One of the key issues in recent translation theories has been on whether translation should domesticate or foreignize the source text. Venuti (1995) defines domesticating translation as a replacement of the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text with a text that is intelligible to the target-language reader. Foreignizing translation is defined as a translation that indicates the linguistic and cultural differences of the text by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language. Other scholars, like Tymoczko (1999), criticize this dichotomy by pointing out that a translation may be radically oriented to the source text in some respects, but depart radically from the source text in other respects, thus denying the existence of the single polarity that describes the orientation of a translation. For my research I have chosen five English translations of Lev Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina, covering over a century of the history of translations into English: Dole (1886), Garnett (1901), Maude (1918), Edmonds (1954) and Pevear and Volokhonsky (2000). My main objective has been to analyse the relationship between earlier and later translations. Since modern English language readers are more familiar with Russian language, literature and culture as well as with Tolstoy’s works than the 19th century readers were, theoretically speaking, translating Tolstoy in 2000 should be easier than it was in 1886. In reality each translator still had to choose between the adequate representation of Tolstoy’s text and the acceptability of their translation for their contemporary English speaking audiences (the terms described in Toury 1995) on a sliding scale between audience and text. In a way, with the higher development of the art and scholarship of translation, the expectations of readers and critics grow, and adequate representation of a text in a different language becomes more challenging. My hypothesis is that literary translation evolves as an exploration of deeper and deeper layers of the source text. In the present thesis I try to show how the history of translation of Anna Karenina into English reflects these different stages of evolution.

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