

Laura Leden

# Girls' Classics and Constraints in Translation

## A Case Study of Purifying Adaptation in the Swedish Translation of L.M. Montgomery's *Emily of New Moon*

*Abstract: This case study discusses constraints related to the image of girlhood and gender roles evident in the abridged and adapted Swedish translation of L.M. Montgomery's girls' classic Emily of New Moon published in 1955 by C.W.K. Gleerups. The 1950s are called the golden age of girls' books in Sweden because their publication peaked during this period. However, the popularity of girls' books during the 1950s did not correlate with high status. Adaptation of translations was common, which indicates the low status of the genre. The Swedish translation of Emily of New Moon was adapted for a younger target audience than Montgomery's original, and abridged to a lower page count required by the publisher series in which the book was included. The publisher imposed didactic constraints on the book, and these constraints are a sign of conservative and protective strategies and authoritarian attitudes. The adaptation reflects what kind of books the publisher wanted to present to girls, and largely involves purification of unconventional behavior and sexuality. This was consistent with didactic translation norms, reflected in the origin of girls' books in educational literature. The translation presents a clear, unambiguous and conventional model for the appropriate behavior of girls, and female characters represent more restrictive gender roles than in the original.*

**Keywords:** L.M. Montgomery, Emily book series, girls' books, girls' fiction, translation, abridgment, adaptation, purification, norms, gender roles

The 1950s Swedish translation of Canadian author L.M. Montgomery's (1874–1942) Emily trilogy (*Emily of New Moon* 1923, *Emily Climbs* 1925, and *Emily's Quest* 1927) about an imaginative girl and her path to becoming an author is an illustrative case for exposing constraints imposed on children's literature and girls' books in particular. Comparing the translations with their originals reveals abridgment. For example, the Swedish translation of *Emily of New Moon* published in 1955 was abridged by 13% (Leden, "Klassiska flickböcker" 37).<sup>1</sup> The initial reason for abridging the book was the publisher's need to fit the book into the page count of their publisher series C.W.K. Gleerups ungdomsböcker [C.W.K. Gleerup's young adult books], as discussed by Åsa Warnqvist regarding the first novel by Montgomery published in this publisher series ("I Experienced" 229). However, an analysis of all the omissions in the book shows a pattern indicating that almost 40% of the omissions can be attributed to didactic constraints (Leden, "Klassiska flickböcker" 38), that is, what is considered appropriate for the young readers (see Desmidt 86 and below). Studying translations is a way to discover what kind of children's literature and gender roles were desired at a certain point in time in a certain culture. Comparing originals and translations shows what has been adapted. In this article I will use material collected for my MA thesis, which is primarily a quantitative study of all omissions in the Swedish translation of the Emily trilogy. I will discuss constraints related to the image of girlhood and gender roles in the Swedish translation of *Emily of New Moon* made in the 1950s by analyzing abridgment associated with didactic constraints in order to place the omissions in the context of the conservative and non-feminist time period when girls' books were considered a low status genre.

Abridgment is an extreme form of adaptation, which means adjusting the text to the target readers (Weinreich 39). Translation always involves some degree of adaptation, because the act of translation essentially means rewriting the source text in the target language. To distinguish between obligatory and non-obligatory adaptation, the type of adaptation discussed in this article can be defined as "an alteration of the text and/or textual elements, which changes the sense and/or specific functions of the text" (Bertills 192). Thus, this article considers adaptation of content rather than form. The type of didactic adaptation discussed here can be termed "purification", which refers to adaptation to make the target text correspond with the values of the target readers or, in the case of children's literature, their parents and educators (Klingberg 58). The purification seen in this case study of Montgomery's *Emily of New Moon* alters the text on the content level by

conventionalizing the behavior of the heroine and by omitting taboo subjects such as sexuality, as the analysis will show. There are many examples that indicate the 1950s Swedish translation has a more didactic function than Montgomery's original from 1923.

Discussing modification of gender roles in Montgomery's books is particularly relevant because these books represent the genre girls' books (or girls' fiction), which is defined by their girl target readers. The common definition of girls' books is that they are books about girls with girls as protagonists (see for example Westin 10). Many scholars, such as Shirley Foster and Judy Simons, add that girls' books are mainly written for girls and deal with "conceptualization of girlhood and the development of a gendered identity" (xii). As noted by Boel Westin, girls' books describe girls' lives and possibilities, making the books products of their time and society (11). Thus, they play an important part in the socialization of girls (Lierop-Debrauwer 127–128). Montgomery's Emily books meet all these definitions, because the protagonist is a young girl and the books describe her development into a woman as well as the options available to her as a girl of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to collections of reading experiences, their readers are also predominantly girls and women (Ahola and Koskimies; Warnqvist, *Besläktade själar*; Kokkonen). The first edition of the translation of *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), published in the C.W.K. Gleerups publisher series in 1909, was marketed as a young adult book, but reviewers defined it as a girls' book (Warnqvist, "Anne på Grönkulla" 216, 218–219). In the 1950s, C.W.K. Gleerups started labeling Montgomery's works books for girls by placing a small F for "flicka" [girl] in the corner of the back cover.

Furthermore, Montgomery's books are often mentioned as classic girls' books and models for later girls' books in Swedish as well as in international research (see for example Foster and Simons xi; Theander 9). Classics are books that maintain their value for several generations in the eyes of the literary establishment and readers (Heikkilä-Haltonen, "1940- ja 1950-luvun klassikot" 169). However, Montgomery's books belong to the paracanon rather than the traditional canon. The paracanon is a reader-centered alternative ranking with less strict criteria than the traditional canon. This term was introduced by Catharine R. Stimpson for books that are, or have been, loved by many readers (958–959). Typically, readers develop an emotional bond to paracanonical works in their childhood, and this love continues into adulthood (970), as is the case with Montgomery's books according to Warnqvist ("Flickan som läsare" 34).

According to Mieke Desmet, girls' classics have an ambivalent status in relation to the traditional canon, because they "are either

perceived as popular works or as works of literary value”, which may result in different perceptions (189). The former represents paracanonical characteristics while the latter criterion indicates traditional canonical characteristics. Desmet has studied the status of girls’ books by analyzing adaptation carried out in Dutch translations of different types of girls’ fiction (formula fiction, classics, and award winning books), and concludes that girls’ classics have a “hybrid nature” and a “complex and unclear status”, since they employ many different strategies and are used to underpin a variety of educational goals (227–228). Her classics material consists of three Dutch translations of Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* (1868) made between 1969 and 1993. She calls these “overt condensations”, which reveal different opinions about what was considered appropriate for the target readers at the time of translation (Desmet 185, 192, 227).

Montgomery’s books have been subject to similar didactic constraints in their Swedish translations, as will be shown in this article. Such constraints and manipulation in translation have been associated with low status in the literary system (Shavit 112). The constraints operating in the Montgomery translations reflect educational conservatism in children’s literature, and a critical attitude towards girls’ books in Sweden at the time of translation in the 1950s.

### The Low Status of Girls’ Books and Educational Conservatism in Post-War Sweden

Birgitta Theander calls the post-war period the golden age of girls’ books in Sweden, as a large number of girls’ books were published after World War II, with a significant increase in the 1950s (14, 32, 434). During this period, many of Montgomery’s books were reprinted and new books were translated, including *Emily of New Moon*. Despite an increase in publication and popularity among readers, girls’ books suffered a low status during the post-war period and were subject to a lot of criticism.

According to Eva Söderberg, the children’s literature critic Gurli Linder (1865–1947) at *Dagens Nyheter*, one of Sweden’s largest newspapers, contributed to the establishment of these negative attitudes in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (165). Linder was influenced by the German literary critic Heinrich Wolgast (1860–1920) who wanted children’s literature to contribute to literary education, and considered girls’ books particularly inferior (Söderberg 165). Linder’s criticism of girls’ books also reflected the condemning of women reading novels in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and conveyed a belittling

attitude towards the girl readers (Söderberg 165). Linder's successor Eva von Zweigbergk (1906–1984), who worked at *Dagens Nyheter* 1929–1969, followed in Linder's footsteps and criticized girls' books for being of low quality, and for displaying an astounding mix of realism and romance, banal plots, and worthless characterizations (Söderberg 165–169). The criticism culminated in the rise of the problem-realistic, gender-neutral "modern young adult book" in Sweden around 1965, which led to contempt towards gendered literature (Theander 10–11).<sup>2</sup> Söderberg's review suggests the criticism in the press primarily focused on the literary aspects of girls' books.

Another traditional source of criticism of children's literature is its educational aspect. Tension arises because children's literature originates from educational literature and belongs to both the literary system and the socio-educational system, thus having a dual function (Puurtinen 17). According to Zohar Shavit, the low status of children's literature originates from the view of childhood, and thus children's literature, as something in need of, or a means for, education (ix). The low status resulting from the educational function of children's literature is a consequence of the asymmetrical communication situation that results from children's books generally being written by adults, who have the power to control what children read (Desmet 77). This is one of the key differences between children's literature and literature for adults, as B.J. Epstein notes (66).

Therefore, the educational atmosphere in Sweden in the 1950s can be assumed to have affected the translation of girls' books during this period. Girls' books originate from early 20<sup>th</sup> century educational literature for girls (Westin 11), which probably still influenced girls' books in the 1950s. Educational literature aimed to educate girls in the role of wife and mother represented the bourgeois view of women characterized by caring and emotional traits, culminating in the 1950s housewife ideal (Andræ 14–15). This reflects the general atmosphere of the 1940 and the 1950s in Sweden. Yvonne Hirdman describes this as a non-feminist period because of the reversion to traditional gender roles after World War II and the segregation between genders, as well as between housewives and working women (159–160). As Ebba Witt-Brattström notes, Swedish post-war women's literature reflected this segregating "gender contract" by emphasizing women's housewife duties in their themes (573–575).

The educational literature of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century advocated impulse control, discipline, and self-control, and education focused on obedience, self-discipline, and a spirit of self-sacrifice (Andræ 17). World War II resulted in an increasingly authoritarian approach to

education. This was reflected in the image of youth conveyed by the Swedish media during the war, which typically consisted of contrasting good and bad examples in a moralizing tone (17). This authoritarian influence seems to have continued in the generally conservative post-war period, particularly in translations, where, as Epstein points out, trends take longer to change than in original writing (74).

In her historical comparative study of the translation of figurative language in children's literature in Sweden, Epstein concludes that the 1940s through the 1970s constitute a period of protectionism in translation (75). According to Epstein, this "need to protect, educate and otherwise have control over children" was associated with the recent war and the turbulent events in the world during this period (75). Edwin Gentzler and Maria Tymoczko note a similar general trend of protective translation techniques intended to influence readers in the 1950s and 1960s (xi). Epstein's results point to a trend to make children's books more pedagogical or conservative during the 1940s through the 1970s in Sweden (76). This resulted in the use of more conservative and less creative translation strategies, which is seen in an increased use of omission in translations from this period (67, 70-71, 75-76).

Similar conservative attitudes seem to have affected the Swedish Montgomery translations published in the same period as Epstein's material. The influence of such educational attitudes commonly resulted in extreme adaptation in children's books, including girls' books, since the translator was free to manipulate these non-canonized texts (Shavit 112). The constraints that the Swedish publisher seems to have imposed on Montgomery's books can be seen as a case in point, reflecting their low status at the time.

### The Publisher C.W.K. Gleerups and the Swedish Translation of the Emily Trilogy

In Sweden, Montgomery's books were originally published by C.W.K. Gleerups in their series of young adult books called C.W.K. Gleerups ungdomsböcker [C.W.K. Gleerup's young adult books]. Such publisher series targeting a specific age group and gender were a common phenomenon in children's literature in the 1950s, because they were cheap and easy to market (Heikkilä-Halttunen, *Kuokkavieraasta* 415-416). The translations published in the C.W.K. Gleerup's young adult series were abridged at the publisher's request, as noted by Warnqvist who researched the publishing history of the Swedish translation of Montgomery's most well-known



novel *Anne of Green Gables* ("I Experienced" 229, 232). Montgomery's books were subject to what Kari Skjønberg calls commercial adaptation, which means they had to have a certain number of pages (10). For this reason, *Emily of New Moon* and *Emily Climbs*, the first and second part of the Emily trilogy, were split into three books called *Emily* (1955), *Emily och hennes vänner* (1956) [Emily and her friends], and *Emily på egna vägar* (1957) [Emily follows her own path]. These Swedish translations were made by Stina Hergin (1911–2002) who was an experienced Swedish translator of children's literature. However, according to Stefan Mählqvist, who has read correspondence between the translator and the publisher, the omissions were made by the publisher Ingrid Schaar in agreement with Hergin. This indicates that the omissions were probably made after the translation. The books themselves contain no information that they are abridged translations, so readers do not know that they are not reading the complete text.

Despite the first two Emily books becoming three, extensive abridgment was required to fit the books into the format of about 200 pages each. One can assume that the decisions on what to omit may have been influenced by the publisher's background in educational and religious publishing as these were the publisher's main fields of publication (see Warnqvist, "I Experienced" 229). The analysis of the books in my MA thesis as well as the analysis presented later in this article also indicate that the translations have a didactic function (see Leden, "Klassiska flickböcker").

Another reason for the abridgment is that the publisher series targeted a younger readership than Montgomery's originals (Warnqvist, "Anne på Grönkulla" 214). As is evident from Benjamin Lefebvre's summary of contemporary reviews of *Emily of New Moon*, Montgomery's original was to be enjoyed by girls as well as adults (241). The target audiences of the Swedish translations *Emily* and *Emily och hennes vänner* were defined by C.W.K. Glerups as girls aged 10 to 14 and 11 to 15, respectively, which is younger than the original crossover target audience described by Lefebvre (see also Leden, "For Children Only"). The intended target audience is noted on the back covers of the C.W.K. Glerups books in the form of the age and gender codes "F 10–14" and "F 11–15", where F stands for "flickor" [girls] and the numbers indicate the recommended age. For *Emily på egna vägar*, the third Swedish translation, which is not included in this study, the corresponding recommendation is girls from the age of 11 and upwards ("F 11–"), and *Emily's Quest* (1927), the third part of the original trilogy, was not translated at all in the

1950s. This is probably because its content might have been considered inappropriate for the publisher series and the target age group, since this book is about Emily on the verge of adulthood. Consequently, the page count restriction and the younger target audience show that the need for abridgment had commercial grounds, but decisions on what to omit were influenced by what earlier translation scholars have referred to as didactic and pedagogical translation norms, which will be discussed in the next section.

## Norms in Translation of Children's Literature

According to Shavit, "translation norms expose more clearly the constraints imposed on [children's literature]" (112). The concept of norms in translation studies was introduced by pioneering descriptive translation scholar Gideon Toury<sup>3</sup>, who defines norms as socio-cultural constraints or "values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate" acquired during the socialization process (54–55). Decisions on which translation strategies to use and what to adapt are always impacted by translation norms, which can be viewed either as solution templates that guide the translator or as constraints that result in adaptation (Hermans 79). The norms discussed in this article function as constraints, because they have resulted in omissions in the material and thus restrict what is included in the translation. Translation norms can be reconstructed from operational level regularities in the translations, which are products of norm-governed behavior (Toury 65). These regularities are revealed by textual comparison of the source and target text, which means comparison of coupled pairs of replaced and replacing segments, and in the case of omission, the replacing segment is zero (65, 79). As Haidee Kruger notes, Toury's approach is based on the assumption that evidence of solutions seen in translations reflects the decision-making process and the norms governing the translations (103). Thus, regularities seen in translations provide hypotheses about norms governing them. In recent years, Toury's norm theory has been used in several studies of translation of children's literature (see for example Meerbergen; Kruger; Palm Åsman and Pedersen).

In terms of norms, children's literature constitutes a special case because of its educational function. As Isabelle Desmidt points out, translation of children's literature follows the same norms as translation of literature for adults, that is, source text related equivalence norms, literary norms, and commercial norms, but also didactic and



pedagogical norms (86). These norms reflect the origin of children's literature and girls' books in educational literature (see for example Westin 11). Didactic norms mean that children's books should enhance the intellectual and emotional development of the child and set good, worthy examples (Desmidt 86). Pedagogical norms require adjustment to the language skills and conceptual knowledge of the child that can result in, for example, adaptation of cultural elements (86). According to Thea Palm Åsman and Jan Pedersen, these norms "are likely to affect most decisions a translator of children's literature makes" (145). The didactic and pedagogical norms are target culture-oriented rather than source text-oriented norms, because they usually result in deviations from the source text and thus clash with the norms of formal equivalence between source and target texts, as Desmidt notes (86).<sup>4</sup> Similar domesticating deviations have, for example, been noted by Palm Åsman and Pedersen (154).

Didactic norms, which are the focus of this analysis, result in purification, a term originally coined by Swedish educationalist and children's literature scholar Göte Klingberg (58). Purification is a didactic strategy defined by Klingberg as adaptation to make the target text correspond with the values of the target readers or, in the case of children's literature, their parents and educators (58). Reasons for purification can be ideological, political, moral, or commercial (Klingberg 58–59; Desmet 82). The phenomenon can also be called censorship, but the term purification is more common in children's literature studies, presumably to emphasize that the aim of the procedure is to present children with "pure" texts. This wish to protect children relates back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and was prominent well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the ideal of childhood innocence led children's authors to make sure their books contained nothing corruptive (West 498–499). According to Torben Weinreich, purification concerns aspects that society does not want children to know about (55). The term purification reflects the protective attitudes prevalent among translators in the 1950s described by Epstein (75).

In the Swedish translation of *Emily of New Moon*, purification is often performed through omission, which has been called the most interventional and target culture-oriented translation strategy (Tallberg-Nygård 158). Most of the purification in this book is of a gender ideological nature and concerns issues related to gender roles and the image of girlhood, as the following analysis will show.

## Gender-Related Purification in the Swedish Translation of *Emily of New Moon*

In my MA thesis, I made a quantitative study of all 332 omitted passages in the Swedish translation of the Emily trilogy. The omissions were identified by close comparison of the entire source and target texts, and the study shows that omissions related to purification are the most common type of abridgment in the Swedish translation of *Emily of New Moon*, since almost 40% of the omissions can be attributed to this category (Leden, "Klassiska flickböcker" 38). These purifying omissions reveal a didactic intention, since they contribute to the presentation of a conventional image of girlhood.

The protagonist Emily, who functions as a role model for the readers, is generally a well-behaved girl who usually only rebels on the inside, so purification regarding her character mostly concerns her thoughts. An example of what the publisher or translator seems to have considered inappropriate behavior for girls is the omission of a passage where Emily paints her cheeks red before going to a birthday party (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 209–210). Even the original text condemns this behavior, since Emily regrets it afterwards, but the publisher or translator chose not to include any mention of her vanity. Another omitted passage exhibiting behavior apparently considered inappropriate for girls depicts Emily wondering why her cat Saucy Sal does not have any kittens and her Aunt Elizabeth saying that "nice little girls don't talk about such things" (95). The omitted passage shows Montgomery's awareness of gender norms. It may have been omitted because of the indirect reference to feline intercourse, since sexuality and bodily functions have been described as taboos often adapted in translations of children's literature (O'Sullivan 85–87). Reproduction and other bodily functions were rarely addressed in Swedish girls' books of the post-war period (Theander 101–104).

Since Emily is a verbally gifted child, purifying omissions also occur in episodes where she criticizes adults and says things about religion that could be interpreted as disrespectful, which contradicted the prevailing educational ideal of discipline and obedience. Omissions of Emily's thoughts, which are often imaginative and expressive, include critical and disrespectful thoughts about adults, such as when Emily writes that "there is not one good-looking person among [her ancestors]" (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 98). They also include her comical or unconventional thoughts about religion and God, such as when the deaf minister Mr. Dare sits on Emily's

cat, which Emily later describes as humorous (184–185), when Emily says that heaven “seemed like a dull place” (185), and when Emily’s friend Ilse says that she is “going to call God Alla after this” and Emily comments that “I think it is a nicer name myself. It is so soft and doesn’t sound so stern. But I fear its not relijus enough” (179). Also adults’ almost pantheistic expressions of religion in conversation with Emily are omitted, such as Mr. Dare telling Emily that “[nature is] just a part of God, Emily – every beautiful thing is” (185), in answer to one of her eager questions. These kinds of abridgments result in the omission of Emily’s unique observations and thoughts about the world she lives in, and consequently religion is described as a more serious matter in the translation than in the original. These abridgments represent a conservative and purist approach to religion. However, the greatest impact on the characterization of Emily is caused by omissions of descriptions of nature that show Emily in creative and sometimes even pantheistic interaction with nature; these omissions in particular make her a more conventional character (see Leden, “Emily Byrd Starr”).

Besides Emily, the purification also affects the behavior of adult characters who are authorities in Emily’s upbringing and supposed to be role models. Her main educator is her guardian, Aunt Elizabeth, who is a model adult with the exception that she is unreasonably strict. Aunt Elizabeth’s strictness seems to have necessitated only minor purification, for example, when Emily has rolled up the blinds in the parlor and Aunt Elizabeth calls her “a little hussy” (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 97). The impression of Aunt Elizabeth as being unreasonably strict does not wholly disappear in the translation since other scenes exhibiting her strictness are not omitted, such as when Aunt Elizabeth locks Emily up as punishment for having walked into the village barefoot (109). In fact, the relationship between adults and children is shown as more unambiguously authoritarian in the translation than in the original since Emily’s rebellion against this authority is downplayed (see the example discussed on page 14).

Most of the purification of adult behavior targets Emily’s great-aunt Nancy who represents a strong contrast to the strict Aunt Elizabeth by challenging norms of acceptable female behavior. In the translation, this contrast is reduced because Aunt Nancy’s behavior is purified. The chapters where Emily visits Aunt Nancy at her home, Wyther Grange, have been greatly abridged, thus omitting a large part of the characterization of Aunt Nancy. A lot of Emily’s observations about life at Wyther Grange have been removed from one of

her diary-like letters in the text: descriptions of Aunt Nancy doing inappropriate things like playing cards instead of going to church on Sundays, making fun of her relatives, and owning so called “French novels” that Emily is forbidden to read (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 251–252). Ironically, in the original book, Emily mentions that Aunt Nancy herself says that she is “a bad example” (251), which is another example of Montgomery’s acknowledgment of norms of appropriate behavior. This passage, like many other omitted passages, also describes Nancy bickering with Caroline Priest, a relative who lives with her, and speaking derogatorily about her (250–252). This indirectly characterizes their relationship as a love-hate relationship and is an example of a dysfunctional adult relationship. All this depicts Aunt Nancy as an unconventional and bold person, since she deviates from the characteristics of a good role model who represents authority and high morals typical of the educational attitudes and gender roles of the 1950s discussed earlier in this article. In the translation, Emily’s vivid letter about her visit with Aunt Nancy becomes rather mundane and childish, since what is left is Emily simply describing Caroline as a good cook who sometimes makes mistakes and vexes Nancy, and a discussion about the breakfasts at Wyther Grange being better than at home at Aunt Elizabeth’s New Moon (Montgomery, *Emily och hennes vänner* 36).

Another aspect of Aunt Nancy that has been purified through omission is her sexuality. This is not surprising, since sexuality is a common taboo in children’s literature (Weinreich 55), and according to Ulla Lundqvist, erotic tension is not a typical characteristic of girls’ books (106). In Theander’s material of girls’ books published in 1945–1965, erotic tension is also quite rare, occurring in only 12% of the books (101). In general, Theander’s study shows that girl’s books from this period had a cautious attitude towards sex and sexuality, reflecting the real-life conditions of women during this period, which preceded the sexual liberation and the introduction of contraceptives in the late 1960s (99).

Even in Montgomery’s original book, the description of sexuality and erotic tension is very innocent, but the theme is present. In the original, Aunt Nancy is associated with sexuality at her first mention, when Emily’s father describes her mother quoting Nancy as saying that “the first time your husband calls you ‘Mother’ the romance of life is over” (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 11). Another omitted passage later in the book describes Aunt Nancy by mentioning her beauty and a poem she once received from a lover (216). Irene Gammel emphasizes that Aunt Nancy and Wyther

Grange are connected to sexuality (123). According to Gammel, Nancy and Caroline “have a special sexual knowledge and promptly initiate the young heroine into the world of womanhood with their tales of sex, seduction and adultery” (123). She is referring especially to passages where Aunt Nancy discusses beaux, and sexualizes Emily’s body by describing what effect her ankles and eyes may have on men. For example, Nancy says that Emily has “keep-your-distance eyes” rather than “come-hither eyes” (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 242). This omitted passage characterizes Aunt Nancy indirectly by suggesting her interest in men. All of Aunt Nancy’s dialogue containing sexual overtones has been omitted, except for her tale about Emily’s friend Ilse’s mother’s infidelity (256–258). It is too important to the plot to be omitted and turns out not to be true anyway. Aunt Nancy seems to be subject to all these omissions because she does not conform to the behavior expected of respectable women, and steps outside the expectations of her gender role and her role as an educator.

The most sexually charged character in the book is Dean Priest, a 36-year-old man who falls in love with 13-year-old Emily. Dean is strongly connected to Nancy, since he is her nephew-in-law, and Emily meets him during her visit to Wyther Grange. All characterization of Dean that hints at his sexual desire for Emily has been omitted in the translation. For example, during Emily and Dean’s first meeting, Dean is directly characterized by Emily as having a mouth that “connoted strength and tenderness and humour” and eyes that are “remarkably dreamy and attractive” (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 265–266). This romantically charged train of thought may have been omitted because it was considered inappropriate for a young girl. Only a description of Dean’s voice as “beautiful – musical and caressing” (266) has been included in the translation, where it is characterized as “vacker: mjuk och musikalisk” [beautiful: soft and musical] (Montgomery, *Emily och hennes vänner* 51) by changing the erotically charged adjective “caressing” to the more neutral “mjuk” [soft].

As Gabriella Åhman points out, Emily and Dean’s relationship is sexually charged from their first meeting (141). A sexually charged incident removed in the translation involves Dean placing a flower picked by Emily between the pages of Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* after their first meeting when Dean rescues Emily who has fallen down a cliff (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 272). According to Elizabeth Epperly, Emily and Dean’s love affair parallels that of Jane and Mr. Rochester, and the flower scene symbolizes Dean’s identification with Mr. Rochester (163). The quote “[a]ll glorious rose upon

my sight / That child of shower and gleam" from *Jane Eyre* by which Dean places Emily's flower may seem innocent (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 272), but it is a stanza from a song about passion and love (Epperly 163). A young reader would probably not recognize the context of this quote, but even Dean's act of saving Emily's flower indicates his feelings for her, particularly considering that flower is a euphemism for a girl or woman's virginity. Because of this omission, both erotic tension and an important intertextuality are lost.

In the translation, Dean's feelings and intentions are not evident in the first book, since all his lines mentioning love or kisses have been omitted. In the original, Dean's desire for Emily and his intentions become evident in lines such as when Emily is leaving Wyther Grange and Dean says "[n]o, I don't want you to kiss me – yet. And our first kiss mustn't have the flavour of good-bye. It would be a bad omen" (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 278), and later in the second book when he thinks "[b]ut how perfect the white line of [Emily's] throat – how kissable the sweet red curve of her mouth. She would be a woman soon – but not for him – not for lame Jarback Priest of her father's generation" (Montgomery, *Emily Climbs* 88). Both examples of omitted lines refer to potential kisses between Dean and Emily, foreshadowing developments in their relationship in the third book, which, as previously mentioned, was not translated into Swedish in the 1950s. As Åhmansson points out, Dean's lines typically contain ambiguous ironies (143), which have been omitted in the translation whenever he mentions love, such as when Dean promises to teach Emily the "love talk" that she needs for her novels and asks her not to look for another teacher (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 270). These erotically charged passages were likely subject to purification due to the young age of the target readers.

Finally, some purifying omissions concern the narrator's explicitly non-didactic comments. Passages where the narrator's voice sides with Emily in disputes with adults, and challenges the authoritarian relationship between children and adults in Montgomery's original text have been removed in the translation. This reflects the authoritarian approach to education prevailing in the post-war period. An example of such an omitted passage is when Emily skims some milk without permission and gets away with it, and the narrator comments that "this does not point any particular moral; in a proper yarn Emily should either have been found out and punished for disobedience or been driven by an uneasy consciousness to confess" (Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* 133). This omitted passage contains the narrator's meta comment about moral purification, which Montgomery opposed. The comment shows Mont-



gomery's awareness of moral conventions in children's literature and her criticism of them. According to Mary Rubio, the narrator's comments about Emily's refusals to conform to social conventions and expectations are one of Montgomery's strategies to include social criticism in her apparently innocent stories (cited in Epperly 6-7). The narrator's comments clearly show Montgomery's non-didactic intentions, which the translation contradicts by omitting these comments as well as unconventional female behavior, lines, and thoughts that do not meet the expectations of the ideal female.

## Conclusion

The pattern of purification seen in the omitted passages in the Swedish translation of *Emily of New Moon* cannot be discarded as an arbitrary consequence of the abridgment of the books in order to fit the page count required by the publisher series. The purifying omissions in the translation reveal effects of the didactic norms and constraints imposed on the Swedish Emily translations in the 1950s. These constraints are a sign of the conservative and protective translation strategies common during this period (Epstein 76), and the authoritarian attitudes to education prevailing in post-war Sweden (Andræ 17).

The translation exhibits didactic intentions and a protective attitude towards its young readers by omitting critical and unconventional thoughts and behavior, as well as references to sexuality. The characterization of Emily is tamed and conventionalized, which makes her a more suitable role model for young girl readers. The greatest change occurs in the characterization of the bold and sexually charged adult characters Aunt Nancy and Dean Priest, whose roles are greatly diminished and purified in the translation by omissions of unconventional behavior and erotic tension. This purifying abridgment results in an indirect didactic tendency, which contradicts Montgomery's original non-didactic intention. As a consequence of the abridgment, the translation presents a clear, unambiguous and conventional model for the appropriate behavior of girls, and female characters represent more restrictive gender roles than in the original. This indicates that the translation was affected by gender-related constraints resulting from the segregated gender roles and conservative educational attitudes prevailing at the time of translation. The translations are clearly products of their time.

The above regularities observed in this analysis generate the hypothesis that girls' books of conservative periods like the 1950s were subject to didactic constraints restricting the image of girlhood and

femininity. More research on a larger scale is needed to further test the results of this case study. Translations are excellent material for uncovering constraints as comparison of source and target texts reveals changes made before publication. The manipulation of translations of girls' books reveals assumptions about girl readers, and about what publishers or educators wanted them to read and protect them from at the time of translation.

The correlation between a work's status and the degree of adaptation also needs to be investigated further. The didactic abridgment of the Emily translations supports the assumption that girls' classics had an ambivalent and complex status in Sweden in the 1950s. The abridgment is similar to that seen in Desmet's girls' classics material, where considerations for the target audience were prioritized in favor of canonical characteristics (228). In the context of educational adaptation, I conclude that an ambivalent status means that a work is associated with both traditional canonical characteristics and paracanonical characteristics. A work with ambivalent status is both considered a classic associated with literary qualities, which represents traditional canonical characteristics and indicates high status, and manipulated for educational purposes, which is typical of popular paracanonical works and indicates low status. This ambivalent status reflects that girls' classics have a high status in the paracanon but not in the traditional canon.

According to Epstein's results, contemporary translators make fewer assumptions about their readers than translators of more conservative periods (76). This points to the need for new translations of old classics like Montgomery's books, as new translations would likely be more source text-oriented and less didactic than the existing target culture-oriented 1950s translations. The fact that new Swedish translations of Montgomery's books have not been made, not to mention that recent editions of the old translations are still not acknowledged as abridged translations, indicates that the status of Montgomery's books continues to be ambivalent.

*Biographical information: Laura Leden is a PhD candidate at the University of Helsinki and holds an MA in Swedish Translation Studies and a BA in Scandinavian Literature. She has published on L.M. Montgomery in *The Lion and the Unicorn and The Looking Glass* and presented several papers at the L.M. Montgomery conferences organized by the University of Prince Edward Island.*

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## Notes

1 The Swedish translation of *Emily of New Moon* was split into two books: *Emily* (1955) and *Emily och hennes vänner* (1956).

2 Consequently, scholars and critics, especially prior to the 1990s, were very critical of girls’ books. More recently, research like Theander’s has contributed to raising the status of girls’ books in Sweden. Her analysis of themes and typical characteristics of all 1,022 girls’ books published in Sweden during the period 1945–1965, which aimed to correct misconceptions about the genre, emphasizes qualities overlooked in earlier research (14, 32). Contrary to the earlier criticism, Theander’s study shows that the books represent a great variety of themes, most commonly psychology and relationships between characters, which also are central issues in the *Emily* trilogy (435).

3 Descriptive translation studies, also called the manipulation school, was a school of translation studies born in the 1980s as a result of “the cultural turn”. Descriptive translation studies led to a fundamental change of paradigm from “prescriptive and source-oriented, linguistic and atomistic” to “descriptive, target-oriented, functional and systemic” studies. Thus, the object of descriptive research is the function of the translation in the target culture, which is essential to the study of norms. See Snell-Hornby 47–49.

4 Equivalence is a debated concept within translation studies. Desmidt refers to what is called exact or formal equivalence defined as 1:1 sameness (see for example Kukkonen 22) rather than Toury’s definition of equivalence as any relation between a source text and a target text (61). For a thorough discussion on the concept of equivalence and its definitions within translation studies, see for example Hermans 96–98.