in the field. The foreignizing approach is preferred by many since the elements from the original text and background culture are kept in the translation; on the other hand, the domesticating method tends to adapt the original text to the TL readers' cultural situation, making it more understandable but overshadowing cultural differences.

Brandon Sanderson's novels and their translation carried out by Gabriele Giorgi were what allowed me to observe both these approaches and many other strategies applied to translation. Instances were found where the translation was faithful to the original text, especially when dealing with neologisms created by the original author, but often the translations were adapted resulting in textual changes and the original meaning of the word diverting slightly from SL to TL. The challenges identified are issues with regard to the translation of names, neologisms, compounds, and the appropriate translation of the novel's title. Fantasy works are bound to have a large number of invented names, places and concepts and translating these elements requires translators to be extremely creative and to have a high degree of skills, in order to be efficient and effective. It is up to the translator to take liberties in the translation of the ST while creating the TT, with respect and regard to the original author's initial will and intentions, creating a relationship between the ST author and the TT translator, which can be productive but also restricting; the analysis shown in the dissertation examined how these phenomena can appear in the same work.

The translation of *The Stormlight Archive* undertaken by G. Giorgi is very close to the source text, especially when translating character's names and place names, which would have lost their initial meaning if adapted to Italian. On the contrary the translator took liberties and made the choices he deemed a better fit with the translation of compound names and the translation of the work's title, changing the meaning and the effect the TT has on the reader; different strategies and methods were taken into

consideration and applied on different occasions and we can see from the examples where Giorgi preferred to adopt a domesticating approach to adapt the ST to Italian audiences.

In conclusion translation is a field that poses multiple challenges and requires high levels of attention and inventiveness from translators. Not only is translating a difficult task but translating fantasy fiction requires particular attention and it is a genre that has a great deal to give to scholars and the readers as it exerts abiding interest in all types of audiences.

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RIASSUNTO

Lo scopo di questa tesi è quello di fornire una descrizione generale del concetto di traduzione testuale, ed esaminare come le sue diverse strategie e i suoi metodi possano essere applicati concretamente, con particolare riferimento a come queste tecniche vengono utilizzate quando si affronta la traduzione di narrativa fantasy. Questo studio è stato attuato attraverso un criterio teorico e successivamente mediante un approccio pratico, andando ad analizzare l'opera di narrativa fantasy di Brandon Sanderson *Le Cronache della Folgoluce: La via dei Re*.

La tesi è articolata in tre capitoli. Nel primo, vengono fornite diverse ideologie e punti di vista sul concetto di traduzione testuale, il quale significato è cambiato ininterrottamente durante gli anni. Le diverse prospettive mostrano come si tratti di un concetto che non si può definire con precisione e all'interno del quale saranno presenti divari e dibattiti costanti. Una delle idee che emerge maggiormente risiede nel fatto che la traduzione è il trasferimento di materiale testuale da una lingua di partenza, definita source language (SL), a una lingua di destinazione, definita target language (TL). Molteplici dibattiti si verificano in merito alla questione se la decisione spetti o meno all'interpretazione del traduttore; generalmente, si concorda che un testo tradotto debba essere non solo leggibile, ma anche comprensibile dal lettore, e che trasmetta lo stesso significato del testo originale. È fondamentale menzionare anche il concetto di fluidità e l'illusione della trasparenza, che senza i quali, secondo Venuti (1995) un testo non può essere considerato tradotto in maniera adeguata. Tuttavia, non è possibile concordare su una definizione globale e accettata universalmente sull'argomento.

Una questione che deve essere affrontata e che è una delle principali cause di controversie nella traduzione è la natura dell'equivalenza, altro argomento per il quale si suddividono molte linee di pensiero. L'equivalenza ha uno stretto rapporto con la traduzione; può essere vista come lo scopo principale di un traduttore, essendo che mira a raggiungere un livello di similarità elevato fra testo di partenza e testo di destinazione. Quando parliamo di equivalenza, il significato della parola racchiude in sé una serie di classificazioni del tema della traduzione che variano in base a come l'equivalenza venga utilizzata: traduzione completa vs. traduzione parziale, traduzione totale vs. traduzione ristretta e traduzioni effettuate anche in base a gerarchie grammaticali e fonologiche. L'importante

è che gli elementi tradotti nella lingua di destinazione abbiano una corrispondenza formale, anche a livello approssimativo di equivalenza. In queste situazioni è importante la figura del traduttore, argomento che viene trattato verso metà capitolo.

Non esiste una guida su come debba avvenire il processo di traduzione, ma tutti hanno convinzioni contrastanti sul metodo da utilizzare e su quali regole appoggiarsi, e molte di queste contraddizioni hanno portato ad avere un'opinione e idea negativa sul ruolo del traduttore, visto come inferiore allo scrittore del testo originale. Altre idee portano ad una visione del traduttore come la persona che ci dona il prodotto finale di un processo creativo e la manifestazione dell'interpretazione data dal lettore ad un testo. Non è possibile, in qualsiasi caso, negare l'importanza di un traduttore, specialmente per la diffusione di opere a livello internazionale.

Il concetto sul quale è stato messo particolare importanza è la questione dell'invisibilità del traduttore, ideato da Lawrence Venuti (1995). Secondo Venuti (1995), il traduttore deve cercare di rendere il suo lavoro invisibile e non far trasparire sé stesso nel testo tradotto, andando tuttavia a sminuire il lavoro del traduttore. Successivamente, nel capitolo, viene spiegato come il lavoro del traduttore non sia affatto semplice, essendo che non è semplicemente un'attività di selezione e assemblaggio di materiale di testo, ma è un'azione e pratica che collabora nel creare conoscenza e modellare la cultura.

La parte finale del primo capitolo si concentra sulle principali strategie adottate durante la traduzione, ossia procedure che vengono seguite per ottenere un prodotto finale che sia la traduzione più idonea del testo di partenza. Andrew Chesterman (2016) propone una categorizzazione di strategie, dividendole in strategie di comprensione e strategie di produzione, essendo le seconde il risultato delle prime. Un'ulteriore classificazione proposta dallo scrittore è divisa in tre gruppi di strategie: strategie grammaticali, strategie semantiche e strategie pragmatiche. Tra i metodi più utilizzati e oggetto di discussione troviamo i metodi di naturalizzazione e straniamento. La naturalizzazione si basa sulla traduzione di elementi legati alla cultura del testo di partenza, ossia di adattarli alla cultura d'arrivo; mentre lo straniamento è un metodo che sostiene maggiormente le differenze culturali, trasportandole così come vengono presentate nel testo di partenza al testo di destinazione.

Il secondo capitolo si concentra sul fornire un'introduzione della narrativa fantasy, spiegandone le varie caratteristiche e come il genere si è sviluppato nel tempo. Benché

sia possibile donare una definizione del genere, è importante sottolineare come questa narrativa sia estremamente varia e in continua evoluzione. Il genere non viene più visto come un genere dedicato esclusivamente ad un pubblico di età infantile, ma come un genere che può raggiungere lettori di tutte le età, essendo che vari tipologie di narrativa fantasy si sono sviluppate e diversificate dal fantasy per bambini; il primo a fare questa distinzione fu proprio J.R.R. Tolkien nel suo saggio *On Fairy Stories*.

La narrativa fantasy è un genere estremamente legato all'immaginazione e proprio per questa sua caratteristica è difficile da definire in modo preciso. Ciò che è certo è che la sua natura di evasione che dà al lettore che ne determina il valore, essendo un genere letterario non legato ai limiti e convenzioni dei testi di realismo. Il termine *Fantasy* nasce nell'epoca contemporanea, ma la narrativa fantasy è presente nella realtà dell'uomo dall'antichità, tantoché si possono ritrovare le prime tracce di questi racconti nella mitologia di tutto il mondo. Possiamo considerare il genere fantasy come un rifiuto della realtà in cui vive l'uomo, che tuttavia, non va disturbare la sfera artistica di ciò che è considerato "reale".

Di preciso, la narrativa fantasy descrive un'incertezza fra la realtà e l'immaginario; è fantastico tutto ciò che un individuo trova misterioso nel momento in cui vede o vive un determinato avvenimento, e che suscita esitazione di fronte al soprannaturale, nonostante la persona sia certa delle leggi della natura reale. Questo succede nel momento in cui lo scrittore riesca a creare con successo un mondo secondario, ossia a riuscire nella corretta creazione di un *worldbuilding*, un mondo con le proprie regole e dove tutto quello che è stato creato viene visto come reale nella mente del lettore; nel momento in cui la credulità di chi legge viene a mancare, il processo di creazione fallisce. Questo processo viene menzionato da J.R.R. Tolkien, il quale lo definisce come *sub-creation*.

È possibile fare una classificazione del genere fantasy, dipendente dalle caratteristiche che possiede un testo, dagli elementi presenti all'interno e dal pubblico al quale viene proposto. Due di queste categorie principali vedono il fantasy per bambini e il fantasy per adulti, che talora risultano per avere come pubblico target la stessa fascia d'età; ne è un esempio lampante la saga *Harry Potter* di J.K. Rowling. Altre categorie del genere sono l'*High Fantasy*, dove l'eroe principale viene sviluppato per tutta la durata dell'impresa che deve intraprendere; *Low Fantasy*, che si sviluppa nel mondo reale, dove appaiono elementi di magia e soprannaturali; il Magical Realism, all'interno del quale i personaggi

vedono le capacità magiche come qualcosa di ordinario e, infine, il *Dark Fantasy*, costituito dai tipici elementi del genere fantasy, con l'aggiunta di caratteristiche che fanno parte del genere horror. L'enorme vastità del genere non permette di dare una classificazione e divisione precisa di tutti i sottogeneri che gli appartengono, valutando che è un genere che muta continuamente nel tempo e che ha avuto la sua maggior crescita con l'avvento di scrittori come J.R.R. Tolkien, J.K. Rowling e George R.R. Martin. Grazie a questi scrittori, il linguaggio fantasy è avanzato e si è evoluto, influenzando le opere di molti autori che si sono susseguiti. Le opere di narrativa fantasy antiche vengono considerate solo come opere che hanno ispirato il genere Fantasy moderno, ma questo non toglie che siano dei lavori con una forte componente fantastica. Dall'anno 1825, la connotazione che veniva data al genere Fantasy cambiò. Il genere non è stato più fonte di derisione, ma di interesse, anche grazie all'avvento della corrente romantica. Da menzionare sono anche i Fratelli Grimm, le quali storie e raccolte di racconti hanno influenzato intere generazioni e film d'animazione, e i quali hanno avuto un grande successo nel 1823 grazie alle *German Popular Stories*, il che comprova come il Fantasy suscitasse curiosità e fosse considerato finalmente come un genere rispettabile.

La seconda parte del capitolo si concentra sulla traduzione del genere *Fantasy* e sulle difficoltà per un traduttore, nel trasferire elementi e parole, spesso e volentieri inventate, nella lingua di destinazione. Nello specifico, il compito più arduo per un traduttore è di dover considerare che si tratta di un mondo che nasce dall'immaginazione dell'autore, senza considerare elementi legati alla realtà culturale della lingua di partenza che si manifestano durante il racconto. Il trasferimento culturale è una delle strategie principali attuate dai traduttori, definita anche come naturalizzazione; la strategia opposta, in cui questi elementi vengono mantenuti così come appaiono senza alcun bisogno di adattamento, è quella della naturalizzazione, per questo molte volte privilegiata perché riproduce elementi culturali, permettendone la diffusione. Il problema principale del genere *Fantasy* ricade sul fatto che il periodo storico e culturale può essere ispirato a situazioni reali, il mondo secondario creato dall'autore è estraneo a tutti i lettori.

Due difficoltà maggiori che si ritrova ad affrontare un traduttore sono i neologismi e la lingua utilizzata nei testi *Fantasy*. I neologismi sono una classe rara di parole, coniate dagli stessi scrittori per descrivere personaggi e luoghi della narrativa; molte di queste parole trattano di parole composte e possono essere parole composte inedite, diverse dai

composti standard. Per ultimo il linguaggio utilizzato all'interno della narrativa *Fantasy* è estremamente difficile da tradurre, non solo per la terminologia usata dagli autori, ma per le lingue che vengono ideate dagli autori, chiamate anche lingue costruite; ne è un esempio l'Esperanto.

Il terzo e ultimo capitolo introduce l'analisi del libro *Le Cronache della Folgoluce: La via dei Re* di Brandon Sanderson, in inglese *The Stormlight Archive: The Way of Kings*. Viene data una breve presentazione dell'autore e dell'opera, la quale va messa all'interno di un contesto molto più vasto, ideato da Sanderson stesso. La seconda parte del capitolo studia ed esamina varie tipologie di nomi di personaggi, nomi di luoghi, neologismi e parole composte trovate all'interno della storia. L'esame di questi elementi viene effettuato attraverso un confronto dell'opera originale con il testo tradotto in italiano. La scelta di quest'opera proviene dalla valutazione di tutti gli elementi presenti all'interno di essa e per la presenza di molteplici nomi e neologismi che potrebbero rappresentare una difficoltà durante il processo di traduzione. Le tecniche maggiormente riscontrate nella prima parte dell'analisi comprendono strategie sintattiche e grammaticali; nella maggior parte dei casi la traduzione dei nomi dei personaggi è caratterizzata dall'uso dello straniamento da parte del traduttore, cosa che non è avvenuta nella traduzione di Gabriele Giorgi, il quale ha deciso di tradurre in modo letterale i nomi dei personaggi di sembianze umane senza trovarne un equivalente in italiano. Per personaggi di origine ignota e il quale nome ha etimologie provenienti dal latino Giorgi ha optato per un adattamento, naturalizzando i nomi nella lingua di destinazione. Nel caso di neologismi e parole composte e dello stesso titolo dell'opera le tecniche maggiormente utilizzate comprendono tutte e tre le classificazioni di strategie, con particolare accento alle strategie in cui l'unità della parola cambia di struttura e significato, mostrando cambi espliciti e cambi d'informazioni effettuati dal traduttore, anche nel tentativo di trovare una casi di sinonimia tra SL e TL. In questo modo il traduttore ha adattato le parole ad un pubblico italiano, a discapito di un possibile danneggiamento o modificazione del significato iniziale del nome.

L'ultima parte finale della tesi presenta le conclusioni prese in seguito all'analisi effettuata, tenendo conto di come il traduttore, nei casi in cui fosse realizzabile, scegliesse di adottare strategie di naturalizzazione per permettere al pubblico una miglior percezione del libro, senza nuocere al valore dell'opera e del suo significato iniziale.