



FROM GREEN GABLES TO RED HAIR

THE ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS OF L.M. MONTGOMERY'S *ANNE OF GREEN GABLES*

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Attraverso lo studio della ricezione di *Anne of Green Gables* di L.M. Montgomery questo articolo mette in luce come tale romanzo ha acquisito lo status di “classico dell’infanzia” in Italia ed evidenzia come il successo di pubblico e commerciale possono influenzare il trasferimento culturale e la trasmissione di un’opera letteraria. L’articolo presenta le traduzioni in italiano dal 1980 nel loro contesto editoriale, per sottolineare il ruolo cruciale degli editori nella “creazione di un classico”. Per sottolineare ulteriormente il ruolo chiave assunto dalle strategie editoriali nel processo in questione, vengono anche esaminati due spazi peritestuali delle traduzioni: le collane e i titoli in cui il romanzo di L.M. Montgomery è apparso. La pubblicazione di quest’ultimo in collane di classici dell’infanzia ha garantito al romanzo il suo status di classico, con l’effetto di consentirgli una stabile e duratura presenza nel mercato librario. La scelta di un titolo popolare e familiare per la traduzione italiana, un titolo che garantiva una immediata identificazione con la serie animata, ha ulteriormente contribuito al successo del romanzo. Nell’evoluzione dai primi passi televisivi a eroina acclamata, per i suoi lettori italiani la protagonista del romanzo, Anne Shirley, è semplicemente “Anna dai capelli rossi”.

By looking at the evolution of the Italian reception of L. M. Montgomery’s *Anne of Green Gables*, the study highlights how this novel acquired its “classic” status in Italy and also reveals how commercial success and popularity may influence the cultural transfer and transmission of a literary work, shaping its perception and identity in the new context. Existing Italian translation from 1980 onwards are presented in their editorial context, so as to underline the crucial role of publishers in the “making of a classic.” In order to further highlight the key role of editorial strategies in the classicizing process of Montgomery’s novel in Italy, two peritextual spaces in translated texts are closely examined: series and titles. The publication in series of children’s classics granted the novel its classic status, resulting in a lasting and stable presence on the market. The choice of a popular and familiar title for the Italian translation, allowing an immediate and positive identification with the animated television series, further contributed to its endurance. Evolving from her popular television beginnings to an acclaimed classic heroine, for her Italian readers Anne Shirley is simply “Anne of Red Hair.”

I INTRODUCTION

In 1908, Lucy Maud Montgomery published what was to become an extremely successful novel, acclaimed by readers and critics, and soon considered an international children’s classic: *Anne of Green Gables*. Sales, (re)translations, movie and television adaptations, all prove its success and timeless appeal, generation after generation. However, the Italian translation and reception of this international bestseller reveal a different picture. First translated into Italian in 1980, the reception of the novel questions the criteria used to define and identify classics, highlighting how such a status is not achieved exclusively through literary and aesthetic values. Moreover, its translation exemplifies how the cultural transfer of a foreign book depends on a plurality of factors, while also disclosing the extent to which the target cultural and literary context and its constraints influence the whole translation process both

in terms of the circumstances of translation and translator's strategies.¹ Far from being a clear, univocal and universal concept, children's classics are highly controversial and problematic, just like their definition. As Anja Müller points out, «identifying a “classic” is [...] always a question of definitions and more or less problematic criteria of selection».² The history of the Italian reception of Montgomery's novel shows how the book evolved from its popular beginnings into an acclaimed classic, listed in Italian selected bibliographies for young readers, as well as in publishers' series of children's classics. This study also reveals how, and to what extent, external factors and circumstances, such as commercial success and popularity, may influence the cultural transfer and transmission of a literary work, shaping its perception and identity in the new context.

2 THE MAKING OF A CLASSIC: MONTGOMERY'S NOVEL IN ITALY

Shortly after its first publication in 1908, *Anne of Green Gables* was translated into numerous languages (more than forty) and soon became an international bestseller and a classic of children's literature.³ Seventy-two years later, Italian readers met for the first time its red-haired heroine, Anne Shirley, thanks to the Japanese animated television series *Akage no An* based on Montgomery's novel, produced by Nippon Animation in 1979 and first broadcast in Italy in 1980. The popularity of the animated version opened the way to the Italian translation of the novel.

The time gap between the original publication of the novel and its Italian translation, along with the peculiar circumstances under which the book arrived in Italy, rise some interesting questions about how we define the classics of children's literature. Moreover, they challenge the very idea of the existence of international children's classics and the extent to which some of them are really international, that is to say what remains of the “original” works and characters once they have gone through the internationalization process characterizing the cultural transfer and transmission of children's books nowadays.⁴ Within the framework of the «commercialization and internationalization» of children's culture in Western countries,⁵ the importing process of Montgomery's novel in Italy is not exceptional: «for [...] “the children of the videosphere”, books are often channeled through to them via website films, television or videogames, and “old classics” are merely known through

¹ GISELE SAPIRO, *Normes de traduction et contraintes sociales*, in *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies. Investigations in homage to Gideon Toury*, edited by ANTHONY PYM, MYRIAM SHLESINGER and DANIEL SIMEONI, Amsterdam-Philadelphia, John Benjamins 2008, pp. 199-208.

² ANJA MÜLLER, *From Robinson der Jüngere (Robinson the Younger) to Tintenherz (Inkheart): Tracing German Children's Fiction between Realism and Fantasy*, in *Brave New Worlds. Old and New Classics of Children's Literature*, ed. ELENA PARUOLO, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2011, pp. 67-88, p. 67.

³ RUBIO, MARY-HENLEY and ELIZABETH WATERSTON, *Preface*, in LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY, *Anne of Green Gables* edited by MARY-HENLEY RUBIO and ELIZABETH WATERSTON, Norton Critical Edition, New York, Norton, 2007, pp. VII-IX

⁴ EMER O'SULLIVAN, *Comparative Children's Literature*, trans. ANTHEA BELL, London, Routledge 2005; EAD., *Does Pinocchio Have an Italian Passport? What is Specifically National and What is International about Classics of Children's Literature*, in *The Translation of Children's Literature. A Reader*, ed. GILLIAN LATHEY, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters 2006, pp. 146-162..

⁵ E. O'SULLIVAN, *Comparative Children's Literature*, cit., p. 149.

their adaptations».⁶ Perrot's remarks uphold the market and reception-oriented approach adopted by O'Sullivan, who, in her attempt to define children's classics, questions other criteria used as defining features, such as aesthetic value and universality.⁷

If classics are a «literary mystery»,⁸ children's classics are even more complex and problematic. Uncertainty, ambiguity and elusiveness seem to surround their definition, since, as Sandra Beckett notes, «the word “classic” itself is a somewhat slippery term» and «there is no easy definition of a classic, no clear criteria as to what constitutes a classic and no consensus on a definitive list of classics».⁹ Therefore, there is no single, universal, generally valid and internationally accepted definition of children's classics, and «this is because of the different contexts found in children's literature: on the one hand, we have the concept of the classic in children's literature research, on the other we have a body of allegedly international classic children's books, of “popular” classics, present in actual fact (on the market and in the public awareness), which have been handed down over a long period».¹⁰

If the term classic «generally implies aesthetic value, significance and endurance»,¹¹ one of the main problems is then represented by the selection criteria to be used as benchmarks to decide which books fit these “general” parameters of endurance, aesthetic value and significance. Furthermore, these defining parameters are not as innocent and straightforward as they may seem:

If it is adults who confer the status of “classic” on a book, does this mean that a “children's classic” has nothing to do with real children today? And what do we mean by good? Is “goodness” or “high quality” something that you can find in the text and point at? [...] ideas about what is good depend on who is reading, when, and why – although it is instructive to find out what certain people at certain times *thought* was “good”. Then what do we mean by significant? Significant for whom? And who says what is significant?¹²

⁶ JEAN PERROT, *French Classics: Between a Nostalgia for the Sacred and the Buoyancy of the Playing Child*, in *Brave New Worlds. Old and New Classics of Children's Literature*, ed. ELENA PARUOLO, Brussels, Peter Lang 2011, pp. 55-66, p. 57.

⁷ E. O'SULLIVAN, *Comparative Children's Literature*, cit.; EAD., *Does Pinocchio Have an Italian Passport?*, cit., pp. 146-162..

⁸ PETER HUNT, *British Classics on the Operating Table. Dissecting Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Through the Looking-Glass and The Wind in the Willows*, in *Brave New Worlds. Old and New Classics of Children's Literature*, ed. ELENA PARUOLO, Brussels, Peter Lang 2011, pp. 45-53., p. 45.

⁹ SANDRA L. BECKETT, *Crossover Classics: Classics for All Ages*, in *Brave New Worlds. Old and New Classics of Children's Literature*, ed. ELENA PARUOLO, Brussels, Peter Lang 2011, pp. 31-44., p. 31.

¹⁰ E. O'SULLIVAN, *Comparative Children's Literature*, cit., p. 133.

¹¹ S.L. BECKETT, *Crossover Classics*, cit., p. 31.

¹² P. HUNT, *British Classics on the Operating Table*, cit., p. 45.

Answers to these fundamental questions reveal different approaches and result in different criteria, reflecting different points of view and time- as well as culture-specific social and individual concepts of childhood. According to Anja Müller attempts at defining children's classics can be summarized in three main criteria. Ideological approaches relegate children's classics to their supposed "universality"; reception-oriented approaches identify classics in terms of productivity and market phenomena; and finally, Kümmerling-Meibauer's approach combines innovation and aesthetic quality. For her, classics are a kind of prototype in terms of genres, topics, themes or style and are therefore texts that have inspired and influenced literary production.¹³

Moving from a comparative perspective, and thus taking into account the processes of translation and adaptation often undergone by classics, O'Sullivan stresses the importance of reception and disregards aesthetic value and innovation, as they are deemed unable to effectively identify classics.¹⁴ She considers classics as titles lasting over a considerable time and generating numerous adaptations in various media, and thus having an impact on future readers and literary developments. Evaluating children's classics in terms of popularity and productivity, focusing on reception and reader response, also means admitting that aesthetic and literary values, even when undisputed, are not always enough to turn a book into a "classic" and that other factors take part in the classicizing process. The cultural transfer of Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* into the Italian context is a case in point in this respect. A central point in the Italian reception of Montgomery's novel is actually the key rôle played by publishers. O'Sullivan recognizes their importance in the selection and transmission of classics, especially in «keeping the group of classic children's books on the market»,¹⁵ since «classics are a safe bet for publishers: they sell well, copyright has usually run out so that no royalties are payable and, as they have no immediate topical relevance, their shelf-life is not limited».¹⁶ Literary texts do not appear in a vacuum, they are part of a literary tradition as well as of a book industry. They are published because of their literary value, but also as a result of economic and commercial purposes, which in turn affect translation and its norms, along with political and cultural constraints.¹⁷ In this context, publishers can actively influence and determine how a work is granted the classic status, in particular through its publication in series of children's classics.

2 BETWEEN AESTHETIC QUALITY AND POPULAR SUCCESS: *ANNE OF GREEN GABLES* AS A CHILDREN'S CLASSIC

¹³ A. MÜLLER, *From Robinson der Jüngere*, cit., pp. 68-69.

¹⁴ E. O'SULLIVAN, *Comparative Children's Literature*, cit., p. 135.

¹⁵ Ivi, p. 133.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ GISELE SAPIRO, *Normes de traduction et contraintes sociales*, cit.

Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* is nowadays indisputably considered an international children's classic, as its presence in lists of classics of children's literature proves.¹⁸ In *Anne of Green Gables: the Architect of Adolescence*, Mary Rubio analyses L. M. Montgomery's novel and explains why it is a classic, concluding that it «provides a rich literary experience for readers of all ages. It is not a novel that people outgrow».¹⁹

According to Rubio, the work stands out because of its excellence, distinctiveness, innovation, universality and popularity. The novel was a forerunner, successfully describing and depicting adolescence at a time when the term “adolescent” was not in common use, while dealing with universal themes allowing children of different generations to identify with its heroine, Anne Shirley, and her growth to maturity. Therefore, we can even consider Montgomery's novel a *Bildungsroman*, since «the unpromising little waif of chapter one who was given to all kinds of excess grows into a balanced young woman whose imaginative inner life is guided by acceptable social values».²⁰ Anne's growing up, however, cannot be reduced to the simple taming down of her rebellious and subversive power and of her difference. In the process, the little red-haired, freckle-faced Anne awakens the Avonlea community, debunking its faults, limits, and inadequacies²¹ in «her outspoken innocence».²² In this way, the universality of the novel fully emerges and reveals its capacity to speak to its readers, both girls and boys, both children and adults, generation after generation: «the collision between the child perspective and the adult one makes *Anne of Green Gables* a perennial favorite with children».²³ The “credibility” stemming from Montgomery's own experience and childhood aptly woven into the plot, humor and satire are other features that contribute to the novel's immortality and timeless success. Success and popularity, as well as the resulting intertextuality with both previous literary

¹⁸ Montgomery's novel is one of the 63 titles contained in the three-volume series of critical essays *Touchstones: Reflections on the Best in Children's Literature*, edited by Perry Nodelman, and resulting from the list of classics drawn up by the ChLA Canon Committee in the 1980s. As far as Italy is concerned, the Italian translation (*Anna dai capelli rossi*) is listed in the «Classics» section of the influential and prestigious bibliography *Almeno questi* (http://www.liberweb.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20337&Itemid=107), created by the Centro Regionale di Servizi per le Biblioteche per Ragazzi.

¹⁹ MARY RUBIO, *Anne of Green Gables: the Architect of Adolescence*, in *Touchstones. Reflections on the Best in Children's Literature*, vol. 1, edited by PERRY NODELMAN, West Lafayette, Children's Literature Association 1985, pp. 173-187., p. 186.

²⁰ M. RUBIO, *Anne of Green Gables: the Architect of Adolescence*, cit., p. 177.

²¹ M. RUBIO, *Anne of Green Gables: the Architect of Adolescence*, cit., p. 178; SHIRLEY FOSTER and JUDY SIMONS, *What Katy Read. Feminist Re-Readings of "Classic" Stories for Girls*, Basingstoke, Macmillan 1995, pp. 166-168; T.D. MACLULICH, *L. M. Montgomery and the Literary Heroine: Jo, Rebecca, Anne and Emily*, in LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY, *Anne of Green Gables*, ed. MARY-HENLEY RUBIO and ELIZABETH WATERSTON, Norton Critical Edition, New York, Norton, 2007, pp. 386-394, p. 392.

²² M. RUBIO, *Anne of Green Gables: the Architect of Adolescence*, cit., p. 178.

²³ *Ibid.*

tradition and future literary developments,²⁴ are widely highlighted by Rubio: translations into numerous languages, movie, stage and television adaptations, and sale statistics are reported to underline what a phenomenon *Anne of Green Gables* really is and its lasting influence. Reception is thus taken into account and considered as part of the classic status, demonstrating that «classics can enjoy huge popularity and commercial success, as well as critical acclaim».²⁵

The novel became an immediate best-seller and a huge success in English speaking countries, going through several editions in just a few months: «It was published concurrently in England, and had reached a fifth English imprint by May 1909. [...] in May 1914 it reached its thirty-eighth American imprint, and since then it has been constantly reissued both in Britain and the United States, as well as being widely translated and adapted for stage, screen and television».²⁶ Figures for its world-wide popularity are even more impressive: «First translated into Swedish in 1909, the book has since been translated into over thirty languages, including Arabic, Chinese, and Turkish, and Anne Shirley, Montgomery's red-haired, imaginative heroine, has been an internationally recognized household name for over a century».²⁷ Interestingly, the novel's success and popularity in non-Western countries and cultures question, once more, the modes of transmission of children's classics and highlight the processes of cultural adaptation and appropriation they undergo in the transfer, since «[t]he reception of foreign classics has much to do with the receiving culture's values, tastes, and aesthetic standards».²⁸ The international reach of the novel makes it particularly suitable for studying such dynamics:

With a remarkable thirty-five foreign-language translations, Anne has developed new roles and identities abroad, proving stunningly adaptable to new cultural contexts and functioning smoothly in the iconographies of other nations, such as Japan. Within each cultural system, Anne seems to act as a super-fractal containing multitudes of self-similar smaller Annes.²⁹

²⁴ Rubio mentions, as an example of the influence of *Anne of Green Gables* on other writers, Astrid Lindgren and Jean Little, the Canadian author of children's books (ivi, pp. 174-175). In *Comparative Children's Literature: What is there to compare?*, Maria Nikolajeva examines intertextuality in children's literature and points out the influence of red-haired Montgomery's Anne on red-haired Lindgren's Pippi (MARIA NIKOLAJEVA, *Comparative Children's Literature: What is there to compare?*, in «Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature», XVIII/1 (2008), pp. 30-40, p. 33).

²⁵ S.L. BECKETT, *Crossover Classics*, cit., p. 34.

²⁶ S. FOSTER and J. SIMONS, *What Katy Read*, cit. p. 150.

²⁷ MCKENZIE, ANDREA, *Patterns, Power, and Paradox. International Book Covers of Anne of Green Gables across a Century*, in *Textual Transformations in Children's Literature. Adaptations, Translations, Reconsiderations*, ed. BENJAMIN LEFEBVRE, New York, Routledge 2013, pp. 127-153, p. 129.

²⁸ IRENE GAMMEL, ANDREW O'MALLEY et al., *An Enchanting Girl: International Portraits of Anne's Cultural Transfer*, in *Anne's World: A New Century of Anne of Green Gables*, ed. BENJAMIN LEFEBVRE and IRENE GAMMEL, Toronto, University of Toronto Press 2010, pp. 166-191, p. 176.

²⁹ Ivi, p. 167.

Montgomery's novel has thus generated «adaptive and appropriative readings»³⁰ in the new contexts and cultures, and its popularity «in places such as Iran and Japan is based on an appropriation of these narratives to fit existing cultural expectations».³¹ In more than a century of history, through her different adaptations and appropriations, Anne has therefore reflected changes and shifts in readers' expectations and belief systems, especially with regard to constructs of girlhood.³²

3 FROM CARTOON CHARACTER TO CLASSIC HEROINE: THE JOURNEY OF ANNE SHIRLEY FROM CANADA TO ITALY

The classic status of *Anne of Green Gables* seems to be clearly and widely established, independently of the criteria used. Despite its international success, Montgomery's novel was translated into Italian only after the success of the animated series, disclosing how the corpus of so-called international classics is probably not as international and universal as it is often thought.³³ This also reveals the complexity of the processes allowing a work to cross cultural and linguistic borders. Publishers, in particular, act as a filter, selecting which titles are to be offered to readers and mediating the cultural transfer of foreign works. They play an active and crucial role not only in influencing readers' perception but also in establishing the classic status of a text. When introducing *Anne of Green Gables* in Italy, publishers drew on its acclaimed international status as a children's classic and validated it in the Italian context by publishing the novel in series devoted to children's classics.

When we consider all published translations, with no distinction between first editions and reprints, the advanced search tools on the online Italian National Library Service catalogue (Opac SBN) retrieve 32 results and 8 different unabridged translations (see [Table no.1](#)). Moreover, in 2014, *Il gatto e la luna* published a new Italian version by Ilaria Isaia, who translated all the eight novels of the series devoted to Anne Shirley, thus making them available to Italian readers for the first time.³⁴ These ebooks are not listed in the Opac catalogue and therefore are not included in the above-mentioned results. Quite interestingly, out of the 33 translated versions published since 1980, only one was done by a male translator, i.e. the 2018 annotated translation by Oscar Ledonne and Enrico De Luca, edited by the latter.³⁵ If maintaining that in translating children's literature women historically outnumber men is certainly too risky, it is however undeniable that many women both write

³⁰ Ivi, p. 172.

³¹ Ivi, p. 170.

³² Cf. MCKENZIE, ANDREA, *Patterns, Power, and Paradox*, cit..

³³ Cf. E. O'SULLIVAN, *Does Pinocchio Have an Italian Passport?*, cit.

³⁴ LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. ILARIA ISAIA, [s.l.], *Il gatto e la luna* 2014.

³⁵ EAD., *Anne di Tetti Verdi*, a cura di ENRICO DE LUCA, trans. OSCAR LEDONNE and ENRICO DE LUCA, [s.l.], Lettere Animate Editore 2018.

and translate for children; some of them actually started by translating children's books and then moved to writing.³⁶

The first Italian translation by Luisa Maffi dates back to 1980 and was published by Mondadori in two different series – “Narrativa Mondadori per ragazzi” and “I libri da leggere”, with illustrations by Giovanni Mulazzani.³⁷ The following year, Mursia, a well-known publisher of children's literature, included the translation by Maria Grazia Odorizzi, illustrated by Carlo Alberto Micheli, in its prestigious series “Corticelli”, devoted to classics.³⁸ With the exception of the 1981 Marcella Dallatorre's version published by La Sorgente,³⁹ these early translations were constantly reprinted in the following years and we have to wait until the late 1980s for a new one: in 1988, Fabbri published Rossana Guarnieri's translation in the series “I cristalli”, with illustrations by Claudio Solarino.⁴⁰ In the 1990s and 2000s, these translations, especially versions by Odorizzi and Guarnieri, were republished a number of times, sometimes shifting to a different series. In the wake of the recent classic revival, most likely due to the economic crisis affecting the Italian publishing industry in the years 2011-2014, Mondadori retranslated the novel and published a new version by Gianna Guidoni with illustrations by Silvia Provantini.⁴¹ The translation first appeared in the series “I classici” in 2012 and two years later, in 2014, was reprinted in the “Oscar junior classici”. In 2014, Giunti included the novel in the series “I classici del Battello a vapore”, with a translation by Maria Bastanzetti and illustrations by Linda Cavallini.⁴² In 2013, however, Giunti also issued a version defined as «traduzione raccontata» (translation told) by Vanna Cercenà,⁴³ an Italian author of children's books. Among the most recent versions, Gallucci published a new translation by Angela Ricci in the series “UAO. Universale d'avventure e d'osservazioni”,⁴⁴ as part of a wider project, which includes so far five translated novels of the *Anne of Green Gables* series. Interestingly, the cover of the first volume features an image from the 2017 Netflix's series adaptation *Anne with an e* (*Chiamatemi Anna*, in Italian). This choice confirms the importance of

³⁶ CHIARA ELEFANTE, *Poil de Carotte et ses traductions italiennes au féminin: l'évolution d'un classique littéraire*, in «Documents pour l'histoire du français langue étrangère ou seconde», XLVII- XLVIII (Décembre 2011-Juin 2012), pp. 299-315., p. 300.

³⁷ LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY, *Anna di Green Gables*, trans. LUISA MAFFI, Milano, Mondadori, 1980. The same year, ERI junior published an “anonymous” translation (EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, Torino, ERI junior, 1980), at least on the basis of the data and information available on the Opac SBN catalogue.

³⁸ EAD., *La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini*, trans. MARIA GRAZIA ODORIZZI, Milano, Mursia, 1981.

³⁹ EAD., *Anna dei Tetti Verdi*, trans. Marcella Dallatorre, Milano, La sorgente, 1981.

⁴⁰ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. ROSSANA GUARNIERI, Milano, Fabbri 1988.

⁴¹ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. GIANNA GUIDONI, Milano, Mondadori 2012.

⁴² EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. MARIA BASTANZETTI, Milano, Piemme 2014.

⁴³ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, told by VANNA CERCENÀ, Firenze-Milano, Giunti junior 2013.

⁴⁴ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. ANGELA RICCI, Roma, Gallucci 2018.

adaptations into other media and popular success in the marketing and promotion of children's books, as well as for reinforcing their classic status and assuring their endurance over time. Moreover, all the translations of Montgomery's series display a round label containing Netflix's logo and the series title, so as to further remind potential readers of the connection.

Table 1. Italian translations of Anne of Green Gables (1980-2020)

Title	Translator	Illustrator	Publisher	Year	Series
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>			ERI junior	1980	
<i>Anna di Green Gables</i>	Maffi, Luisa	Mulazzani, Giovanni	Mondadori	1980	Narrativa Mondadori per ragazzi
<i>Anna di Green Gables</i>	Maffi, Luisa	Mulazzani, Giovanni	Mondadori	1980	I libri da leggere
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizzi, Maria Grazia	Michelini, Carlo Alberto	Mursia	1981	Collana Corticelli
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizzi, Maria Grazia (transl.); Armanetti, Anna (rev.)		Mursia	1981	Collana Corticelli
<i>Anna di Green Gables</i>	Maffi, Luisa	Mulazzani, Giovanni	Mondadori	1981	Narrativa Mondadori per ragazzi
<i>Anna dei Tetti Verdi</i>	Dallatorre, Marcella		La sorgente	1981	
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizzi, Maria Grazia	Michelini, Carlo Alberto	Mursia	1982	Collana Corticelli
<i>Anna di Green Gables</i>	Maffi, Luisa	Mulazzani, Giovanni	Mondadori	1982	I libri da leggere
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizzi, Maria Grazia	Michelini, Carlo Alberto	Mursia	1986	Collana Corticelli

<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana	Solarino, Claudio	Fabbri	1988	I cristalli
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizi, Maria Grazia	Michelini, Carlo Alberto	Mursia	1992	Collana Corticelli. N. S
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizi, Maria Grazia	Michelini, Carlo Alberto	Mursia	1995	Collana Corticelli
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		Fabbri	2000	I delfini Fabbri editori
<i>La vera storia di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini</i>	Odorizi, Maria Grazia		Mursia	2000	Collana Corticelli. N. S
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		Fabbri Editore	2004	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		Bompiani per la scuola	2005	Samar-canda
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana	De Conno, Gianni	Fabbri	2005	I classici illustrati
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana	De Conno, Gianni	Fabbri	2007	I classici illustrati
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		BUR ragazzi	2009	BUR Rizzoli. Ragazzi
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		BUR ragazzi	2010	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana	De Conno, Gianni	Rizzoli	2010	Classici illustrati
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		BUR ragazzi	2011	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		Corriere della sera	2012	Classici dell'avventura

<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guidoni, Gianna	Provantini, Silvia	Mondadori	2012	I classici
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guidoni, Gianna	Provantini, Silvia	Mondadori	2014	Oscar junior classici
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Bastanzetti, Maria	Cavallini, Linda	Piemme	2014	I classici del battello a vapore
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Isaia, Ilaria		Il gatto e la luna	2014	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana	De Conno, Gianni	Rizzoli	2017	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Guarnieri, Rossana		BUR ragazzi	2017	BUR Rizzoli. Ragazzi
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>			Centauria	2018	I grandi classici per ragazzi
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi 1</i>	Ricci, Angela		Gallucci	2018	UAO. Universale d'avventure e d'osservazioni
<i>Anne di Tetti Verdi (Annotated by Enrico de Luca)</i>	Ledonne, Oscar, De Luca, Enrico		Lettere Animate Editore	2018	

Besides movie and television adaptations, Montgomery's novel was also abridged and adapted in textual forms (see [Table no. 2](#)). Such abridged versions include the two 1980 picturebooks by ERI junior⁴⁵ and Mondadori,⁴⁶ based on the animated series, and the adaptation by Anna Solinas published by Mursia in the series "Beccogiallo", with the illustrations by Raffaella Zardoni.⁴⁷ In particular, "Beccogiallo" is a series devoted to classics, fables, and fairy tales, created in 1980 to adapt works and make them suitable for younger readers (aged from six years old). More recently, in 2015, the novel was

⁴⁵ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, abridged edition, Torino, ERI junior 1980.

⁴⁶ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, abridged edition, Milano, Mondadori 1980.

⁴⁷ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, adapt. ANNA SOLINAS, illustr. RAFFAELLA ZARDONI, Milano, Mursia 1989.

adapted in the popular Geronimo Stilton's series,⁴⁸ and abridged in a version for readers aged from four years old by the prestigious children's publisher EL.⁴⁹ Finally, the graphic novel by Mariah Marsden and Brenna Thummler based on Montgomery's novel was translated into Italian by Laura Tenorini and published by Il Castoro in 2019.⁵⁰

Table 2. Italian adaptations of *Anne of Green Gables* (1980-2020)

Title	Adaptation/ Translation	Illustrator	Publisher	Year	Series
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>			ERI junior	1980	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>			Mondadori	1980	
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Solinas, Anna	Zardoni, Raffaella	Mursia	1989	Beccogiallo
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Solinas, Anna	Zardoni, Raffaella	Mursia	1994	Beccogiallo
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Cercenà, Vanna [translation told by Vanna Cercenà]	Rhemrev, Edwin (cover)	Giunti junior	2013	Classici tascabili
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Geronimo Stilton	Infantino, Paola; Zaffaroni, Giulia	Piemme	2015	Grandi storie
<i>Anna dai capelli rossi. Il graphic novel</i>	Marsden, Mariah (adaptation) Tenorini, Laura (translation)	Thummler, Brenna	Il Castoro	2019	

⁴⁸ GERONIMO STILTON, *Anna dai capelli rossi*, Milano, Piemme 2015.

⁴⁹ STEFANO BORDIGLIONI, *Anna dai capelli rossi*, San Dorligo della Valle, EL 2019..

⁵⁰ MARIAH MARSDEN, *Anna dai capelli rossi. Il graphic novel*, trans. LAURA TENORINI, illustr. BRENN THUMMLER, Milano, Il Castoro 2019.

<i>Anna dai capelli rossi</i>	Bordiglioni, Stefano	Zichella, Margherita	EL	2019	Una fiaba in tasca
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Considering how and when Montgomery's novel arrived in Italy, editorial strategies prove to be crucial to its Italian reception and to the whole classicizing process. By including it in well-known and sometimes prestigious series devoted to classics of children's literature, publishers attempted at bridging the time gap with the original publication, a time span in which *Anne of Green Gables* had become an international classic. Series, as peritextual space, is less prescriptive than other peritexts, such as pre- and postfaces or any other form of prefatorial texts, be they introductory or concluding. Such texts distinguish for their ability to guide or complete the reading, also depending on the author's status and on the target readers.⁵¹ Whereas these peritexts provide a reading angle, more or less overtly, series mainly guides the reader by hinting at what kind of book they are going to buy and read. However, it can transfer some of its features to the book itself, since «the series emblem [...] amplifies the publisher's emblem, immediately indicating to the potential reader the type of work, if not the genre he is dealing with».⁵² Series thus certainly serves as a reference framework for readers, but is less likely to guide their interpretation of the text than prefatorial peritexts. As underlined by Pederzoli, from a reader's perspective, series seems to meet a need for recognition and readability, since books from a specific series are generally bought because this belonging guarantees, in theory, a particular content, a specific literary or educational level, and a certain reading pleasure.⁵³ Each series is created within a specific cultural, intellectual, editorial, and commercial project, and by including a book the publisher recognizes a set of shared features and matching criteria.

If we look at the Italian series in which Montgomery's novel has been published since 1980, it is clear that the "classic" label represents their common feature, whether it is explicitly used or not in their names. The series "Corticelli", for example, is presented on the publisher's website as a collection of unabridged editions of the greatest classics of children's literature, whose 190 titles have made millions of Italians discover reading and its pleasures.⁵⁴ Other series include Mondadori's "I libri da leggere" (Books to read) – a name implying a canon or at least a list of selected books to be read because of their "high quality" – "I classici" (Classics) and "Oscar junior classici" (Oscar junior classics). The latter is based on the publisher's famous and historical paperback series of adult fiction, here adapted to offer prestigious children's classics in paperback unabridged editions, with colour illustrations. References to the status of children's classics are made also in Giunti's series "I classici del Battello a vapore" (Classics of Battello a vapore) and

⁵¹ Cfr. GENETTE, GÉRARD, *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997.

⁵² Ivi, p. 22.

⁵³ PEDERZOLI, ROBERTA, *La traduzione de la littérature d'enfance et de jeunesse et le dilemme du destinataire*, Brussels, Peter Lang 2012, p. 83.

⁵⁴ *Chi siamo*, «Ugo Mursia Editore», URL <https://www.mursia.com/pages/chi-siamo>, last accessed Dec., 27th 2020.

“Classici tascabili” (Paperback classics). The series “Il Battello a vapore”, in particular, is a well-known and popular series of Italian children’s literature, where classics are published in unabridged versions and with critical materials. Rossana Guarnieri’s translation is certainly the most reprinted and re-published version, shifting not only series but also publisher within the RCS publishing group (Fabbri, Bompiani, Rizzoli). Among the various series in which Guarnieri’s version appeared, besides the “Classici illustrati Fabbri” (Fabbri Illustrated classics), the notable and famous series of classics “I Delfini” is worth noting. The series

was issued in 1994 and edited by the academic Antonio Faeti. It was intended for young readers (10-12 year olds) but also for a mixed readership including teachers, parents and librarians. The titles published in the series included “crossover classics” and literary works from the traditional western canon. They have been restyled and are currently being republished by BUR (Rizzoli).⁵⁵

The mixed nature of the readership is further confirmed by the presence of some peritexts distinguishing the series, in particular «[i]ts director, as well as the founder of children’s literature as an academic discipline in Italy, Antonio Faeti wrote an introduction [or an afterword] for each of the volumes in this collection».⁵⁶ The series is thus fundamental to shape the reader’s perception of a book *ante textum* and has a validating power, being able to grant a book a certain status, including that of children’s classic.

Whereas series as a peritext successfully introduced Montgomery’s novel as a classic to the Italian publishing market and readers, by creating a recognizable literary and editorial framework, generally such a classic status is not reinforced and underlined by blurbs. Blurbs, covers and titles give readers their first impressions and their purpose is more overtly commercial and promotional. All these elements surrounding, wrapping, extending, presenting and promoting the translated text contribute therefore to its “new life” in the target culture. In particular, «the interpretation of cover art and blurb text may be read as indicative of the way in which the translation has been marketed».⁵⁷ Quite surprisingly, translations published by Mursia in the “Corticelli” series does not feature blurbs, as if the publisher relied on the reputation and prestige of the series to promote the novel and validate its literary and aesthetic value. This seems to be further confirmed by the mention «edizione integrale» (unabridged edition) on the front cover. Unlike Mursia and its strategy, the other publishers include blurbs and use them to focus on the novel, its plot and its heroine, so as to direct readers’ attention to the book’s content and Anne’s outstanding qualities. Blurb texts briefly summarize the

⁵⁵ ELENA PARUOLO, *Introduction*, in *Brave New Worlds. Old and New Classics of Children’s Literature*, edited by ELENA PARUOLO, Brussels, Peter Lang 2011, pp. 9-28, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁶ ROBERTA PEDERZOLI, *The ‘Paratext Effect’ in the Translation of Children’s Classics: the Case of La Guerre des Boutons*, in *Brave New Worlds. Old and New Classics of Children’s Literature*, ed. ELENA PARUOLO, Brussels, Peter Lang 2011, 147-168, p. 148.

⁵⁷ LEAH GERBER, *Marking the Text: Paratextual Features in German Translations of Australian Children’s Fiction*, in *Translation Peripheries. Paratextual Elements in Translation*, ed. ANNA GIL-BARDAJ, PILAR ORERO and SARA ROVIRA-ESTEVA, Bern, Peter Lang 2012, pp. 44-61, p. 45.

plot, usually hinting at the novel's beginning, and emphasize Anne's distinctive characteristics to arouse readers' curiosity and encourage identification. While the classic status of the novel is extensively neglected in these texts, Anne takes centre stage with her transformative and creative imagination, her distinctive physical characteristics, her rebellion and her power to transform people, as shown by these few examples:

(1) Un bel pomeriggio di giugno, Anna aspetta il signor Matthew dei Tetti Verdi alla stazione di Riochiaro. È un'orfana ed è convinta di aver finalmente trovato una famiglia tutta per lei. Ma una bruttissima sorpresa la aspetta: ai Tetti Verdi attendevano...un maschio! E adesso che cosa ne sarà di lei? Ti piacciono: le ragazze coraggiose, la fantasia, le storie a lieto fine? Allora...questo libro è per te.⁵⁸

(2) Tredici anni, capelli rossi, il viso punteggiato di lentiggini, la testa piena di sogni e una fantasia travolgente, Anna Shirley arriva a sorpresa nelle vite di Marilla e Matthew. E le cambierà per sempre.⁵⁹

(3) Quando Anna arriva alla porta dei Cuthbert, Marilla rimane molto sorpresa: aveva deciso di adottare un ragazzino che aiutasse lei e suo fratello alla fattoria, non certo l'orfanella magrolina, dai capelli rossi e dalla lingua lunga che si trova davanti. Ma rimandarla indietro si rivela presto impossibile: l'esuberante candore, l'eccezionale vitalità, l'acuta ironia e persino l'insopportabile testardaggine di Anna cambieranno per sempre la vita del burbero Matthew e della severa Marilla.⁶⁰

If series contributed to the classic status of *Anne of Green Gables* in Italy, the titles of the translations further clarify how different needs and interests, both literary and commercial, intertwine in the definition and transmission of classics. Introduced in Italy following the popular success of the animated series, in order to enjoy an enduring presence on the publishing market and in the production of children's books, Montgomery's novel had to be percei-

⁵⁸ L.M. MONTGOMERY., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, told by VANNA CERCENÀ, cit. English translation: «One fine June afternoon, Anna waits for Mr. Matthew of Green Gables at Bright River station. She is an orphan and believes she has finally found a family of her own. But an unwelcome surprise awaits her: at Green Gables they were waiting for...a boy! And what about her now? Do you like bold girls, imagination, happy endings? Then...this book is for you».

⁵⁹ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. ROSSANA GUARNIERI, Milano, BUR ragazzi, 2013. English translation: «Thirteen years old, red-haired, freckled, a head full of dreams and an irresistible imagination, Anna Shirley unexpectedly enters the lives of Marilla and Matthew. And she will change them forever».

⁶⁰ EAD., *Anna dai capelli rossi*, trans. GIANNA GUIDONI, Milano, Mondadori 2014. English translation: «When Anne arrives at the Cuthbert's door, Marilla is very surprised: she had decided to adopt a young boy to help her and her brother on the farm, not the skinny, red-haired, big-mouthed orphan girl in front of her. But sending her back soon turns out to be impossible: Anne's feisty candour, exceptional vitality, acute irony and even unbearable stubbornness will change the life of grumpy Matthew and stern Marilla forever».

ved by readers as “deserving” to last. One way to achieve this aim was to exploit and reinforce the strict connection with the animated series, since «literature is also disseminated through other channels, such as film, television, comics and computer games» and «when we read a book, we are often struck by its similarities to others we know».⁶¹

The title, «the obvious stepping stone into the text»,⁶² is a fundamental liminal space, as it introduces the book in a certain and specific way to an audience and gives the readers their first impressions. According to Mclean, «the title offers guidance, attempts to control the reader’s approach to the text, and the reader’s construction of that text. [...] no title [...] leaves the reader unaffected and fails to influence, whether positively or negatively».⁶³ The title functions therefore as an invitation to the potential reader and as a key to the reading. Its choice, both in source and translated text, depends on a plurality of factors: the text itself, of course, but also the potential reader, publishing and commercial aims, market’s expectations and trends. Being such a crucial paratextual element, the complex and difficult task of translating titles involves both the translator and the publisher. In this context, Elefante highlights the contribution of the *skopostheorie* to their translation, underlining how translators must carefully analyze target reader’s expectations and preferences, in order to fulfill the “appeal” intention of the author and the commercial purposes of the publisher. Only after such an analysis can they choose between a domesticating title, recognized as familiar by the reader, or a foreignizing title, highlighting the text’s “otherness”.⁶⁴

Drawing on Elefante’s remarks, the analysis of the titles for the Italian editions of *Anne of Green Gables* confirms the different interests and needs at stake. Significantly, in most of the titles, Montgomery’s heroine is presented as Anne «of red hair» (*Anna dai capelli rossi*) rather than «of Green Gables», thus making the identification with the popular television red-haired character immediate and automatic. This mechanism of identification is two-fold: it meets readers’ expectations and needs, offering them a recognizable and familiar reference, while serving the commercial purpose of publishers, who bet on its popularity. However, the first Mondadori translation was published as *Anna di Green Gables*, a literal translation partially reproducing the original title, while the contemporary abridged illustrated version by the same publisher was given the title *Anna dai capelli rossi* (*Anne of Red Hair*). Such a choice discloses two different strategies, one undoubtedly more market-oriented and addressing younger children – the main audience of the television adaptation, the other obviously attempting to “respect the literality” of the original.

This same effort significantly marks also the titles of the other early translations. In 1981, La Sorgente published Marcella Dallatorre’s translation as *Anna dei tetti verdi* (*Anne of Green Roofs*). More interestingly, that same year, Mursia published Montgomery’s novel under the title of *La vera storia*

⁶¹ M. NIKOLAJEVA, *Comparative Children’s Literature*, cit., p. 30.

⁶² MARIE MCLEAN, *Pretexts and Paratexts. The Art of the Peripheral*, in «New Literary History», XXII/2 (1991), pp. 273-279, p. 275.

⁶³ Ivi, pp. 275-276.

⁶⁴ CHIARA ELEFANTE., *Traduzione e paratesto*, Bologna, Bononia University Press 2012., p. 77.

di Anna dai capelli rossi, ovvero Anne dei verdi abbaini, which back-translates as *The true story of Anne of red hair, or Anne of green dormers*. The unusually long title exemplifies an attempt to mediate between two opposite demands: commercial and economic needs, on the one hand, literary and critical concerns, on the other. The two-part, symmetrical title embodies both of them: the first part winks at the popularity and success of the animated series and, therefore, aims at attracting young readers; the second part very likely hints at a sort of cultural project undertaken by the publisher and aiming at promoting the literary value of the novel, by preserving the literality of its original title. Despite such an effort, a closer look at the covers of the different editions reveals that the expression «Anna dai capelli rossi» graphically stands out. Through different visual and typographical solutions, such as capital letters, the most recognizable element of the title is hence given emphasis and appeals to the reader.

When the new translation by Rossana Guarnieri was published at the end of the 1980s, commercial and popular success had probably by then definitively established Montgomery's novel as «Anna dai capelli rossi». This is the title Guarnieri's translation was given, as were the abridged version by Mursia in the "Beccogiallo" series and recent retranslations of the novel. The new translation published by Mondadori in 2012 is significantly called *Anna dai capelli rossi*, confirming the shift towards the popular perception and image of the book. Similarly, Maria Bastanzetti's translation and Vanna Cercena's retelling, both published by the Giunti publishing group, were issued as *Anna dai capelli rossi*. Deviating from this established trend, in 2018, the edition annotated and edited by De Luca tried to restore the "original" colour and meaning through the title *Anne di Tetti Verdi*. In this case, the name of Montgomery's heroine is kept in English, while the reference to the Cuthberts' farm, Green Gables, is brought back and the place is given an Italian translation («Tetti Verdi»), as underlined by the use of the preposition «di» and capitalization. The problematic and challenging nature of the title of Montgomery's novel in translation is highlighted also by Derelkowska-Misiuna with regard to its Polish translations:

among the most notable mistranslations of Bernsteinowa's is the word "gable". The original meaning of a triangular upper end of a house wall joining the sloping parts of the roof was substituted by the word "wzgórze", which means a low hill. It is difficult to tell whether Bernsteinowa [in 1912] did not know the original meaning of the word or found it difficult to translate it into Polish in a sufficiently poetical way. None of the translators [...] dared to change the title. "Ania", a naturalized version of the name "Anne", and the mistranslated "green gables" turned into "green hills" were to stay in Polish culture.⁶⁵

From a diachronic point of view, French editions of Montgomery's novel show similar, yet distinctive, issues in the translation of the title. Although since the mid-1980s both the novel and the screen and television adaptations have featured different expressions that include «pignons verts» for green

⁶⁵ ANNA DERELKOWSKA-MISIUNA, *Anne of Green Gables: Towards the Ideal or Mass Production of Translations?*, in *La Retraduction en littérature de jeunesse / Retranslating Children's Literature*, ed. VIRGINIE DOUGLAS and FLORENCE CABARET, Brussels, Peter Lang 2014, pp. 193-207, p. 195.

gables, early translations completely erased any reference to Green Gables and the Cuthberts' farm. In 1925, the novel was first translated into French by the Swiss publisher J. H. Jeheber with the title *Anne, ou les Illusions heureuses* (Anne or the happy illusions),⁶⁶ where the main focus is on Anne's boundless and powerful imagination («illusions») and on the happiness that these transformative imagination and creativity bring to her. In 1964, Hachette published *Anne et le bonheur* (Anne and the happiness)⁶⁷ in its popular and successful series for young readers "La bibliothèque verte". Once again, happiness is foregrounded in the title as the key achievement of the heroine's transformation and growing up. The spatial reference to the Cuthberts' farm, and hence to the Avonlea community, completely disappears in both titles, positioning Anne and her eventual happiness as the central focus of the book. In 1986, the Quebec publisher Québec-Amérique issued the new translation *Anne...la maison aux pignons verts* (Anne...the house with green gables)⁶⁸ as part of its project to make the novels of the series available to French readers. The following year this same translation by Henri-Dominique Paratte is published in France by Julliard as *Anne: la maison aux pignons verts* (Anne: the house of green gables).⁶⁹ Interestingly, the reference to Green Gables is restored in titles and introduced to France via the Canadian translation, suggesting that belonging to the cultural context where the novel originated urged both the translator and the publisher to maintain a close reference to the original title, also when exporting the translation to France. Since then, not only has Paratte's version been republished in several editions, but «pignons verts» has also established itself as the "official" translation. This is confirmed by recent retranslations, such as *Anne des pignons verts*⁷⁰ published in 2017. The evolution of titles in the French speaking world thus shows a shift to foreignization, as further proved by the forthcoming *Anne de Green Gables*,⁷¹ where this trend reaches perhaps its climax, since the name of the Cuthberts' farm is kept in English.

While unabridged Italian translations initially tried to question the relationship with the original title and somehow attempted at keeping a sign of its presence, abridged versions and adaptations, as well as later translations, definitely chose the path of popular identification. As noted by Elefante, it is extremely rare for a text, especially a foreign classic, to be published with a new title when it is retranslated, since the title represents a peritextual element intrinsically linked to a book's life and therefore hard to modify.⁷² In

⁶⁶ LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY, *Anne, ou les Illusions heureuses*, trans. S. MAERKY-RICHARD, Genève, J. H. Jeheber 1925.

⁶⁷ EAD., *Anne et le bonheur*, trans. SUZANNE PAIRAULT, Paris, Hachette 1964.

⁶⁸ EAD., *Anne...la maison aux pignons verts*, trans. HENRI-DOMINIQUE PARATTE, Montréal, Québec-Amérique 1986.

⁶⁹ EAD., *Anne: la maison aux pignons verts*, trans. HENRI-DOMINIQUE PARATTE, Paris, Julliard 1987.

⁷⁰ EAD., *Anne des pignons verts*, trans. LAURE VALENTIN, Minzac, Éditions Il était un bouquin 2017.

⁷¹ EAD., *Anne de Green Gables*, trans. HÉLÈNE CHARRIER, Bordeaux, Monsieur Toussaint Louverture 2020.

⁷² C. ELEFANTE, *Traduzione e paratesto*, cit., p. 9.

the translation of *Anne of Green Gables*, such a change occurred in the French speaking context, under specific circumstances, while attempts to introduce a title different from the one of the animated series were not successful in Italy. Probably, Italian young readers inextricably associated and identified Anne Shirley's story, and therefore Montgomery's novel, with its screen adaptation, and breaking such a link through a different title proved too difficult or even disadvantageous for publishers. Apparently, pursuing the strategy of capitalizing on the popularity of the animated series and its title turned out to be safer and more effective.

If titles greatly contributed to establish Anne Shirley as «Anne of red hair» for her Italian readership, also cover illustration usually foregrounded this distinctive physical trait, as already noted by McKenzie in her analysis of book international covers of the novel across a century.⁷³ Covers and in-text illustrations form the visual or iconic paratext of the book, with cover arts probably being the most outstanding visual feature. However, since «the copyright for images is not always sold along with the rights to publish the verbal text»,⁷⁴ translations tend to use images and illustrations different from those of the source text. Moreover, as Gerber underlines,

it is difficult to analyse the translation of cover images because of the tendency for reprints to be issued with altered or even new images, particularly in texts that have experienced high sales and lasting appeal. [...] Another widespread trend is for a text to be reissued with new cover art after it has been adapted for screen (either film or television) so that the new cover features the promotional image of the screen version.⁷⁵

These general remarks hold even truer in the case of classics, due to the broad time span of their (re)publication. However, the analysis of cover images of a children's classic offers an interesting perspective on changes and «transformations that occur in our perceptions of that text».⁷⁶ In particular, «illustrations on the cover of a book must adhere to the artistic conventions of the time, but make the book sufficiently distinctive and attractive in appearance to make the potential buyer pick it up».⁷⁷ Cover illustrations of Italian editions of Montgomery's novel thus reflect changes in aesthetic and artistic trends and in cultural expectations. With few exceptions, like the 2014 edition published by Bur Ragazzi featuring a whitish cover with a red sketched farm, almost all covers focus on Anne, drawing our attention and our eye to her. In a variety of artistic styles, Anne's red hair metaphorically contributes to conveying an empowering sense of freedom, both physical and mental. She is often portrayed with her braids into the wind, smiling, her dreamy eyes staring at the reader or reaching for the horizon, thus creating

⁷³ A. MCKENZIE, *Patterns, Power, and Paradox*, cit., p. 130.

⁷⁴ LEAH GERBER, *Marking the Text*, cit., p. 54.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ A. MCKENZIE, *Patterns, Power, and Paradox*, cit., p. 128.

⁷⁷ *Ivi*, p. 127.

dynamism and aptly «captur[ing] Anne's powers of mental movement through imagination».⁷⁸

Over the years, the novel has shaped its Italian “identity” and image, and forty years after its first Italian translation, Anne Shirley is undoubtedly «Anne of red hair» for the Italian readers. We may contend that the Italian title derives from the popular success of the animated series of the same name, and that the novel owes a “cultural debt” to the Japanese television adaptation. Still, it is undeniable that red hair is a specific and distinctive characteristic of Montgomery's heroine, «her red hair [...] is surely her most notable physical characteristic»⁷⁹ and ultimately, this expression satisfactorily identifies her. Red hair is a clear, visible, external sign of her difference and otherness within the Avonlea community.⁸⁰ Red hair is a kind of physical double of Anne's psychological dimension and it turns out to be an integral part of the narrative, setting some central episodes in motion: «With a temperament as distinctive as her startling red hair, this alien orphan overturns rigid conventions, questioning accepted mores from religion to female ambition, falling into hilarious scrapes, and showing the power of imagination to broaden minds and win love».⁸¹ Red hair is what makes Anne herself:

If we remember nothing else about *Anne of Green Gables*, we remember that this garrulous orphan girl has red hair, that the red hair troubles her sorely, and that it also gets her into trouble. Anne's flaming red hair is her visible and identifying sign: it is what gives her mythopoetic power and makes the helpless orphan denizen of a small Canadian island a heroine for all seasons and all climes, “popular” in the widest sense.⁸²

Red hair is part of Anne's identity, is what defines her attitude and distinctiveness, her “rebellion” and subversiveness, her outspokenness, her satire and her actions, all exposing «the restrictive nature of Avonlea society, where convention and custom rule all conduct».⁸³ To borrow Juliet McMaster words, «Anne's hair is irreducibly a part of her self; and one she must come to terms with»,⁸⁴ one which pushes her to take action. Blaming her red hair for the world's rejection and her orphan's experience, she decides to dye her hair, she «takes steps and *acts* – though not without counting the cost. Her hair is her own, like Jo [March]'s, and she takes responsibility not just for ha-

⁷⁸ Ivi, p. 146.

⁷⁹ Ivi, p. 129.

⁸⁰ M. RUBIO, *Anne of Green Gables: the Architect of Adolescence*, cit., pp. 176-177.

⁸¹ A. MCKENZIE, *Patterns, Power, and Paradox*, cit., p. 128.

⁸² JULIET MCMASTER, *Hair Red, Black, Gold, and Nut-Brown*, in LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY, *Anne of Green Gables*, ed. MARY HENLEY RUBIO and ELIZABETH WATERSTON, Norton Critical Edition, New York, Norton 2007, pp. 402-409, p. 402.

⁸³ Ivi, p. 392, cf. S. FOSTER and J. SIMONS, *What Katy Read*, cit. pp. 166-168.

⁸⁴ J. MCMASTER, *Hair Red, Black, Gold, and Nut-Brown*, cit., p. 407.

ving it but for doing something about it».⁸⁵ The lesson Anne does learn from the unsuccessful hair dyeing episode is one extremely important in terms of identity, since «in doing something about her hair [...] she has learned to claim her own appearance and her own identity, and to be proud of both».⁸⁶

Although its choice most likely depends on the circumstances surrounding the importation, translation and transmission of Montgomery's novel in Italy, *Anna dai capelli rossi* represents a successful translated title. It is undeniable that this choice involves a displacement: attention shifts from space – the place, and thus the community, where Anne grows up («Green Gables» is the name of the Cuthberts' house) – to the character, focusing on her identity. However, the title succeeds in creating a lasting impression on the reader: it refers to one of Anne's most outstanding traits, one of her most visible features and, as such, one easy to exploit, literarily and commercially. At the same time, it offers the reader a familiar reference, easier to identify than green gables, dormers or roofs, as some of the early titles back-translate.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The journey through the history of the Italian translation and reception of *Anne of Green Gables* shows, as O'Sullivan has widely underlined,⁸⁷ the central role of translation, in its wider meaning, in the cultural transfer of foreign books, and classics in particular. Aesthetic and literary value and commercial success are not always enough to make an international classic travel across linguistic and cultural borders. Despite being an international bestseller, acclaimed by both critics and the general public, Montgomery's novel remained unknown in Italy for a long time and it was not translated until the animated television series became popular among children. Without the animated series, L. M. Montgomery's novel would probably not have made its way into the Italian readership, or it would have taken even longer. Adaptations in various media are therefore an integral part of the transmission process of classics, both promoting their cultural transfer and reinforcing their status. The Italian reception of *Anne of Green Gables* thus shows how classics acquire their status and prove to be *enduring, good* and *significant* thanks to both popular and critical acclaim.

To many Italian readers, Anne Shirley is still first and foremost the red-haired eleven-year-old orphan girl seen on TV screens, and then met in the pages of the book – if they ever read it. I also dare to say that, because of its popular success as *Anna dai capelli rossi/Anne of Red Hair*, many of those readers will most likely still ignore, as grown-ups, that the original title of the novel does not contain any reference to the heroine's red hair and refers, instead, to the Cuthberts' house where orphan Anne arrives at the beginning of the novel. Beyond any discussion on how successful and appropriate the translation strategies adopted for the title were, this confirms that reception makes the book and that translation, as part of the transmission process, in-

⁸⁵ Ivi, p. 408.

⁸⁶ Ivi, p. 409.

⁸⁷ E. O'Sullivan, *Does Pinocchio Have an Italian Passport?*, cit.

fluences the way in which classics and their *timeless* heroines and heroes are perceived across cultures.

The peculiar circumstances surrounding the Italian translation of Montgomery's novel inevitably affect its reception and the subsequent classicizing process. The publication in series of children's classics elevated the novel to the status of classic, resulting in a lasting and stable presence on the market, as reprints, republications and retranslations prove. The choice of a popular and familiar title for the Italian translation, allowing an immediate and positive identification with the animated television series, further contributes to its endurance. Series and titles, as peritextual spaces, thus show that «paratexts are often a defining trait of classic books».⁸⁸ Series, in particular, through their “labeling” power unveil the key, though often overlooked role played by publishers: «rightly or wrongly, publishers have the power [...] to grant a book the status of children's “classic” by publishing it in a different form precisely thanks to its paratext».⁸⁹ In this respect, the Italian translation of *Anne of Green Gables* is emblematic and proves, once again, how complex and multifaceted children's literature and classics are. Over the years, Montgomery's novel has acquired its classic status also in Italy, thanks to the interplay between the various literary, publishing, commercial and translational factors at work in children's literature. Their inextricable mixture first allowed the novel to reach the Italian readership and then granted *Anne of Green Gables* the place it deserves also in the Italian literary production for children.

⁸⁸ R. PEDERZOLI, *The 'Paratext Effect'*, cit., p. 148.

⁸⁹ Ivi, p. 165.

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