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COMPROMISES IN L.M. MONTGOMERY'S *ANNE* -SERIAL
Literary Freedom within the Restrictions of Victorian Society

A Pro Gradu Thesis

by

Anna Leena Ahonen

Department of English
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ABSTRAKTI

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
ENGLANNIN KIELEN LAITOS

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on tarkastella kanadalaisen kirjailijan Lucy Maud Montgomeryn *Anna* -sarjaa feministisen kirjallisuuskritiikin näkökulmasta ja ennen kaikkea osoittaa mitä ristiriitoja kirjailija joutui kohtaamaan työssään yrittäessään tasapainotella ympäristön asettamien rajoitusten ja omien kirjallisten pyrkimystensä välillä. Tutkielmassa osoitetaan miten viktoriaanisen ajan aatteet vaikuttivat kirjallisuuteen ja Montgomeryn tekemiin valintoihin ja miten nämä ympäristön odotusten ja kirjailijan pyrkimysten väliset ristiriidat ilmenevät *Anna* -sarjassa.

Tutkielmassa todetaan, että edellä mainitut ristiriidat vaikuttavat tekstiin monin eri tavoin. Ensimmäiseksi: Tekstissä voidaan havaita selkeitä kompromisseja, mikä ilmenee esimerkiksi luonnekuvauksen muuttumisessa persoonallisesta henkilökuvauksesta viktoriaanisen roolimallin suuntaan. Samankaltaista muutosta voidaan havaita myös juonenkehittelyn tasolla. Toiseksi: Kirjailija turvautuu usein symboliikkaan ja alluusioihin kirjoittaessaan asioista, joita hän ei pysty suoraan käsittelemään. Kolmanneksi: vaikka *Anna* -sarjan kuvaus on erittäin romantisoitua ja täten se voidaan laskea kuuluvaksi romanttiseen genreen, kirjailija käyttää tekstissään paljon myös komiikkaa ja ironiaa, jotka antavat romaaneille realistisen lisävivahteen ja kerronnalle syvyyttä.

Edellisen vuosisadan vaihteessa naisen elämän päämäärän katsottiin kiteytyvän viktoriaanisen ajattelutavan mukaan avioliittoon ja äitiyteen. Koulutus alkoi saada jalansijaa myös naisten keskuudessa, mutta koulutuksen tarkoituksena ei ollut niinkään urakehitys, vaan paremmat edellytykset aviopuolison ja äidin rooliin. Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan *Anna* -sarjaa myös historiallisen näkökulman kautta, esimerkiksi naisen koulutusta ja asemaa työelämässä ja perheessä, mikä omalta osaltaan selittää kirjailijan tekemiä valintoja.

Lisäksi tutkielmassa perehdytään lyhyesti L.M. Montgomeryn elämänkertaan sekä muuhun tuotantoon, mikä valottaa hänene asemaansa kirjallisuudessa.

Vaikka *Anna* -sarja on perinteisesti katsottu kuuluvan lastenkirjallisuuteen ja lähinnä sen alalajiin, tyttökirjoihin, tässä tutkielmassa todetaan, että perinteisesti vakavan tutkimuksen ulkopuolella olleet kirjallisuuden lajit eivät suinkaan ole kelvottomia tutkimuskohteita, vaan ne tarjoavat erittäin mielenkiintoisen ja monikerroksisen tutkimusalueen.

Asiasanat: feminist literature criticism, L. M. Montgomery, girl's books.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Primary sources:	Abbreviations
Editions used for quotations	
Anne of Green Gables	*Green Gables*
Anne of Avonlea	*Avonlea*
Anne of the Island	*Island*
Anne of Windy Poplars	*Windy Poplars*
Anne's House of Dreams	*House of Dreams*
Anne of Ingleside	*Ingleside*
Rainbow Valley	*Rainbow*
Rilla of Ingleside	*Rilla*

Other sources:	Abbreviations
Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language	*Webster*

INTRODUCTION

The advent of feminist literary criticism has opened doors to many branches of literature, which have earlier been excluded from the area of 'real literature', in terms of justificating their position as the subject of academic research. These formerly overlooked branches include the literature written by women and children's literature, which will be the subject area of the present study. Since the opportunity to study these works in the academic world has during recent years presented itself, it is important to take a closer look to the literature in question and at the same time, strengthen their questioned position in the accepted literary canon.

The theoretical part of the present study takes a look to the development of feminist literary criticism, dealing with different approaches such as 'Images of Women' -criticism and gynocritics. The definitions of children's literature will also be discussed in this context, since the literary status of children's literature has also been subordinate to the traditional literary canon, just as the writings of/for women have often been until recently.

This study concentrates on *Anne* -novels, written by the Canadian writer, Lucy Maud Montgomery in the beginning of the twentieth century. Most of the studies on Montgomery until quite recently have concentrated either on biographical research or on Montgomery's first novel, *Anne of Green Gables*. (Åhmansson 1991: 14). In this study, however, the author will be introduced briefly in the background information, since the nature of this study, eg. its focus on the textual details of the novels, it is not relevant to put too much emphasis on biographical details. Further, even though the present study does not want to remove *Anne* -novels from the context of children's literature, it will, however, attempt to prove that *Anne* is not only for children, but for adults, too, and that a close reading of the novels

should indeed be encouraged, since the novels offer many different layers which probably have been overlooked when the reader has been, so to speak, too young
to read in between the lines. This is the reason why the *Anne* -serial has attracted also academic research during recent years.

In addition to *Anne of Green Gables*, the other seven novels of the *Anne* -serial will also be the subject of close reading, the purpose of which is to reveal Montgomery's views on women, her use of the eternal types of femininity and how the characters function in different areas of life, such as home or community. Even though the emphasis is on the traditional roles of women, such as the role as a mother or a wife, which are central in the *Anne* -novels, since they concentrate on the domestic environment, the purpose of the present study is to reveal more about the woman's role than there is to be seen on the surface.

It can be claimed that despite of Montgomery's traditional approach to the woman's role, her views were quite modern in the sense that the educational and intellectual aspects of a woman's life were also dealt with in detail. She touched upon areas that were considered to be too sensitive to deal with in novels, such as marital difficulties and sexuality in general. However, these themes were literally only 'touched' upon, since a closer scrutiny was not accepted within the literally genre Montgomery was a part of (eg. romantic and/or children's literary genre) or because of the demands of the time.

Since close reading of the *Anne* -novels reveals instances, where the need for the author to express herself obviously clashes with the demands of the time, it will serve as a fruitful basis for a researcher to study where these clashes occur and which demands have forced the author to make a compromise and choose an ending or a resolution that may not have been the same if the author had been granted a complete literary freedom.

There are several ways with which the clashes can be detected, even though it may be a challenge for the researcher.

Firstly, it can be claimed that if the storyline (or a character) noticeably changes to a stereotypical direction according to Victorian ideals, and the reader is left, in short, disappointed, this disappointment can be interpreted as a sign of a clash taking place in the text. This type of a clash often indicates that the author has given in to the literal/social expectations and written a resolution to a storyline to accommodate them. Secondly, the use of symbolism and references to biblical or mythological characters or incidents may indicate that the writer is saying something that is hidden between the lines and can be interpreted only by a more enlightened reader eg. an adult, but usually not by a younger reader who does not have the necessary background education to understand the allusions and see behind the textual level. To a certain extent, this allows the author to deal with subjects that cannot be openly discussed. Thirdly, certain incidents or characters may be overly romantized or described in terms of seemingly far fetched euphemisms or elaborate descriptions, which can be taken to indicate the author's submission to the romantic genre. This may seem at times a little annoying to the reader, but is, however, a typical feature of the genre in question.

The main focus of the present thesis will be to find these clashes or the 'points of tension' by close reading of the *Anne* -novels and examining them within the framework of the literary conventions of the time and/or the romantic genre, not forgetting the historical perspective and the demands of the society at the time.

In this context, it has to be noted that the present thesis is mainly an adult reader's re-examination of the *Anne* -novels and it will attempt to show how twenty years of personal development has also affected the way how the reader receives the messages *Anne* has to offer.

However, before going to the *Anne* -novels, we will start by taking a look at the development of feminist literary criticism and its meaning for the literary studies, since it is the starting point of the present thesis.

2. FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM

The field of literature, since the beginning of literary history, can be described as an area that has been reserved mainly for men. This in a sense that also women have been writing as long as the men, but their works were rarely considered to be of any importance in the literary field as a whole. Furthermore, if we include oral tradition to the field of literature, women have had a very important role, since women in the domestic field were often the ones through whom the stories and tales passed on from generation to generation. However, men were often considered to be god-like Authors, who had the power to create, whereas women supposedly lacked this creative force. As Gilbert and Gubar point out, the male sexuality was considered to be the essence of literary power (Gilbert and Gubar 1979:4) and women writers in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century, some even in the nineteenth century, felt somehow apologetic about their frivolous pastime of attempting the pen (Gilbert and Gubar 1979:61). The established literary canon i.e. the writers and the works that have been perceived of great importance as we observe literature as a whole (eg. William Shakespeare and his works), is notably a male canon, which has excluded women almost completely. If women have produced literary works, which they undoubtedly have done, they have been considered only scribblers, whose works have only little, if any, literary value and consequently, women's writing has been excluded from many literary anthologies. However, this does not necessarily mean that

women's writing has been poor in quality, but rather that the readers and especially the critics inside the established literary canon have been male (Åhmansson 1991:7; see also Niemi 1988:7). On the other hand, contradictory claims have also been made, such as the one by John Stuart Mill (1806-73), who claimed that not only are women weaker in a physical sense, but this weakness also comes forward when comparing women's literary or artistic work to those made by men. Mill states that women lack originality and even though they are capable of expressing thoughts and ideas, they have not produced any new ideas that could lead to a new era of thinking or to establishing of a new school.

> If we consider the works of women in modern times, and contrast them with those of men, either in the literary or the artistic department, such inferiority as may be observed resolves itself essentially into one thing: but that is a most material one; deficiency of originality. Not total deficiency; for every production of mind which is of any substantive value, has an originality of its own - is a conception of the mind itself, not a copy of something else. Thoughts original, in the sense of being unborrowed - of being derived from the thinker's own observations or intellectual processes - are abundant in the writings of women. But they have not yet produced any of those great and luminous new ideas which form an era in thought, nor those fundamentally new conceptions in art, which open a vista of possible effects not before thought of, and found a new school. (Mill 1869(1996):183)

It can be argued that even if Mill is considered to be one of the early supporters of the feminist movement and that his views were ahead of their time, we still have to note that Mill himself was very much a part of the traditional patriarchal establishment.

It is difficult to point out the exact moment of the beginning of feminist literary criticism, but as Janet Todd suggests, feminist literary criticism probably began, 'when the first woman became aware of her relationship to language and conscious of herself as writer, speaker, reader or auditor.'

However, the first major works in the field which set up the lines for American and French feminist criticism were Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1928) and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949). (Todd 1988:18) When considering the beginnings of feminist literary history and criticism, Woolf's work is clearly more important, since she 'was literary through and through', whereas Simone de Beauvoir's themes were not particularly close to the literary field. In Todd's view, 'Beauvoir's book is less useful for feminist literary history in its tendency to universalize as nature rather than historicize as culture the distinctions of men and women'. (Todd 1988:18-19) However, Beauvoir does exemplify logically and systematically many of the injustices towards women in the Western society, which contributed much to the women's movement and from that on, also to feminist criticism.

Feminist literary criticism, as any other scholarly method, has gone through several different stages, where the emphasis has been shifted back and forth mainly in between the writer, the reader and the text. Already in the beginning of feminist criticism, at the point where feminist criticism as we know it now, was not even aware of its own existence, the question of emphasis was not at all clear. This is clearly put into words in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* in 1928 as she ponders the question of women and fiction:

> The title women and fiction might mean, and you may have meant it to mean, women and what they are like; or it might mean women and the fiction they write; or it might mean women and the fiction that is written about them; or it might mean that somehow all three are inextricably mixed together and you want me to consider them in that light. (Woolf 1928/1956:5-6.)

To answer that question, it is necessary to shed some light on a few approaches in feminist criticism and show how they emphasize the relations between writer, reader and text.

2.1 The 'Images of Women' criticism or Feminist reading

One of the earliest forms of feminist criticism focused on what was called 'images of women' (Ruthven 1984:70). This kind of beginning is quite logical if one considers the fact that the early feminist criticism concentrated on the images that the traditional male literary canon had constructed of women. The purpose of this kind of study was firstly, to unmask the oppressive nature of stereotypical portrayal and the downright aggression towards women that the canonical literature so often held, and secondly, to make women aware of these images made by the patriarchal system and consequently raise women's consciousness about their situation (Ruthven 1984:71; Todd 1988:21, 23). Since the literary texts remain the same, it was necessary to shift the emphasis on the reader and try to find a non-traditional way of approaching the text, in this case 'a re-reading of a text from a feminist point of view' or *re-vision*. Re-vision (in this context intentionally written with an hyphen) 'often takes as its starting point earlier traditional or patriarchal readings of the same text, striving to uncover dimensions which formerly have been ignored'. In a way re-vision can be seen as a sort of reading between the lines in which the reader is aware of both her own experiences of living in a male oriented society and of the oppressed state in which women have been living for a long time. (Åhmansson 1991:37)

In American colleges in the early 1970s most of the courses on women in literature concentrated on the study of female stereotypes in male

writing (Moi 1985:42, Todd 1988:23). These images were naturally not portraits of real, authentic women, but rather images of what men thought women to be. However, since men were not the only sex found guilty of the stereotypical portrayal of women in literature, women were considered to be even worse than male writers, since they, unlike the men, were betraying their own sex, as Susan Koppelman Cornillon, the editor of *Images of Women in Fiction: Feminist Perspectives*, points out in her essay (Moi 1985:42-43, see also Todd 1988:23). Thus, 'Images of Women' criticism could also be quite accurately described as the study of *false* images of women in literature written by both sexes (Moi 1985:44; emphasis original). However, it has to be remembered that in the field of literature, it can hardly be hoped that realism would be the only accepted choice of genre in portraying women, even though in Anglo-American feminist criticism, the insistence of authenticity and truthful reproduction of the 'real world' have been considered as the most important literary values, and consequently, feminist criticism has been perceived as hostile to non-realistic forms of writing. (Moi 1984:47).

The stereotyping found in 'Images of Women' criticism is often based on binary categories, which classify women either as madonnas or whores, mothers or mistresses etc, just as Simone de Beauvoir categorized the world according to binary oppositions such as male/female, self/other, reason/feelings etc. (Beauvoir: 1949). Considering how deeply these images are rooted in our history, since many of them are already found in the Bible and classical mythology, it is no wonder that they have also been a part of literary tradition well into the twentieth-century. (Beauvoir 1949:114; Ruthven 1984:72) The mythical masks, created by men, that have been fastened to women's faces in literature by male artists have been there for two reasons. Firstly, to lessen male fear of female "inconstancy" and secondly to possess the female more thoroughly by putting real

women into categories labelled according to the 'eternal types' of womanhood. (Gilbert and Gubar 1979:16-17; Ruthven 1984:74; Todd 1988:23) Further, women have not been only strictly categorized according to these types but also always in relation to men. Women have been portrayed as daughters, mothers, mistresses and wives, but hardly ever as independent subjects. (Ruthven 1984:72-73) This is hardly a surprise considering the overall patriarchal system of society, where men have always come first and the women have been the (in)significant Others. It is important to notice that women's literary tradition is not a separate sphere, but walks hand in hand with the development of women's position in society in general. This kind of socio-historical approach to literature was a common method in the early feminist criticism. Also, 'Images of Women' criticism originally stemmed from the idea that academic feminism was conceived of initially as some sort of sociology in which literary text could be used as evidence and picked over to see what kind of role-models for women they supplied (Ruthven 1984:70).

In the study of the images of women in literature, the concept of role-models is crucial. As Cheri Register, in an essay published in 1975, suggests, 'A literary work should provide *role-models*, instill a positive sense of feminine identity by portraying women who are "self-actualizing, whose identities are not dependent on men"' (Moi 1985:47; Ruthven 1984:73; emphasis original). Moi continues this train of thought by adding that this kind of portrayal may however lead to a lack of authenticity, since not all real-life women are as independent and self-actualizing as Register insists. On the other hand, a literary work is always a product of its time, which makes the 'unrealistic', stereotypical images of women produced in the nineteenth and in the beginning of the twentieth century, and even today, quite realistic role-models for the women of the time. Another example of role-models in literature are the conduct book for

ladies from the eighteenth century on that were written for women as guides of how to be 'real women'; angelic, modest and confined to self-lessness (Gilbert and Gubar 1979:23), which is quite an opposite image to what Register called for in the 1970s. Further, it has to be remembered that even if a definite piece of literature is observed as a depiction of the 'real world', it is still a portrayal, not a piece of reality. If the 'literariness' of literature is not taken into consideration, the relationship between reality and literature as well as the relationship between author and text are blurred. This sort of view-point is not only extremely naive, but also forgets that the earlier writers also wrote their works in a different kind of social and ideological conditions, which made it impossible for them to fulfil the demands of feminist critics studying the 'images of women' in the early 1970s. (Moi 1985:48-49)

As an act of reading, 'images of women' criticism is seen as the life ('experience') of the author and the life of the reader. When the reader becomes a critic, *she* must present an account of *her* life for *her* public and thus make the public aware of the position from which *she* speaks. This kind of approach where the reader has the right to learn about the writer's experience strongly supports the basic feminist contention that no criticism is 'value-free', but that we all speak from a position shaped by cultural, social, political and personal factors. (Moi 1985:43; emphasis added) Since the reader must use her knowledge and experience, it seems that it would be impossible for men to study 'images of women', or to get involved in the feminist criticism at all, because they lack the understanding of actually being in the feminine sphere. However, this kind of discrimination is exactly the same that the women have been experiencing in the literary field since its beginnings, thus it would be not sensible to turn the tables around and exclude men from feminist approaches to literature. It may be true that women do not only write, but

also read differently from men, which could indicate that men are by nature incapable of practising feminist literary criticism. (Mellor 1988: 4) However, this reason still does not justify exclusionism in feminist literature criticism. Instead, different views stemming from different backgrounds and even despite of gender should be considered as an advantage and consciousness-raiser on both sides of the male/female dichotomy. This problem has also been noted among male researchers, who now in turn are questioning their right to enter the field of feminist studies, as K.K. Ruthven writes in his *Feminist Literary Criticism.*

> I mention such general objections to the writing of books by men on feminist topics because they function rhetorically to dissuade men from entering the debate on the grounds that they are somehow disqualified from doing so. This is a new experience for most men. And while it may be said that it will do them good to feel excluded for a change (because women have always felt excluded by non-feminist criticism) I think the long-term effects of exclusionism are bad. (Ruthven 1984:2).

The first step away from 'images of women' criticism, in which the main purpose was to uncover the stereotypes made by men and make the reader aware of these stereotypes, was to find another angle from which to study the literary works and thus achieve a different kind of understanding. This angle was brought into feminist literary criticism in 1979, when Elaine Showalter presented her criticism against the traditional feminist approaches and introduced the term 'gynocritics' (Ruthven 1984:94).

2.2 Gynocritics

The critical method of re-vision received criticism, since it was considered to be just a continuation of the traditional approach to literary texts. Even though feminist critique, or feminist reading, may reveal some aspects that have been ignored by traditional critics, it is still a male oriented approach, in a way 'a study of what men have experienced and thought women to be' (Todd 1988:41; Moi 1985:76; see also David 1987:xii). Further, it is impossible to be a re-visionist when reading certain female writers. This is because of the fact that they have been excluded from the traditional canon and their works have been considered as sub-literary. For a feminist critic, this absence from the male literary tradition by certain women writers, is an obvious starting point in criticism from a feminist point of view. (Åhmansson 1991:38)

As Elaine Showalter argues in her article *Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness* 'the revisionary feminist critique is redressing a grievance and is built upon existing models' (Åhmansson 1991:37). The re-visionary approach or feminist critique is still traditionally androcentric, and places woman in the place of the reader interpreting the male texts, when a feminist critic should concentrate on woman as writer and on the problems of female creativity and language. As Ruthven argues, the negative task of deconstructing androcentrism can quite truthfully be called 'feminist critique', but the term does not apply so well to the positive side of analysing and describing the writing of women. This kind of new approach was called 'gynocritics' or the study of women's writings (Ruthven 1984:93-94; Moi 1985:76; Meese 1986:72).

The main approaches of Showalter's 'gynocritics' were firstly, 'the history, themes, genres and structures of literature by women, secondly the 'psychodynamics of female creativity' and thirdly, the 'studies of

particular writers and works'. (Ruthven 1984:94; Moi 1985:75). Further, gynocritics would not only emphasize 'women as writers' but also 'women as the producers of textual meaning'. (Ruthven 1984:97; Todd 1988:41). In Showalter's view, the feminist critic should not turn to 'gynocritics' only to learn 'what women have felt and experienced', but she further indicates that this experience is directly available in the texts written by women. (Moi 1985:76).

'Gynocritics', however, can be criticized for the fact that in its search for experience, transmitted through literary works, the actual text disappears. A text is only a medium through which the 'experience' can be found. In Moi's view, Showalter emphasizes that 'the feminist critic should attend to historical, anthropological, psychological and sociological aspects of the female text; in short, it would seem, to everything but the text as a signifying process' and 'the only influences Showalter appears to recognize as constitutive of the text are of an empirical, extra-literary sort'. (Moi 1985:76) Showalter did not attempt to deconstruct traditional approaches to literature, but rather to construct a whole new female framework necessary for the study of women's writing, which was based solely on female experience, not on traditional male models and theories. (Todd 1988:41) Showalter's anti-theoretical approach can be explained by the fact that she wanted to free feminist literary criticism from traditional male-originated theory and at the same time was afraid of falling to a trap of female theorizing, which would not be any better if compared to male theory. In an essay *Toward a Feminist Poetics* (1979), Showalter states: "Literary science, in its manic generation of difficult terminology, its establishment of seminars and institutes of postgraduate study, creates an elite corps of specialists who spend more and more time mastering the theory, less and less reading the books." (Todd 1988:40). However, in her later essay, *Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness* (1981), Showalter took a step

back and saw her earlier anti-theoretical position as an evolutionary stage and suspected that there was, indeed, a need for a theoretical consensus. (Todd 1988:43). On the other hand, even though 'gynocritics' did try to establish a new canon, which would not be just a continuation or a different branch of the male tradition, it has to be remembered that since feminist criticism's location is inside the academy and since the deconstruction of patriarchal culture, if ever even possible, is still far from today, the practice of gynocritics has to find its place 'within, alongside, beneath or above' this culture. (Todd 1988:42) It can also be said that feminist criticism in general does not have a common theory or methodology, but the uniting factor is the ideology that ties the different approaches together. Feminist literary criticism is an approach in literary studies, which tries to uncover the discrimination towards women. Further, this new feminist awareness increases the possibility to change the world toward a more equal society. (Niemi 1988:8).

In this study, I would like to emphasize especially this so called feminist awareness in the traditional girl's books, which have been accused of portraying girls unrealistically. It has been claimed also, that the women characters in the novels could not offer a today's reader a good and, even more importantly, an independent role model. Furthermore, if we consider the deconstructional methods that have always been linked closely to feminist studies (eg. Ruthven 1984: 51), it can be claimed that even though these methods are very useful to a certain extent, it is still no use deconstructing or over-theorizing works of literature to a non-existence, or in other words, labelling certain works not good after removing them from their proper context, such as the time frame in which they were written.

Since this study concentrates on the so called "girl's fiction", it is necessary to shed some light on children's literature in general and its relationship to the traditions of feminist literary criticism.

3. FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Children's literature - despite of its long history - has been excluded from the traditional literary canon in very much the same way as women's writings. As Peter Hunt points out, serious criticism of children's literature sounds like a contradiction in terms (Hunt 1990:6). However, in the last decades, criticism in this field has also risen into a position that allows it to be a subject of academic research. Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig make this same conclusion in their work about girls' fiction when they suggest that 'Children's books are no longer something to be grown out of: they have acquired a literary standing, with its attendant glamour; they can be criticized as seriously as anything else.' (Cadogan and Craig 1976: 372).

When we think about children's literature, there is also the question of how we define it. It is clear that there are some works that have been written by the author deliberately for children. However, this is not necessarily always the case, since some of the works that are considered to be children's literature were never specially intended for children, though they had certain qualities that attracted children and that is how the works found their main audience. This fact has led to the argument that there are no such things as books for children, only books which children happen to read. (Hunt 1990:91). Or, if this question is extended to the limit, how do we define children, since there are also books that

have been written for 'children of all ages' (Henley Rubio 1984: 111). On the other hand, if we think of children's books as a literary genre, this approach regards them as sub-category of literature proper. For children's literature to achieve this position, as it seems to have largely done in the past few years, would bring along many advantages. Firstly, research in the field of children's literature would be able to concentrate on the literary works themselves rather than waste time and space on self-justification and defence. (Hunt 1990: 8) Secondly, there has been a tendency even with the best known pieces of children's literature, such as *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Wind in the Willows*, researchers have felt a need to find an excuse to justify their work, which in turn has led to attempts to prove that these works are 'really allegories, or deeply psychological parables, intended to convey disguised truths to initiated adults'. (Hunt 1990: 36) However we wish to study children's literature and whatever our view of children's literature may be, it is important to have the academic acceptance, which leads to intellectual acceptance and allows us to treat this branch of literature simply as a part of the whole field of literature, without the need to justify its importance in every turn. (Hunt 1990: 8).

In addition to the obvious similarity between feminist literary criticism and children's' literary criticism in terms of their subordinate position in the whole field, we will find that in the study of girls' books this combination of approaches is extremely useful already since the continuum 'children's' literature - girls' books - feminist approach' has an obvious logic in the terms themselves. Since the *Anne* -novels, which are the main focus of this study, are often referred to as children's classics, which attract readers generations after they were first published, we are intrigued by the question of what it is in these novels that make them so appealing to children and adults time after time. Further, since the girls'

books are without exception written from a girl/woman's point of view, since both the author and the protagonist are female, feminist criticism will reveal us more details of what these novels are truly all about in terms of the feminine and how it is expressed. One might even suggest that these novels have some kind of character trait we could call eternally feminine, since the female readers of different generations seem to find something in the novels to which they can relate to. These traits are examined later in connection with different areas of a woman's life, such as marriage, motherhood and so on, but before we start looking at these more closely, it is necessary to shed some light to the life of the author, to *Anne* -serial in general and the time frame in which the serial was written.

4. L. M. MONTGOMERY AND THE *ANNE* -SERIAL

The Canadian writer Lucy Maud Montgomery created the character of Anne Shirley in the beginning of the 20th century. The first novel of the serial *Anne of Green Gables* was published in 1908 and was followed by five other novels. However, since the readers wanted to know more about Anne, Montgomery filled in a few gaps in Anne's life by writing two additional novels to the serial. Anne-serial is a piece of literature that has up to now been usually excluded from the field of "real" literature. The reasons for this are various. Firstly, it is written by a woman in the beginning of the 20th century. As mentioned before, literary tradition has been reserved mainly for men up until recently. It is no surprise that many of the earlier women writers have hidden their real identities behind pseudonyms or plain initials, as L. M. Montgomery has done, in order to be taken seriously in the literary field where most of the writers and even more importantly, the critics have been male. However, it can also be

argued that knowing their place in society, not many women writers of that time even tried to create a great novel - or at least they did not admit it in public. Montgomery certainly did not, but considered herself to be more of a scribbler instead of a serious writer. This sentiment, which can be interpreted as Montgomery's very own belief of herself, also comes forward in the Anne-serial. Anne also wrote, but could not imagine herself as a real writer (*House of Dreams*, 136), a sentiment shared by Captain Jim also (*House of Dreams*, 142). Secondly, Anne-serial is written for women. At this point one could argue that *Anne* -serial is not written for all women, but mainly for children and adolescent girls. It is true that if L. M. Montgomery has been mentioned in literary anthologies or in other works in the field of literary history (which she quite often is not), she has been referred to as "a writer of children's fiction" or "a writer of girls' books". However, this interpretation is not necessarily the whole truth. As Gabriella Åhmansson suggests in her doctoral thesis, Montgomery did not write to a definite age group, but to female audience in general (Åhmansson 1991:14). This could very well be true, since even though Montgomery begins Anne's story from a young girl of 11-years, she does let her grow up and introduces many aspects of the lives of older women and at the same time, she has also been able to weave into the story very realistic details of women's lives in the turn of the century, if not always from Anne's point of view, then through other characters. On the other hand, even though many readers of *Anne* -novels probably have been and will be in their early adolescence, it can be claimed that many of the readers return to the books many times as they grow older. Even if the romantic magic of Anne's world may have disappeared, after the reader has gathered more experience in her own life, the books, however, now offer other aspects that probably have not revealed themselves for the reader earlier, but have been left between the lines in the early

adolescence. As it is in the real world, some of the events in one's adolescence will become more understandable after we are distanced ourselves from them. This is true also in connection with literature and we can assume that the viewpoint we have towards literary works will be different in different ages.

At this point, it is important to note the focus of the present thesis, since the tensions found in the novels examined are not necessarily obvious to the adolescent reader, but rather reveal themselves as the reader returns to the novels later in life. This can be interpreted as a sign of the author's need to express more that it was possible for her in her text and as the adult reader becomes aware of something lacking in the text, he or she has found a presumable tension point, or a clash as they are called in this theses, which has already existed in the mind of the author.

For the novels in orger to create a temporal and real context, the next chapter will shed some light to the author of the *Anne* -novels and also give some information of her other works.

4.1 Biographical look on L.M. Montgomery

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born on November 30, 1874, in Clifton, Prince Edward Island. Although few women of the time received a higher education, Montgomery attended Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown, where she received her teacher's certificate in 1894 and her teacher's licence in 1895. She went on to Dalhousie College (1895-96) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where she worked after graduation as a reporter and columnist for the Halifax *Echo*.

She gave up a promising career to return to Cavendish, Prince Edward Island, to care for her aging grandmother. During this time she

began writing poetry and short stories for American and Canadian periodicals. In 1906, she began to work on her first novel, *Anne of Green Gables*, which she described as "merely a juvenilish story, ostensibly for girls". However, as the novel was published in June 1908 by an American publisher, it attracted audience far beyond expectations. At the request of her publisher, Montgomery wrote a sequel to *Anne of Green Gables* the next year (2. *Anne of Avonlea*, 1909) and this was followed by six other books in later years. (3. *Anne of the Island*, 1915; 5. *Anne's House of Dreams*, 1917; 7. *Rainbow Valley*, 1919; 8. *Rilla of Ingleside*, 1921; 4. *Anne of Windy Poplars*, 1936; 6. *Anne of Ingleside*, 1939. The ordinal number refers to the order according to the plot, which differs from the publication order.) Even though the sequels were also very popular, Montgomery herself admitted that they did not reach the level of the first novel. The reason for this may have been that the charm of the adolescent Anne lost some of its appeal as she had to grow up. (Klinck 1965:345) On the other hand, Montgomery wrote the sequels to *Anne*, among several other novels, because of the publisher's demand, so it is not surprising that one might notice that the books have been written with the popular market in mind (Henley Rubio 1984: 111). One of Montgomery's many achievements in the literary field, was to bring her own home, Prince Edward Island, to the world literary map as she gave her contribution to the Canadian literature. Even though L. M. Montgomery does bring her own home environment, Prince Edward Island, to the forefront in many of her descriptions of nature and surroundings, she did not set out to write a great, especially *Canadian* novel (which may have been the goal of many Canadian male writers), but to describe life from a woman's point of view in general. Neither did she want to be judged by the standards of the critics in the great national race to write the Great Canadian Novel, which seemed to be the goal of many Canadian writers at the time (Åhmansson 1991:50).

Even though Anne-novels are the best known of her works, she also created other popular characters, such as Emily of the New Moon (*Emily trilogy*) and Sara Stanley (*The Chronicles of Avonlea*). On the whole, Montgomery was a very productive writer and during her lifetime she published, all in all, around 500 poems, nearly 600 short stories and 20 novels, many of which have inspired television series in the 1980s and 1990s. In addition to the abovementioned material, she also kept a personal journal between 1889 and 1942, which total some 5100 pages. These journals have been available to scholars since 1992, 50 years after the death of L.M. Montgomery, and they have since been of great help to scholars wishing to link her writings to a biographical perspective. This, along the fact that Montgomery and her works have also become the object of 'serious' studies, is a proof that her works have lived on and probably will do so among the generations to come. (Henley Rubio 1984:109-110, 119)

Before analysing the texts themselves, it is useful to understand why feminist literary criticism is a useful starting point in studying the so called girls' books, such as the *Anne* -serial. This theme will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.2 *Anne* -serial from the viewpoint of feminist literary criticism

As mentioned before, the development of feminist literary criticism has opened many doors when considering literature that has been earlier considered sub-literary, such as children's literature or girls' books, which can actually be taken as a sub-category of children's literature. Further, feminist literary criticism has offered a new way of observing literature that has been mostly ignored until now.

Firstly, feminist literary criticism started from the study of "images of women", which concentrated on how women have been portrayed in traditional literature. In this case the literature could be divided into literature written by men and that written by women, of which the first has traditionally gained more attention. Since the changes and experiences about a woman's life are usually more profound if they come from the person's inner self, it makes more sense to examine the literature written by women themselves (gynocritical approach), since this kind of approach reveal more of women's experience and this experience is directly available in text written by women (Moi 1985:76). When considering *Anne* -serial, this kind of approach could lead to interesting observations of how even women writers themselves actually portray women as self-sacrificing, obedient and always secondary to men. At first glance this might actually seem true, since women in *Anne* -books are portrayed in a very traditional way. However, it has to be remembered that there are many levels to a text and the true meaning (if there ever is one) is seldom found before going deeper into hidden meanings. On the other hand, every writer is a product of his/her time and for the turn of the century women writers it must have been especially difficult to bring forward their views and beliefs about women's lives or the world itself, especially if their views differed from those that were considered as acceptable. This is clearly put into words in Rachel Blau DuPlessis' work *Writing beyond the ending. Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers.*

> To compose a work is to negotiate with these questions: What stories can be told? How can plots be resolved? What is felt to narratable by both literary and social conventions? Indeed, these are issues very acute to certain feminist and women writers, with their senses of the untold story, the other side of a well-known tale, the element's of women's existence that have never been revealed. (DuPlessis 1985: 3)

These questions are especially important in this study, since the main focus will be put on exactly to those points in the texts where the author has presumably pondered over the abovementioned questions in her own writing process. Even though the purpose of this study is certainly not to re-write Anne's story, it will be interesting to examine how and why the writer has reached particular resolutions in the plot and sub-plots of the serial. The clashes in these resolutions would probably not have taken place if the author had had complete literary freedom in her writings.

However, as Elizabeth Epperly points out, Montgomery was not a radical herself, either in her own life or in her writings, which would make it difficult to describe her as a feminist writer. In Montgomery's own view, she wanted to fit in the respectable society and also to take on the responsibilities her culture designated for her. This view of life can also be seen in her heroines, such as Anne Shirley, who embraces traditions and even when she rebels, she only does so up to a point. (Epperly 1992:17). Further, one of the main methods of early feminist literary criticism was the re-vision, in which the texts (usually written by the famous male writers of the classic literature) were read by women and interpreted by them. However, when studying Montgomery's works, it is quite hard to be a re-visionist, as Åhmansson points out, since Montgomery's texts were not even read by traditional critics, which would be a natural starting point for a feminist critic of today (Åhmansson 1991:38). Naturally, this makes the re-visionary approach impossible, but on the other hand this can also be seen as an advantage, since the earlier interpretations will not give today's researcher any presuppositions or disturb in any way while reading Montgomery's texts.

Feminist criticism has been accused of insisting on realism and thus being hostile to non-realist forms of writing (Moi 1984:47). This sentiment probably stems from the idea that literature has been filled with images of

women that have nothing to do with real women. As mentioned, also Montgomery fell into the trap of romanticism, which creates characters that are not necessarily quite believable. Her main character Anne - despite of her obvious faults in the beginning of the serial eg. the lack of the so called proper upbringing - grows up to be a woman almost too good to be true. For a young reader it is not necessarily a disturbing feature about the book, but an older reader may become annoyed by the seemingly faultless main character. An example of the above over-praise is found in the following, where Anne is described through the eyes of Gilbert, her future husband.

> In Gilbert's eyes Anne's greatest charm was the fact that she never stooped to the petty practices of so many of the Avonlea girls - the small jealousies, the little deceits and rivalries, and palpable bids for favor. Anne held herself apart from all this, not consciously or of design, but simply because anything of the sort was utterly foreign to her transparent, impulsive nature, crystal clear in its motives and aspirations. (*Avonlea*, 169)

The change in Anne's character from a lively chatterbox to an ideal woman and a mother is clear example how the description of a character maturation may deprive her of the credibility as a true, lifelike person. This kind of negative development is often an indication of a clash in the character description in the novel.

However, there may be several reasons why the author has chosen to depict Anne in this way. Firstly, as pointed out in the "images of women" criticism, there was a need for role models. These role models were also a kind of mirrors, in which a woman could see herself and hopefully, grow in a better direction. Today, from feminist literary criticism's point of view, literature should provide women with role models that are self-actualizing and independent (mainly from men), which is close to the definition of a good role model. However, if one is

studying texts from the beginning of the century, when the Victorian thinking was still prevalent, this kind of demand is hardly in its right place. When observing the role model Anne provides, one could claim that it is quite "appropriate" for the time-frame in question, when women were not expected to be independent and self-sufficient. On the other hand, Montgomery's Anne was also a "career-woman", even if not in today's sense. She chose to go to college and she did have ambitions, even though she gave them up when she got married. It has been said that Montgomery had great difficulties with writing sequels to Anne's story, because she wanted both to keep her readers happy by letting Anne find her Prince Charming, and let her stay independent at the same time. As a matter of fact, Montgomery actually tried to postpone Anne's inevitable marriage as long as she could, and she was also reluctant to write sequels to Anne's story, since she was well aware of the options Anne would have if the story continued. (Åhmansson 1991: 126) Secondly, the other reason why Anne's character may seem a little bit too perfect can be explained by the fact that Montgomery herself had difficulties in attaching to Anne character traits that were not considered suitable for ideal women. This is one of the most interesting themes in the serial, since it could be claimed that when trying to form a realistic depiction of a real woman and keeping Anne the romantic, idealistic and nearly angelic woman that she is, Montgomery was forced to create other characters who possessed the traits that could not possibly be attached to Anne. And further, as the reader puts these characters together, it is possible to see that these characters form a "whole woman", still very much a product of its time, but undoubtedly revealing more sides to a woman than Anne herself, or Montgomery, could. Thirdly, Anne's character can also be explained by the fact that the serial in general can be considered to represent the romantic genre in fiction and Montgomery wanted to maintain Anne

throughout all the novels as a pure prototype of a traditional romantic heroine.

When we start looking at the clashes in Anne -serial, we must keep in mind the different ways clashes can be detected in the novels. Firstly, if the character description or the storyline noticeably changes in a stereotypical direction during the novels, it can indicate a clash. Secondly, the use of symbolism and allusions suggests that the author has tried to find a way to express things that could not be described explicitly and thirdly, the author's submission to the romantic genre eg. the use of overly romantized descriptions and developments in the plot can also be interpreted as a clash. These three types of clashes will be discussed later in abovementioned order in the following.

5. CLASHES AND COMPROMISES IN THE *ANNE* -NOVELS

In this study, the main focus is to find the instances where either a character or the storyline develops in a direction that lessens the believability and appeal of the character or the storyline. When the adult reader finds himself/herself disappointed with the descriptions or is left with a feeling that something has left unsaid, it may indicate a clash between the development of characters and plots and the outside expectations that have forced the author to make certain choices in her writing. The two types of compromising descriptions, character and storyline, will be dealt with individually in the following chapters.

5.1. Compromises in character description

First of all, it is important to note that *Anne* -serial as a whole, is a story about several women and how they interact with each other and the surrounding society. The setting is mainly the home and the domestic environment and thus, men can be perceived more as supporting characters throughout the whole serial. One clear indication of that is that the male characters stay more or less the same, unlike the female characters, many of which change drastically throughout the serial. Further, the men in the novels are not even given a chance to develop, since they do not appear in the novels as active subjects the way the women do.

If we take a look at *Anne of Green Gables*, it is Anne who changes more than anyone. She is transformed from a little, poor orphan girl into a woman full of kindness and moreover, full of ambitions for the future. Marilla changes from a life-hardened old-maid into a motherly character, who does not lose any of her strength while developing the softer character traits. The two main male characters, Matthew and Gilbert, do not change all that much, since Matthew stays, until his death, the good-hearted and understanding elderly man, who actually has more maternal traits than his sister Marilla in the beginning of the novel. Gilbert, on the other hand, can be seen as one of the main characters in *Green Gables* only because his effect on Anne's ambitions is so profound. This is actually the function of the important male characters in *Green Gables*. They are there to mould Anne's development to a certain direction, not to act in any other significant way.

This is why character development, as well as character deterioration is found only in the women in the serial. As we take a look to the process of character development and -deterioration, the starting

point is naturally the main character, Anne, since she is the one who changes most of all throughout the novels.

5.1.1 Anne

Plotwise, *Anne* -serial is basically a story of an orphan girl, who, through difficult circumstances finds a home with two elderly siblings, Matthew and Marilla, and with their help and guidance gets herself an education and occupation as a teacher and finally, her story reaches the final fulfilment in marriage and motherhood. Since Anne is the main character in the first six *Anne* -novels, it is important to stress her description and to show how the signs of character deterioration are mostly visible in her. We will start examining her personal development in chronological order, according to the novels, the logical starting point being the orphan girl in the beginning of *Green Gables*. However, before getting into the novels, a brief look into the historical background of Victorian girlhood and the life of the orphans will be of great use in understanding Anne's story.

5.1.1.1 Girls and orphan girls

At the turn of the century, it was of common belief that little girls were in every sense weaker and more frail than boys, even though the truth was actually the opposite, since female toddlers are more hardy than males and more likely to survive the first five years of life. The misconception of a weaker female child was derived from adulthood, in which women are generally smaller in size than men. Since girls were described as more frail, they also had more restrictions upon their physical activities than

boys. Further, girls were in general more protected than boys, even when they reached adulthood, since it was commonly thought that all these physical restraints would have been harmful to reproductive capacities, which was considered to be the essence of a female in general. (Light and Parr 1983:7) If we wish for a closer look at what an ideal Victorian girlhood would have been, we will have a vivid image from the following:

> A rosy glow lingers around our image of late Victorian and Edwardian girlhood, eyelet-bordered pinafores over blue gingham dresses, full berry pails set down by a broad shady tree, kindhearted tears for the poor animals in a Beatrix Potter tale, years of innocent isolation from the adult world, a time to nurture the modest tenderness of womanhood. By the late nineteenth century the identification of childhood, especially girlhood, with purity and sentiment was almost complete in middle-class British Canada, an association imported with illustrated Sunday school primers and the *Girls' Own Annuals* from rural manses and the homes of England's gentry. (Light and Parr 1983:9)

However, in reality Canadian women lived far from the homes of England's gentry and the way they brought up their daughters often differed a lot of the high Victorian ideal. Even though manners and purity - both in dress and in thought - were stressed strongly, girlhood did not mean sitting neatly in the garden, but more often hard work. Whereas boys' work in the countryside was often done in the summers, during which they helped their fathers in the farmwork and were thus freed to go to school during winters, girls' work did not know any seasons. Girls were often forced to stay at home to take care of their younger siblings and at the same time, they were taught all the domestic tasks such as cooking and needlework, which they would need later in life in their own homes. (Light and Parr 1983:9-11) In short, in Victorian thinking it was commonly accepted not only that boys would be boys, but that men often remained boys if given the opportunity, whereas girls were expected to become

women early in life. They were not allowed as much freedom of childhood as boys and their upbringing aimed to create ideal women in a child's form as early as possible[1]. (Cadogan and Craig 1976:73) Even though a girls' life at the turn of a century was not all work and no play, a certain restrained behavior was expected of girls and being a wild tomboy was not accepted, since it did not reflect the idea of a little lady of the Victorian childhood.

If we consider the position of orphan girls in society, it was naturally more harsh than the position of girls who grew up among their own family. In Canada, Girls' Homes and Orphan Asylums were established in order to take care of the children who were parentless, or who could not live at home, because their parents could not or would not support them for some reason or another. This kind of institutions were fairly typical in urban centres across the nation and met a real need, since the number of homeless children was fairly large. In case the child was an orphan or the parents were unable to take care of them, the care of her was left for the institution to be clothed and nurtured largely at the public expense, and after the age of ten, they were often placed in families to be employed as servants. In many cases, however, one of the parents of the girl placed in these institutions was a respectable member of society and after having signed an agreement with the institution, was to pay a small monthly sum according to circumstances, with which the child's upkeep was taken care of. In this case, the parent was considered to be in authority of the child. However, if the payments were discontinued, the institution gained exclusive control of the child and was able to place her in families, mostly in the countryside where extra help was often needed. The girls

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[1]Maybe the best example of this is Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868), where the title itself describes the March sisters as little women, even though the eldest of the four sisters is only sixteen.

placed in families signed an agreement, according to which they agreed to remain with the family till the age of eighteen and the employers, ie. the family, were bound to supply board and clothing, and to pay the Home a certain sum annually to be held in trust until the term expires. (Light and Parr 1983:20-21). When we consider the abovementioned circumstances, it is fairly easy to assume that the orphans and homeless girls would have rather been taken into a family as a member of the family, rather than an employee for only a certain period of time, since the position as an employee did not offer the emotional security of a home these girls must have longed for. At this point it is also worth to note that even though *Anne*-serial is a piece of fiction, the basis of the story is based on an actual newspaper clipping Montgomery found, about an orphan girl who was placed in care of two middle-aged siblings. Montgomery used the idea first in a short story for Sunday School weekly, and later expanded the story into her first novel, *Anne of Green Gables* (Klinck 1965:345).

After having looked at the historical facts about girls and orphan girls, we will move on to observe of how the orphan theme is used in children's' fiction, especially in Anne's story.

5.1.1.2 Anne as an orphan

The orphan theme in children's fiction was very popular at the turn of the century. To have a main character in a novel who is an orphan is a tool that works two ways. Firstly, a child with no background at all is a perfect mould for upbringing. The faults of character that he/she may have in the beginning of the story will be ironed out as the story goes on. Secondly, the child in question is not necessarily the only one, who needs his/her faults to be ironed out, but the adults, who became custody of the child in

question may also need some reformation in their own character. In this respect, the absence of the real parents was a necessary tool in a Bildungsroman. According to Cadogan and Craig (1976:89), the English fictional children usually fell in the first category, where the child is in need of a proper upbringing, while the American fictional children fell to the second. However, in Anne's story, both elements are clearly to be seen. Even though Anne is basically good and sincere, she does need a "proper" upbringing. Åhmansson describes Anne's development into a young lady and Marilla's humanization as a reciprocal learning and unlearning process, which also is the red thread through the novel *Anne of Green Gables*. (Åhmansson 1991:95-96).

The Anne-serial includes many stories of orphans, both orphan girls and boys, who go through the bildungsprocess (e.g. process of reforming or upbringing) in one way or another[2]. However, this study will concentrate only on Anne's character development, whether it will interpreted as positive or negative development, as we will see later. When Anne first enters the scene, she is described as follows:

> A child about eleven, garbed in a very short, very tight, very ugly dress of yellowish grey wincey. She wore a faded brown sailor hat and beneath the hat, extending down her back were two braids of very thick, decidedly red hair. Her face was small, white and thin, also much freckled; her mouth was large and so were her eyes, that looked green in some lights and moods and grey in others.
> So far, the ordinary observer; an extraordinary observer might have seen that the chin was very pointed and pronounced; that the big eyes were full of spirit and vivacity; that the mouth was sweet-

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[2]Other orphans in Anne -novels are for example Davy and Dora Keith in *Anne of Avonlea*, Mary Vance in *Rainbow Valley* and war orphan Jims in *Rilla of Ingleside*. In addition to these, there are several half-orphans who live in orphan -like situations, since they have been separated from the remaining parent for one reason or another, for example Paul Irving in *Anne of Avonlea* and Elizabeth Grayson in *Anne of Windy Poplars*.

> lipped and expressive; that the forehead was broad and full; in short, our discerning extraordinary observer might have concluded that no commonplace soul inhabited the body of this stray woman-child of whom shy Matthew Cuthbert was so ludicrously afraid. (*Green Gables* 11.)

In the beginning of the description, the whole appearance of the girl seems to be thin, pale, scrawny and in short, not very appealing to anyone, except maybe for the purpose of arousing pity in the reader. However, the following description by the 'extraordinary observer' gives the reader a much more positive picture. It is clear that despite of the austere appearance of the girl, there is a great promise that lies ahead for this particular orphan girl. In her article, Jacqueline Berke (as quoted by Åhmansson 1991:75) points out that the absence of parents is crucial in these books, which describe the bildungsprocess of orphan girls, since:

> The adolescent girl, in particular, shoring up energy with which to meet the great challenges of adolescence - i.e., growth of self-confidence, exercise of independence - must begin to take the reins in her own hands, to do for herself what has so far been done for her. And who is in a better position to do this... than the motherless girl? For she is necessarily self-propelled, self-directed, functioning on her own with no immediate inhibiting - or encouraging - authority.

Åhmansson summarizes this by stating that the orphaned state of the girls is thus not only an instrument to arouse pity, but a very necessary precondition for the development of the young female heroes, since they have to rely on their own personal resources in order to assert themselves, they are competent and to some extent independent. Also Rachel Blau DuPlessis states in her book *Writing beyond the Ending* that the orphan in children's literature is a character who is 'so marginalized, so removed from common sources of satisfaction (family, friends, social situation), that

if a plot simply provides such a character with access to what must usually be taken for granted, the atmosphere of gratitude will finally impede any criticism from occurring'. (DuPlessis 1985: 9) She also points out that orphans are used as a mechanism which makes standard family, kinship and gender relations seem like a utopian ideal. This thought can be developed further, since if girls' books are usually bildungsnovels, in which the character has to develop from a very deprived beginning into an ideal role model, as they without exception do, the development occurring during the story from nothing into a utopia is a very effective tool for accentuating the main character's abilities and perseverance. Further, when studying the novel from a feminist criticism's point of view, it is important to point out that the reason for Anne's immediate rejection by Marilla does not have anything to do with Anne as a person, eg. what she was like. The reason for the rejection is simply the fact that she was not a boy, since Marilla and Matthew needed a boy rather than a girl to help with the farmwork. This can also be interpreted that women and girls in general may feel rejected in several occasions in life just because they indeed belong to the "wrong sex" and would be more readily accepted if they were male. Åhmansson notes that even if girls generally do not wish to be boys, most of them can recognize the dilemma, since the rejection of the female child universally has archetypal overtones (Åhmansson 1991:79).

> "*You* would cry too, if you were an orphan and had come to a place you thought was going to be home and found that they didn't want you because you weren't a boy. Oh, this is the most *tragical* thing that ever happened to me!" (*Green Gables* 24.)

The early childhood of Anne was a harsh one indeed, since she became an orphan at the age of three months, after which she was taken care of by Mrs. Thomas and later by Mrs. Hammond. The two women offered her

food and a roof to sleep under, but not much of a home, since she was treated more as a servant than one of the children, as soon as she was capable of doing the tasks needed. After she had to leave the Hammond household, she was sent to the asylum in Hopetown, from where she was taken to the Cuthberts in Avonlea. (*Green Gables*, 39-40). Anne's early life is obviously a tool used by Montgomery, with which she could accentuate Anne's hardships and thus make a even stronger contrast with Anne's later life, which proves to be a success in every possible way. However, Anne's hardships before the age of 11 were so many that it can already seem too far-fetched for the reader and thus, probably very far from realistic description.

It is noteworthy that even though Anne herself does feel rejected by everyone during her early years and even though she truly longs for a place to call home, she does not hesitate to use her orphan background to gain understanding and to raise sympathy among people who find her manners everything but suitable for a little girl her age. She stresses her orphaned status as she arrives to Green Gables and also in her later trials, when she realizes she has done something wrong and tries to find extenuating circumstances for her behavior. This can be seen for example in Anne's apology to Mrs. Lynde, in which she eloquently begs forgiveness for having behaved badly:

> "Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry," she said with a quiver in her voice. "I could never express all my sorrow, no, not if you used up a whole dictionary. You must imagine it. I behaved terribly to you - and I've disgraced the dear friends, Matthew and Marilla, who have let me stay at Green Gables although I'm not a boy. I'm a dreadfully wicked and ungrateful girl, and I deserve to be punished and cast out by respectable people for ever. It was very wicked of me to fly into a temper because you told me the truth. It *was* the truth; every word you said was true. My hair is red and I'm freckled and skinny and ugly. What I said to you was true, too, but

> I shouldn't have said it. Oh, Mrs. Lynde, please, please, forgive me. If you refuse it will be a lifelong sorrow to me. You wouldn't like to inflict a lifelong sorrow on a poor little orphan girl, would you, even if she had a dreadful temper? Oh, I am sure you wouldn't. Please say you forgive me, Mrs. Lynde." (*Green Gables*, 73)

Anne uses this same apologizing formula again, as she goes to Mrs. Barry to beg for forgiveness for unintentionally intoxicating her friend Diana Barry with Marilla's currant wine, which she thought to have been raspberry cordial.

> "Oh, Mrs. Barry, please forgive me. I did not mean to - to - intoxicate Diana. How could I? Just imagine if you were a poor little orphan girl that kind people had adopted and you had just one bosom friend in all the world. Do you think you would intoxicate her on purpose? [...]" (*Green Gables*, 129-130.)

One main characteristics of Anne in *Anne of Green Gables* is clearly her eloquence, which comes out as a constant chatter in everyday situations and often rescues her from difficulties. Even though Marilla's opinion, as the common thought in Victorian thinking about children that children should be seen, not heard, Anne's chatter is never bad-mannered, even though she occasionally lapses into ill-tempered fits, mostly when her vanity does not endure certain facts about her appearance to be mentioned in public.

As pointed out before, the child protagonist was not always the only person in a bildungsroman in need for upbringing. In Anne's case the upbringing or reforming of adults is another major theme in *Anne of Green Gables*. As she arrives to Green Gables and finds a home with Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert, the former finds herself changing as well when she tries to give Anne a proper upbringing. In the beginning of the novel, Marilla is described as follows:

> Marilla was a tall, thin woman, with angles and without curves; her dark hair showed some grey streaks and was always twisted up in a hard little knot behind with two wire hairpins stuck aggressively through it. She looked like a woman of narrow experience and rigid conscience, which she was; but there was a saving something about her mouth which, if it had been ever so slightly developed, might have been considered indicative of a sense of humor. (*Green Gables*, 5)

The attributes attached to Marilla paint a harsh picture of the described woman, even though the ending of the quote above suggests that there might still be hope for her. However, if one considers the fact that the story can be described as a two-way bildungsroman, it is obvious why the characters must be described the way they are. Anne and Marilla are in a way caricatures of an orphan girl and a middle-aged spinster, who both need reforming in their own way.

In the traditional family, it is usually the mother who is responsible for the upbringing of the children and of the domestic sphere in general, and who is supposed to be always loving, forgiving and so on. Ironically, in this case, the traditional roles of the man and the woman have been reversed. The brother of the two middle-aged siblings seems to be the motherly type, whereas his sister does not believe in any kind of pampering. However, as the Cuthberts decide to keep Anne, her upbringing will be Marilla's responsibility, since Marilla believes that "perhaps an old maid doesn't know much about bringing up a child, but I guess she knows more than an old bachelor" (*Green Gables*, 48). The difference between Matthew's and Marilla's upbringing strategies comes forward on many occasions. One example of Marilla's severity and Matthew's leniency is to be seen in the way they want Anne to be dressed. Marilla prefers dresses that are "good, sensible, serviceable dresses, without any frills or furbelows about them" (*Green Gables*, 78). Matthew,

on the other hand, seeing how much Anne longs for a pretty dress with puffed sleeves and - even with his "old bachelor's" eyes - seeing that Anne is dressed quite differently from other girls her age, gets her a different kind of dress for Christmas.

> Anne took the dress and looked at it in reverent silence. Oh how pretty it was - a lovely soft brown gloria with all the gloss of silk; a skirt with dainty frills and shirring; a waist elaborately pin-tucked in the most fashionable way, with a little ruffle on filmy lace at the neck. But the sleeves - they were the crowning glory! Long elbow cuffs, and above them two beautiful puffs divided by rows of shirring and bows of brown silk ribbon. (*Green Gables*, 201)

Matthew's leniency toward Anne is not apparent only on the material level, but he also seems to be the 'parent' who understands Anne's romantic reveries. Where Marilla is trying to put a halt to Anne's dreams, firstly, because she simply does not understand them and secondly, because her ideas of upbringing are very down-to-earth, Matthew is always trying to encourage Anne to hold on to her dreams and he also expresses this to Anne in several occasion, even though quite often behind Marilla's back.

> "Don't give up all your romance, Anne," he whispered shyly, "a little of it is a good thing - not too much, of course - but keep a little of it, Anne, keep a little of it." (Green Gables, 228)

Marilla, the other character of the upbringing process, softens as the time goes by. Her initial harshness can be explained by several factors. Firstly, she had certain ideas of how to bring up a child, but no experience of it. Secondly, she was used to the other girls in Avonlea, who did not only looked different from Anne, but always seemed to act according to what was expected of them, and after Anne's arrival, she realized that her foster

child did not behave according to those unspoken rules. Further, Marilla's own upbringing as a child and even her adulthood had lacked most of the feelings of love and tenderness, except the love between the two siblings, and it was very hard for her to find a way to respond to Anne's uninhibited expression of her feelings.

> Something warm and pleasant welled up in Marilla's heart at touch of that thin little hand in her own - a throb of the maternity she had missed, perhaps. Its very unaccustomedness and sweetness disturbed her. She hastened to restore her sensations to their normal calm by inculcating a moral. (*Green Gables*, 76)

Marilla's love for Anne does come forward in many details in the novel, but finds its direct expression in words only when Matthew dies and Marilla is comforting Anne's openly teary sadness with her own, more restrained behavior.

> We've got each other, Anne. I don't know what I'd do if you weren't here - if you'd never come. Oh, Anne, I know I've been kind of strict and harsh with you, maybe - but you mustn't think I didn't love you as well as Matthew did, for all that. I want to tell you now when I can. It's never been easy for me to say things out of my heart, but at times like these it's easier. I love you as dear as if you were my own flesh and blood and you've been my joy and comfort ever since you came to Green Gables." (*Green Gables*, 297)

With the time frame in mind, both Anne's and Marilla's upbringing processes have gone to a hoped for direction during Anne of Green Gables, since Anne's so called wickedness has disappeared and Marilla's harshness has softened into more womanly and what is even more important, more motherly behavior. It is as if Marilla's unfulfilled womanhood, which, according to the Victorian thinking, equals motherhood, has found its fulfilment upon Anne's stay at the Green

Gables. Anne, on the other hand, has developed into a young woman of sixteen, who has great dreams and aspirations for the future. However, Anne has been critiziced for losing much of her appeal exactly for the reason that since her original fieriness has been gone, there is not much left of the Anne that once used to be. (Klinck, see p. 21) This is already a sign of Anne losing some of her identity, since she has learned to some extent, to keep her mouth shut and that is also something that is necessary to be the ideal woman of the time.

Even though Anne has been accused of losing much of her original character as she grows up, a certain fire of ambition is still very much burning in her. Already at the end of *Anne of Green Gables* she has her mind set on her studies, even if she would be forced to study from home. Partly she is certainly making efforts to prove herself over and over again through her achievements at school and thus compensate the fact that she was not the boy Marilla and Matthew originally wanted. The major part of her ambition was, however, clearly out of the need of personal gratification. Anne wanted to educate herself. She wanted to write and get her stories published and if the time had been different, Montgomery would possibly have had quite different future for Anne. However, before going deeper into analysing the choices Montgomery has made in *Anne*, it is important to shed some light on the history of women's education and further, what it meant for Montgomery's choices in the literary world.

5.1.1.3 A brief look on women's education - historical perspective

Education for women did not receive unconditional support when the women started to feel the need for formal education. Education was seen as a threat to womanhood, since the Victorian idea of a woman's place was

very limited, including basically the home and the domestic environment. The opposition to women's education had been justifying itself by many different reasons, most peculiar of which from today's point of view might be the so called *life force theory*, according to which the body - male or female - was a closed system possessing only a limited amount of life force. If a person used this life force for one activity, it followed that this used energy was directly removed from another area of activity. Thus:

> The girl who curtailed brain work during puberty could devote her body's full energy to the optimum development of its reproductive capacities. A young woman, however, who consumed her vital force in intellectual activities was necessarily diverting these energies from the achievement of true womanhood. (Åhmansson 1991:117)

This true womanhood naturally meant the fulfilment of women in marriage and motherhood, which can also be described as the 'cult of domesticity'. This cult of domesticity was very much part of women's fiction in the nineteenth century, and also well into the twentieth. As Nina Baym (1978) describes in her book *Woman's Fiction. A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870*, the cult of domesticity is not equivalent to later generation's idea of such a cult, as 'a simple injunction for women willingly to turn the key on her own prison'. The fiction belonging to the area of domestic fiction does emphasise that an unhappy home is the basic source of human misery and consequently, a happy home is the road for human bliss, for both men and women. Further, domestic relations did not include the nuclear family, or the spouse and the parent, but 'the whole network of human attachments based on love, support, and mutual responsibility'. (Baym 1978: 26-27). Home and family remained a very important part of a woman's life even after the education for women became possible. In literature, successful integration of these

two was literally impossible, since *Bildung* and romance could not coexist and be integrated for the heroine at the resolution, although works combining these two discourses in their main part (the narrative middle) are very common in our literary tradition (DuPlessis 1985: 3). The clash between romance and quest in literature was solved by using the quest-plot of self-realization at the service of the romance-plot, which dominates the story and leads to the ultimate fulfilment, marriage. (DuPlessis 1985: 6) Baym also considers this educational plot in domestic fiction as a sort of interlude between unhappy childhood and the conclusion, during which the heroine must earn her own living and, on many occasions, turns to some form of teaching. (Baym 1978: 38).

In real life, as opposed to literature of the time, women's education was not brought about simply because women felt the need to learn and achieve some sort of education. This was naturally a very important factor, but the need for education often stemmed from simple material needs. If a woman turned to literary work, the reason was more often money than the need to express themselves. Naturally, the consequence of this was that women did not consider themselves as artists, but more of a scribblers, whose main goal was to support themselves. Firstly, not all women got married, some by choice and some by the simple fact that women already outnumbered men in the nineteenth century. Secondly, literacy was seen as the road to independence and liberation. (Baym 1978: 31). However, many of the earlier women writers started their writing career simply by writing fiction for pleasure, not profit, but later found themselves supporting their families with their earnings. (Spencer 1986: 7.) Montgomery also, being a popular writer of her time, found herself supporting her family with her writings and she used this formula several times. Her heroines strived for education, wrote stories and kept up their literary preoccupation, even after being married, but as Cadogan and

Craig have noted, though most of these heroines in girls' books are educated to an advanced level, they still see their future in a very conventional way, the ultimate goal being the role of a nest-maker and breeder. (Cadogan and Craig 1976:109) This is also true in Montgomery's *Anne*, probably mostly because of it would have not fitted into her romantic code of writing to make her heroine the breadwinner of her fictional family.

At this point it is important to notice that in the beginning of women's education, the goal was not to give equal opportunities for girls and boys, in terms of a future career, since the main goal of woman's life was marriage. According to Victorian thinking, the knowledge that a girl was supposed to acquire was not for her own purposes, but for the husband, since:

> Even a really superior man almost always begins to deteriorate when he is habitually (as the phrase is) king of his company: and in his most habitual company the husband who has a wife inferior to him is always so. (Mill 1869 (1996):209)

Thus, women had to have enough education so that they could discuss with their husbands issues outside the domestic environment and offer enough intellectual challenge to keep them from deteriorating on the intellectual level. This same view is stated by Honig, who says that it was felt that a girl should pursue a higher education so that she could make a better wife and mother. And this only for the reason that she could have some kind of understanding of her husband's intellectual pursuits, and more suited to educate and uplift her (male) children. Further, singing, sewing, and drawing provided ways to amuse and soothe the father, brother or husband who returned to the hearth weary from his day's

work, thus the modern, educated girl was still expected to ornament the hearth. (Honig 1988:68)

This is extremely interesting from the point of view of this study, since from what we have read above, the whole purpose of women's education was mainly the keep the husbands from intellectual deterioration. Naturally, education is nearly always positive, no matter how you look at it, but the idea of educating oneself for someone else's benefit seems to be contradictory to the sole meaning of education. Further, if a woman educates herself for the husband, to keep him from intellectual deterioration, what will happen to her in the process when she starts to learn from the world and its happenings? Does she feel that she is fulfilling her role as a woman by educating herself for her husband or does she start to feel the need for education for her own personal development? As Kelley points out, the more education these culturally advantaged women received, the harder they worked and the more intellectual ambitious they were, the more they felt the sense of limitation and deprivation, of pointlessness and deep conflict. (Kelley 1984:77)

The quote from Mill above is basically the reverse side of what this thesis is dealing with. The conflicts in character depiction described in these chapters entails the fact that the husband of a fictional heroine is never to be overshadowed by the heroine, no matter how great her dreams and aspirations might have been, if she had given the chance. And as we later will see, the heroines themselves have their ambitions tightly in control when the alternative choice is a life alone. The next chapter deals with Anne's education and her intellectual rivalry with her future husband, Gilbert. It will show how the abovementioned ideas are realized in Anne's story and how the clash between education and marriage is evident in *Anne*.

5.1.1.4 The role of education and ambition in *Anne*

When Montgomery was writing the sequels to *Anne of Green Gables*, she probably knew that inevitably, she would have to write marriage into Anne's story. However, in *Green Gables*, during which Anne grows from a 11-year old girl to a young woman of 'sixteen and a half', Montgomery did not have to ponder the clash between romance and quest. She could concentrate on introducing Anne's character to readers and further, in the things Anne does, she could stress the importance of education in a woman's life. As Gabriella Åhmansson points out, the ending of *Anne of Green Gables* is open, despite the fact that Anne's development describes a circular movement of coming home - going away - returning home. If Anne's story had ended here, the reader would have come away from it remembering Anne's reassuring pronouncements that her ambitions were as strong as ever and that the bend in the road would lead to great things, possibly a writing career. It is not difficult to understand Montgomery's reluctance to write Anne's continuing story. The strict conventions of the fiction that Montgomery wrote as well as the social reality behind it would ruin Anne's intellectual future as surely as if she had been a real live woman born in 1874. (Åhmansson 1991:126)

One of the leading themes in *Green Gables* is the rivalry between Anne and Gilbert - her future husband. Since Gilbert had insulted her about her red hair, which was a very sensitive spot for Anne, the only way she would acknowledge Gilbert's existence was to compete with him at school. And after Anne had rejected Gilbert's apologies when he had saved her from drowning, the feeling was mutual.

> There was open rivalry between Gilbert and Anne now. Previously the rivalry had been rather one-sided, but there was no longer any

> doubt that Gilbert was as determined to be first in class as Anne was. He was a foeman worthy of her steel. The other members of the class tacitly acknowledged their superiority, and never dreamed of trying to compete with them. (*Green Gables*, 245)

In a way, Gilbert being 'a foeman worthy of her steel' can already at this point be interpreted in a way that the two of them could be compatible in more areas than one if the animosity between them would be forgotten, but on the other hand, plotwise Anne simply needed a rival, which would encourage her intellectually to even greater achievements. Further, the polarization between a female and a male character in terms of intellect and intellectual achievements, was also a tool with which Montgomery could emphasize Anne's abilities as a female in traditional patriarchy.

The same theme is repeated in the characters of Anne's teachers, Mr. Phillips and Miss Stacy. Even though it can be claimed that the skills needed to be a good teacher are not dependent of the sex of the person in question, here again, Montgomery is referring to women's superiority, since educated women not only had the skills to teach but also the much needed compassion towards her students, whereas men were insensitive and too much concentrated on their own careers. Mr. Phillips was very much of a product of the old tradition, a man who did not pay attention to the individual needs of the students. (*Green Gables*, 136). The following statement is given by Mrs Rachel Lynde:

> Mr. Phillips isn't any good at all as a teacher. The order he keeps is scandalous, that's what, and he neglects the young fry and puts all his time on those big scholars he's getting ready for Queens. He'd never have got the school for another year if his uncle hadn't been a trustee- *the* trustee, for he just leads the other two around by the nose, that's what. I declare, I don't know what education in this Island is coming to. (*Green Gables*, 118)

Even though Miss Stacy's modern teaching methods - physical culture exercises every day, etc. - did raise some eyebrows among the people in Avonlea, it is obvious that Anne found another soul mate in Miss Stacy, which would never have been possible in her relationship to Mr. Phillips.

> In her new teacher she found another true and helpful friend. Miss Stacy was a bright, sympathetic young woman with the happy gift of winning and holding the affections of her pupils and bringing out the best that was in them mentally and morally. (*Green Gables*, 190)

Also, in the historical perspective, women's dominant role in elementary education in Canada was true from the second half of the nineteenth century on. Women's education paved the road for teaching positions, and educational administrators declared, like a British Columbia School Superintendent in 1872, that women 'possessed greater aptitude for communicating knowledge' and that they have proved themselves 'usually better disciplinarians, especially among younger children, than males'. (Woodcock 1989:132). From the same time period, however, is the comment of a Rev. John Todd, who pointed out in 1871 that 'If ladies enter our colleges and compete in the long course, with the other sex, they must do it by sacrificing the female accomplishments - the piano, cultivated singing, and attractive dress' (Cadogan and Craig 1976:107). It was believed that the success in the academic life and success at home could not exist at the same time and thus, one of them had to be sacrificed in favor of the other.

Despite Anne's obvious intellect and ambition, it is also very clear that she is concerned with the roles of beauty, goodness and intellect in woman's life. However, it is important to note that this is probably one of the things that unite girls of different generations and maybe even the whole womankind of different ages. Already when arriving to Green

Gables, she is wondering the relationship between these qualities, obviously believing in the either/or division described above, and asks Matthew, using big words as usual:

> Which would you rather be if you had the choice - divinely beautiful or dazzlingly clever or angelically good? (*Green Gables*, 17)

She immediately dismissed the idea of being angelically good, since that was something she did not think she was able to achieve anyway, but at the same time, left the issues of beauty and cleverness open. As Åhmansson points out, beauty and goodness are very feminine virtues, whereas cleverness is somehow incongruous. (Åhmansson 1991: 88) As for being angelically good, even this becomes true in later novels, where Anne has grown out of her tendency to always get in to trouble. These troubles usually came about not because Anne was intentionally bad, but because she got into difficult situations before considering the consequences. Later in the book, *Anne of Green Gables*, the topic of beauty and cleverness comes up again in a conversation with Diana, and Anne expresses her 'femininity' by stating that she would 'rather be pretty than clever' (*Green Gables*, 109), since only an unfeminine girl would choose otherwise. But naturally, Anne grows up to be both, even though she gives up her career ambitions many years later, as she becomes a wife. (Cadogan and Craig 1976: 97)

Anne's ambition in the academic world can also be explained by the fact that since Marilla and Matthew allowed her to stay in Green Gables even though she was not a boy and could not help in farmwork, for which the boy was originally wanted, she wanted to prove herself in another area. One encouraging factor was her rivalry with Gilbert and on the other hand, she wanted Marilla and Matthew to be able to be proud of her and her achievements. Further, by excelling at school, Anne has become a boy

in a symbolical level and thus has been able to made up for Matthew's and Marilla's loss in never receiving the boy they had wanted (Åhmansson 1991:125).

Much to Anne's benefit, Marilla's and Matthew's views about women's education were quite modern for their times:

> "... When Matthew and I took you to bring up we resolved we would do the best we could for you and give you a good education. I believe in a girl being fitted to earn her own living whether she ever has to or not." (*Green Gables*, 242)

At the time, a girl's place was at home and her first and foremost education was to be prepared for the future roles of a wife and a mother. As Åhmannson notes, there is not much written about education in connection with *Anne of Green Gables* and if it has been considered at all, then with a certain sense of futility, since Anne refuses to accept the Avery scholarship and thus throws everything away by accepting a teaching position instead of going to Redmond College - similarly as later in life she trades her career with marriage. However, one of the charms of Anne has been her intellectual tenacity, which has attracted girls of different generations. Further, one of the messages of *Anne* is that "having ambitions will always enrich you, whatever your fate might be, whereas having none will certainly ensure that the old order will prevail and girls remain educational drop-outs. Getting an education ultimately means gaining control of your own life, whatever option you might choose afterwards." (Åhmansson 1991:115-116)

When thinking about her future, the young and childish Anne might have also thought that she had to get an education, since she thought 'nobody would ever want to marry me - unless it might be a foreign missionary. I suppose a foreign missionary mightn't be very

particular' (*Green Gables*, 13). Even though Anne decided to succeed in an area that was still very much of a male dominated occupation, it is clear that she never actually wanted to be a boy, as some of the earlier literary heroines, who also wanted to succeed professionally. To better illuminate this point of view, it is useful to make a comparison with another girls' book, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* from the year 1868. (However, at this point, it has to be remembered that *Anne of Green Gables* was published forty years later, during which period most likely a lot had happened in people's attitudes toward women's education and what is even more important, getting education was possible for Anne, whereas Jo in Little Women could not go to a college, since it was not acceptable for a girl.) In *Little Women*, the second eldest of the four sisters, Jo, had a certain similarity to Anne in the sense that she was also a very literary person with vivid imagination, but while Anne always admired beauty and embraced the traditional femininity, Jo more or less despised it, mostly because she felt that her being a woman restricted her growth on the mental level and prevented her from doing what she wanted in life. On the other hand, these two girls' attitudes towards femininity could have been opposite: Anne had been rejected in her childhood because she was not a boy, whereas Jo was always accepted as a girl.[3] Regarding the literary tradition of the time, it is needless to say that also Jo March married an educated man, published a novel[4], and later founded a school for boys with him. (Cheney 1889/1980:81) The only moment of regret that

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[3]Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* is loosely based on her own life and Jo's situation reflected her own role in the family as more male than female. (Shapiro 1987:54)

[4]Alcott enjoyed the independence she had because of the success of her writing. In her own words: "I like the independent feeling; and though not an easy life, it is a free one, and I enjoy it." (Cheney 1889/1980:89)

Anne had for not being a boy, after the initial rejection, Anne had was at the point where she talked to Matthew shortly before his death.

> "If I had been the boy you sent for," said Anne wistfully, "I'd been able to help you so much now and spare you in a hundred ways. I could find it in my heart to wish I had been, just for that."
> "Well now, I'd rather have you than a dozen boys, Anne," said Matthew patting her hand. "Just mind you that - rather than a dozen boys. Well now, I guess it wasn't a boy that took the Avery scholarship, was it? It was a girl - my girl - my girl that I'm proud of." (*Green Gables*, 293)

At this point it is obvious that even though Anne had been accepted for a long time the way she was and Matthew's love had nothing to do with her educational success, an academic degree was still a good way to assure her of his and Marilla's approval and pride by proving that she had intellectually beaten even the boys, including her future husband.

Anne's education did not end with the Avery scholarship and before marriage, Anne continued her studies at the Queens academy (*Anne of Green Gables*), worked as a teacher in the Avonlea school (*Anne of Avonlea*) and went on to Redmond College at Kingsport, where she received her B.A. degree (*Anne of the Island*). However, in the end of *Anne of the Island*, Anne accepts Gilbert's marriage proposal, which meant that since then, her ultimate career goal was to be the wife of a doctor. It is interesting that in the plot, there is a gap of three years between *Anne of the Island* and *Anne's House of Dreams*. (Publication years are 1915 and 1917, respectively.) This gap was never really filled until the publication of *Anne of Windy Poplars* in 1936, which deals with the three years of Anne's engagement with Gilbert, during which she worked as the principal of the Summerside school. In *Anne's House of Dreams* this period was dealt with in only a few sentences. (*House of Dreams*, 2)

From the point of view of today's reader the clash between a career and a marriage is so obvious that it is easy to feel frustrated before the solution. Since Anne decided to marry Gilbert, her whole education becomes somehow useless - if not in the sense of Anne being intellectually compatible to Gilbert and thus, according to the views of Mill (p. 38), being able to prevent her husband's intellectual deterioration. It is an interesting fact that in the novel *Anne's House of Dreams*, which concentrates on the early years of Anne's marriage, Anne thinks that her friend, Leslie Moore is throwing her life away by staying married to her retarded husband and taking care of him, while she would have so much to give to the society outside the home, but when her own husband points out that someone might think the same of Anne, she is positively horrified.

> "That girl was born to be a leader in social and intellectual circles, far away from Four Winds", she said to Gilbert as they walked home one night. "She's just wasted here - wasted."
> "[...] And some people might think that a Redmond B.A., whom editors were beginning to honour, was 'wasted' as the wife of a struggling country doctor in the rural community of Four Winds."
> "Gilbert!" (*House of Dreams*, 87)

However, even when Gilbert points out this kind of point of view, neither is actually taking this remark seriously, but clearly believe that Anne has found her right place in the world. This scene is also dealt with in Åhmansson (1991), who continues the thought by saying that since both Anne and Gilbert agree that Anne's and Leslie's lives are not wasted in Four Winds, Anne's original statement about Leslie's wasted life becomes ridiculous. This in turn leaves the reader 'with the uncomfortable conviction that this is just the case; both women's lives are indeed 'wasted' (in terms of personal fulfilment other than wifehood and motherhood), but the men, who run the Universe, prevent them from seeing it. (Åhmansson

1991:163; see also Cadogan and Craig 1976:97). Here we are once again dealing with a clash between the demands of the society and the intentions of the author. It is hard to define to what extent Montgomery was dissatisfied with her own career development, since she was one of the most successful Canadian writer of her times and was able to support her family with the money she received from writing. However, the question here is not if she was satisfied with the success she accomplished with her writings, but rather the limitations set by the outside environment she has experienced in her writing.

It is impossible to exactly detect how Montgomery would have written Anne's story, if she had not been forced to think of what can be written and further, since Montgomery was a woman who lived in the Victorian society, it is not at all clear that she would have written Anne's story any differently even if she had not been bound by the outside influences. However, even though Montgomery would have not even thought of the attempt of somehow combining career and marriage in Anne's life, this much is clear, as mentioned above (p. 23) that Montgomery's postponement of Anne's marriage was quite clearly an attempt to give Anne a chance to make as much of herself as she possibly could before yielding to the fact that the only possible ending according to the literary tradition and the expectations of the readers in Anne's case was her marriage to Gilbert.

The next chapter begins with a short look to the historical background of the institution of marriage and moves on to describe its effects in Anne's life and what it meant to the character development in Anne's case.

5.1.1.5 Anne's marriage

In the chapter 5.1.1.3, we took a short look to the 'cult of domesticity', which can be shortly described as the area in which the most of female occupation found its place in. The domestic environment was the area, where the ultimate female goals, marriage and motherhood, found their fulfilment. Mellor (1988) describes 'cult of domesticity' as 'the belief that the household is the site of value not merely or even primarily because of what it produces in the economic sense but because it provides the place where the individual personality may grow and the occasion to discover in that growth a way of integrating self and society, family and polis.' (Mellor 1988: 53). It is important to note that even though it is easy to separate home from the outside society, in Mellor's view it is clear that home and family is very much a part of the social environment, not separated from it. This has been also a problem in feminist criticism in general, since very often family has been observed as a natural unit, outside of the society, whereas we could also focus on the family as a social unit, based on other structures of the society as a whole. (Barrett 1985: 162). In some studies, the division of the world in two areas, ie. the public, social area and the private, personal area, is seen as self-evident and the question of a woman's position in this division is mainly whether she belongs solely in the private area, in the heart of the home, or has she also a place outside the home environment. (Nenonen 1986:11). However, if we critize family and home of being mere tools of keeping women in a semi-voluntary imprisonment, we miss the fact that the home environment can actually be a legitimate part of the outside world and it is possible to observe it as a basic unit of a society.

In order to understand the role of a marriage in *Anne* novels, it is important to consider marriage in general in the context of the Canadian

society at the turn of the century. Even though marriage was definitely the most successful career opportunity for a woman at a time, since it often offered basic security both in economic and in social terms, women also started to work outside the home in various occupations. The first steps towards working outside of the home for the unmarried women were found in the areas of domestic service, apprenticeships in dressmaking an millinery, factory work, waitresses and saleswomen. All these areas were poorly paid, attracted mainly women from the lower classes and did not offer liberation in terms of a successful career. Less menial professions as stenographers, bookkeepers, library assistants, cashiers and non-professional nurses were also available for women, but they rarely paid much more than unskilled jobs. The first professions that offered Canadian women notably success were found in writing and teaching. However, the women entering the field had the social and economic advantages of their background, since they started off from the middle class. (Woodcock 1989:129-131) Further, the professions in writing and teaching were considered to be proper occupations for a lady, which also was an important aspect for the women of the upper classes. Campbell (1979/1976:60) notes on her work of the "Liberated" Woman of 1914 in America that over fifty percent of the women in the arts were writers, and this was in fact the single occupation that attracted more women than any other, with the exception of teaching. The popularity of writing is easy to understand, since it was possible to practice writing and earn money from the safety and sanctity of home. Further, writing was also considered easy in terms of that with a certain amount of talent it was not difficult to get articles, poems and even novels published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These observations of the writing women in America can be applied also to the other side of the American-Canadian border,

since women's attraction to writing is obvious also in Canada at the turn of the century.

With the possible exception of writing, most of the work took place outside the home. Despite of social class, women rarely saw their working career as a life long occupation. Working class girls often saw marriage as a way out from the payed labor force and often started a family soon after their weddings, even though many knew about mechanical methods of birth control. Marriages of two wage earners, who remained childless on purpose, were unheard of at the time. However, during the engagement many couples had to save up for their mutual goal while living apart for some time or they had to compromise upon their ideals and have the wife continue to work outside the home after marriage. (Light and Parr 1983:110). In *Anne*, also this aspect is dealt with. Anne and Gilbert lived apart as an engaged couple for three years after Anne's graduation from the Redmond College. During those years, Gilbert continued his medical studies at Redmond and Anne worked as a school principal - a rare occupation for a woman at the time - at Summerside High School. This period is depicted in the novel *Anne of Windy Poplars* (1936), the first of the two additional novels to the serial.

Even though new opportunities for women were opening for advanced education and there were more places for women in teaching and medicine (eg. nursing and social work, which were new professions with strong female identification), most of the Canadian women still chose to devote their lives to child-bearing, child-rearing and traditional homemaking. In addition to the number of women staying at home, the role of a wife and a mother became even more important than before, since after men started to work in wage labor jobs, the responsibility of home environment was largely left for the women. The quality of motherhood and the ability to be a good homemaker became increasingly important

and a woman's skills in the domestic environment often determined her value as a woman. (Light and Parr 1983:109)

As regards to marriage, the fourth novel of the serial, *Anne's House of Dreams*, is clearly the one in which Montgomery depicts the many aspects of a marriage. Åhmansson (1991) described the novel as Marriage as Heaven and Hell, in which the two ends of the polarization are portrayed in the marriage of Anne to Gilbert and in the marriage of Leslie to Dick Moore. Further, she states that '*Anne's House of Dreams* is not only a book about the happy marriage of a popular fictional heroine. Montgomery has transformed it into a book about marriage in general, or a book which includes something of what she herself thought about women's position inside marriage.' (Åhmansson 1991:143) This is quite logical, if we consider that Montgomery's own experience of marriage was not a marriage out of love, but more out of a convenience, since this was certainly not something she could have applied to Anne, she again had to bring other characters into the novel in order to reveal the more negative aspects of marriage in general. Another important point worth noting is the fact that in Montgomery's *Anne*, it is extremely difficult to observe any of the marriages from the inside, ie. closely examine the interaction between a husband and a wife, simply because the husbands are rarely present in the novels in terms of being active characters in the development of the storyline. Instead, these observations about the marriages have to be made mainly from the outside as if the wives' interaction with other members of the family or friends were mirrors that reflect the state of the marriage.

Åhmansson has pointed out that Montgomery does not often describe marriage from the inside. Further, she remarks that the nuclear families which inhabit her fictional homes rarely consist of husband, wife and children, but are more often ruled by women living in a household

deprived of normal family configurations and the few happy families tend to be of short duration, ending with the husband or wife being widowed (Åhmansson 1991:147-148). In *Anne* -serial, the marriages are indeed described from outside, since the happy marriages are simply not described or dealt with by describing the interaction between the married couple. However, in Anne -serial the marriages do not tend to be of short duration, as Åhmansson notes above. There are many occasions where the road to marriage is difficult and the lovers meet many obstacles before finally marrying each other, but as the knot is tied, also the storyline has come to a conclusion.[5] Firstly, however, we will take a look at Anne's marriage to Gilbert, even if it does not portray marriage in as many levels as a real life marriage includes, but more of an ideal image of a marriage at the time. Åhmansson (1991:153-154) points out that the idealized qualities in Anne's marriage to Gilbert also help reduce Anne from the position of strength which she had enjoyed in the previous novels to a position of dependency, since: 'A happily married woman could not at this time be independent or unconventional; she was by definition conformist or she could not be called happy.'

In Anne's marriage this statement is true, because after marriage, there is not much left of the original Anne, whose main objective in life, beside happiness, was ambition for greater achievements. Anne seems to be deeply satisfied with her position as a wife and later as a mother and even though she occasionally has disagreements with Gilbert and actually

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[5]The most obvious example of this kind of sub-plot is the story of Leslie Moore and Owen Ford, which is one of the main storylines in *Annes House of Dreams*. Other similar, even though less prominent, love stories in the Anne -novels are: Lavender Lewis and Stephen Irving in *Anne of Avonlea*, Janet Sweet and John Douglas in *Anne of the Island* and Rosemary West and John Meredith in *Rainbow Valley*.

holds on to her point of view, it is usually Gilbert who is right at the end and Anne gladly admits to the fact that she has been wrong all along.

In *Anne's House of Dreams*, Montgomery is facing the fact that Anne's love story with Gilbert can be peppered by a few disagreements and shadowed by a tragedy as their firstborn child dies shortly after her birth (*House of Dreams*, 115). Even though losing a child is probably the greatest loss a human being can ever face and in the real life often creates a crisis that a weak marriage cannot bear without breaking up, in *Anne's House of Dreams* the loss of Joy is a tragedy. However, this tragedy only strengthens the bond between Anne and Gilbert, as may happen if the relationship is strong enough to deal with the loss without losing touch with the spouse. In the novel, Montgomery is depicting marriage in general, but when she is trying to describe the problems inside of a marriage, she is clearly conscious of the fact that with her readers in mind, Anne's marriage has to be left virtually untouchable. Tragedy is allowed, since the purpose of it is to bring some realism of life into a fairytale, but only within the limits of not shattering Anne's union to Gilbert even a slightest bit.[6]

This decision has led the author to a situation where there is not much to say about Anne anymore. Plotwise, marriage is the ending, not the beginning for her and even though Montgomery still kept writing additional novels to *Anne* -serial, they were more novels about what happens *around* Anne than what happens *to* Anne.

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[6]The next novel *Anne of Ingleside* is the only one in which Montgomery hints at the possibility of real problems between the wife and the husband and the novel is the most realistic in the *Anne* -serial in its depiction of family life. (Epperly 1992:139) However, it has to be remembered that *Anne of Ingleside* was the last novel written only a few years before Montgomery's death and thus, it did not belong to the original six *Anne* -novels.

Of all the themes of *Anne* -serial, marriage would be probably the most interesting area to study in a comparative manner, in other words, to compare Anne's life with the biographical details in Montgomery's own journals. Even though the purpose of the present study is not to draw any direct conclusions about the relationship between the author's life and the life of her heroine, Montgomery's journals include quite an illuminating statement about her own feelings about marriage on her wedding day and thus, in turn explain her views about marriage in the *Anne* -novels.

> "I had been contented all the morning, I'd gone through the ceremony and congratulations unflustered and unregretful, and now when it was all over, I found myself sitting there by my husband's side... My husband - I felt a sudden, horrible inrush of rebellion and despair - I wanted to be free, I felt like a prisoner, a hopeless prisoner. Something in me - something... wild and free and untamed, something that Ewan[7] had not tamed, could never tame. Something that did not acknowledge him as master. It was up in one frantic protest against that which bound me.
> At that moment, if I could have torn the wedding ring of my finger and so free myself, I would have done it. But it was too late, and the realization it was too late fell over me like a black cloud of wretchedness. I sat at that bridal feast in my white veil and orange blossoms, beside the man I had married, and I was as unhappy as I've ever been in my life."[8]

The lines above do not show much of the married bliss, what Anne's marriage is all about. Instead, it is very much like the prison that binds Anne's friend Leslie in *Anne's House of Dreams*. It is clear that even though Montgomery has depicted many different kinds of marriages in her

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[7]Reverend Ewan Macdonald, Montgomery's husband since 1911. (Åhmansson 1991:26)

[8]The quote from Montgomery's own journals is transcribed from the tv-program *The Many Mauds*, produced and directed by Barbara Doran, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. © 1996 Morac Productions Inc.

novels, the expectations of the readers and her own experiences have led her to a solution where the marriage is indeed described as Heaven or Hell, but nothing in between those two opposites. (Or, in few occasions, clearly under a comical code, such as the marriages of Cornelia Bryant to Marshall Elliott in *Anne's House of Dreams* and Mr. and Mrs. Harrison in *Anne of Avonlea*.) This can be explained by the lack of realism, which Montgomery has been accused of. However, it has to be kept in mind that the genre of romance or children's literature did not allow too graphical realism and thus, since the realistic features are to a certain point lacking in *Anne*, the author has only been truthful to her own style of writing and the genre she is a representative of.

Finally, even though Montgomery's choices are understandable and the reasons for them are very clear, the reader may be disappointed when Anne's development as a woman ends with the marriage. At the same time she becomes an outsider in her own life story. Because of this choice made by Montgomery, the present thesis is forced to move on to other characters, whose description also shows underlying tensions and conflicts.

5.1.2 Other characters

The development in the character description similar to Anne's is clearly part of the formula Montgomery creates her characters. The clash between individual ambitions and the obligatory marriage of female characters seems to come up every time when the author is trying to balance between what is expected of her and what she could write if not bound to the expectations. In the next two chapters, it is shown how Montgomery's quest for an independent female character tends to end up in a similar

ending. Firstly, we will take a look at Leslie Moore, Anne's friend, who is the most dominant character in *Anne's House of Dreams* and secondly, at Rilla, Anne's youngest daughter, the main character of the last novel of the *Anne* -serial, *Rilla of Ingleside*.

5.1.2.1 Leslie in *Anne's House of Dreams*

Leslie enters the scene when Anne has become a happily married wife and the reader assumes that Anne's story has come to a much expected closure. Even though Montgomery may not have had the intention to move on to another character when the first one has lost its appeal in the *Anne* -serial, this seems to be very much the case. In *Anne's House of Dreams* Anne becomes clearly a supporting figure to the character of Leslie, who seems to show all the unexpectedness Anne did before and in addition to that, an air of mystery that has been altogether lacking in Anne. Epperly (1992:85) has pointed out that in *Anne's House of Dreams*, without Leslie Moore, Anne on her own would be pale indeed, and the fact that she seems very much alive is due partly to the powerful descriptions of nature and partly to of the strength of the characters around her.

Even though all the novels of the *Anne* -serial follow Anne's life, she is left on the background after the beginning of *Anne's House of Dreams* and the character who claims the main stage in the novel is Leslie Moore, a mysterious person from the start, tied to her child-like husband and seeming to hold many secrets from her past.

At this point it is important to briefly illuminate Leslie's life story, in order to better understand her character as 'a tragic appealing figure of thwarted womanhood' as quoted in the passage above. Unlike Anne, Leslie had a happy childhood, until the first tragic thing in her life

happened. When she was twelve years old, her little brother died in an accident and Leslie happened to see the whole incident. Leslie was heartbroken, but continued her studies and her life, until another death occurred in the family two years after the first one, when her father, Frank West, hanged himself in their parlor. And again, Leslie was the one to find him. However, Leslie finished her studies and started to work as a teacher at the Glen school 'happy and hopeful and full of life and eagerness' (*House of Dreams*, 72) until her mother forced her to marry Dick Moore, in order get rid of the mortgage on her house held by his father, Abner Moore. Leslie's husband is described here by Cornelia Bryant:

> He was a big, handsome fellow, with a little ugly soul. He was always wanting something till he got it, and then he stopped wanting it - just like a man. Oh, he didn't growl at the weather when it was fine, and he was mostly real pleasant and agreeable when everything went right. But he drank a good deal, and there were some nasty stories told of him and a girl down at the fishing village. He wasn't fit for Leslie to wipe her feet on, that's the long and short of it. (*House of Dreams*, 73)

A year after the marriage, Leslie's mother died and soon afterwards Dick left for a voyage to Havana with his cousin George, from which he was eventually returned to Leslie without memory, intellect or reason. He had been injured in a fight and from that point on, during the last eleven years, Leslie had been taking care of him without any hope to get free from her marriage to her retarded husband. (*House of Dreams*, 70-76.) Leslie is presented here as a traditional female sacrificial victim, who is in fact betrayed by her brother, her father, her mother and her husband and, to some extent, also her friends. It is further implied that women are not only betrayed by circumstance or fate, but in many cases, by their own kin (Åhmansson 1991:156), which makes the betrayal even harder to bear.

It is obvious that Leslie's experiences early in life were difficult (eg. the deaths of the brother and the father), but despite of those, she was able to look ahead with a positive attitude and continue her life with high hopes. Even the disastrous marriage to a drunkard, cheating husband did not steal that away completely, since she was able to secure her mother's happiness by throwing hers away. However, as she found herself bound to life to a childlike husband for the rest of her life without any escape, she became a woman of strong feelings all bottled up inside her. It is made clear that Leslie's life story was known to everyone, but nobody really knew the woman inside, since Leslie was also a proud woman, who would not share her sufferings and innermost feelings with anyone. This, however, changes as the friendship between Anne and Leslie develops.

A closer look to Leslie's bottled up emotions reveals feelings of hostility towards Anne, jealousy and even hate. It is clear that Leslie is extremely bitter because of her own life, and after Anne's arrival to Four Winds, her bitterness grows even stronger, since she is able to compare her own life with Anne's, which seems to be everything she had hoped for herself. In a way she is drawn to Anne, since Anne's home offers her a place in which she can forget her own hardships and become part of the life she longs for, but on the other hand, she is also drawn away from Anne, because Anne's evident happiness is for her a constant reminder of what will never be for her. These feelings are portrayed in the following passage, where Leslie is leaving after her first visit to Anne's and Gilbert's home.

> "Come often, " said Anne and Gilbert. They had risen and stood together in the firelight's glow. Leslie looked at them - youthful, hopeful, happy, typifying all she had missed and must forever miss. The light went out of her face and eyes; the girl vanished; it was the sorrowful, cheated woman who answered the invitation almost coldly and got herself away with a pitiful haste. (*House of Dreams*, 80)

Leslie is portrayed many times like a faucet that turns randomly to hot and cold, and her behavior is often perplexing both to Anne and to herself. However, for a long time neither one of them can find a way to change the situation, since Anne is afraid to touch subjects too sensitive for Leslie, and maybe even afraid to go to an area of which she does not have any understanding herself, and Leslie, in turn, cannot find a way to open up after being silent for too many years.

Epperly (1992) has pointed out that Anne's House of Dreams is not a story about wedded bliss, but instead about friendship, particularly between Anne and Leslie. Even though Åhmansson (1991) sees the novel as a book about marriage as Heaven and Hell, Epperly's point of view is not at all contradictory to Åhmansson's description, since the novel entails both aspects. However, in our viewpoint, it is interesting to see how the friendship between Anne and Leslie is fruitful to both counterparts. Anne learns about true hardships and becomes more understanding towards life and Leslie, in turn, finds a true friend, who gradually helps her away from her steel armor of pride and bitterness. It can be said that in *Anne's House of Dreams*, the theme of friendship is widened from the childhood friendship of Anne and Diana to a mature level, where even the true difficulties can be overcome. As Leslie confesses Anne all her hatreds and pains, it is easy for Anne to forgive and understand Leslie's behavior that has earlier perplexed Anne. (Epperly 1992:90-91)

In our point of view, where the focus is put on character development and, even more importantly, on character deterioration, it is interesting how these themes in *Anne's House of Dreams* work to support these developments to both positive and negative directions.

Firstly, the friendship between Anne and Leslie is essential to both women's development. They learn things about themselves as they learn to know one another. When Anne arrives in her new home at Four Winds,

she is a new bride, full of happiness, which she is willing to share with the whole world. Leslie, on the other hand, has been trapped in a bad marriage for several years without any hope of freedom, since his husband's retardedness. At their first encounter, beauty loving Anne is immediately intrigued by the woman's striking beauty, whereas Leslie, hardened and embittered, feels instant hostility towards Anne's apparent happiness, if not towards Anne herself.

As the two women learned more about each other, each became increasingly curious of the other, not just because they were both in need of a friend of their age, which also was true in a rather secluded area as the Four Winds, but more because their lives differed so much from each other that it was bound to raise curiosity in both of them. In the beginning of *Anne's House of Dreams* Anne is still very much of a romantic, who thrives on stories about heroines in distress, who will be saved by romantic heroes. She does realize that Leslie's life is far from her fantasy world, but still the tragedy surrounding Leslie, together with her beauty, is also something that keeps Anne fascinated by her. Leslie, on the other hand, has not had time for romantic dreams since her life has been just one tragedy following another. In her eyes, Anne's down-to-earth existence in a happy marriage is something that she is longing for and cannot hide her envy towards Anne because of that. This makes Leslie a far more realistic character than Anne has ever been, since feelings of envy and hatred are, no matter how unfortunately, very human and in the real world, there is not a single person who never had any bad thought about other people. This circle of mutual admiration and envy draws the two women closer to each other, even though their differences and simple twists of fate draw them time and time again away from each other.

Firstly, we will consider the idea of Anne and Leslie representing the different sides of a same woman. There is Anne, thoroughly good at

everything but lacking of the spirit of a mature woman, whereas Leslie is a woman through and through, but also prone to negative emotions and thus not the ideal woman. In the course of the novel, Anne does not change as a person, even if she gains understanding through Leslie's experiences. She is the ever devoted housewife, who does not disagree with her husband apart from one single exception. Gilbert, as a doctor, finds out that Dick Moore's illness could be cured through an operation, which could restore his wits and return him back to normal life. As Gilbert tells about his findings to Anne, she is horrified at the mere chance that Dick would be the same mistreating, drunkard husband to Leslie that he used to be before his accident.

> I've always thought Dick was a very interesting case from a medical point of view. Lately I've been studying the history of trephining and the cases where it has been employed. Anne, I have come to the conclusion that if Dick moore were taken to a good hospital and the operation of trephining performed on several places in his skull, his memory and faculties might be restored."
> "Gilbert!" Anne's voice was full of protest. "Surely you don't mean it!"
> "I do, indeed. And I have decided that it is my duty to broach the subject to Leslie."
> "Gilbert Blythe, you shall not do any such thing," cried Anne vehemently "Oh, Gilbert, you won't - you won't. You couldn't be so cruel. Promise me you won't."
> "Why, Anne-girl, I didn't suppose you would take it like this. Be reasonable-"
> "I won't be reasonable - I can't be reasonable - I *am* reasonable. It is you who are unreasonable. Gilbert, have you ever once thought what it would mean for Leslie if Dick Moore were to be restored to his right senses? Just stop and think! She's unhappy enough now, but life as Dick's nurse and attendant is a thousand times easier for her than life as Dick's wife. I know - I *know*! It's unthinkable. Don't you meddle with the matter. Leave well enough alone." (*House of Dreams*, 166-167)

Anne's reaction is understandable, since she knows what kind of life Leslie had before Dick's accident. Anne is very adamant in her opinion, but as it turns out, she is proved wrong. As Dick goes through the operation, he regains his memory and the truth is a big surprise to everyone. Dick is not Dick Moore at all, but his cousin George, who survived the accident and because of mistaken identity, was brought back to Leslie. Even Leslie did not realize the truth since she thought that Dick/George's changed appearance was due to the time that had passed by since she last saw him.

Leslie goes through a dramatic change during the novel. In the beginning she is hopelessly unhappy and meeting Anne makes her think of what her life would be if only she were not tied to her disastrous marriage. Before she confesses openly to Anne her hostile emotions and bitterness, she is a very unpredictable character indeed. After she opens up to Anne and explains her mixed emotions about their friendship, she finds some happiness in her life through her new found friendship with Anne. However, this does not stop Leslie's longing for happiness in the roles of a wife or a mother. Especially the brief stay of Owen Ford as Leslie's boarder makes her even more desperate, since the dreams she once had seem to become concrete in Owen. They fall in love with each other, but the circumstances keep them apart and Leslie, having been happy for the first time in years with Owen's presence, feels lonelier than ever.

> "I was so happy all this summer, Anne - happier than I ever was in my life. I thought it was because everything had been made clear between you and me, and that it was our friendship which made life seem so beautiful and full once more. And it *was*, in part - but not all - oh, not nearly all. I know now why everything was so different. And now it's all over - and he has gone. How can I live, Anne? [...]" (*House of Dreams*, 155)

However, as it turns out, Leslie is freed from her marriage as Dick/George's real identity is revealed. This twist of plot makes possible

the fairytale ending, which includes Owen Ford's reappearance and their marriage. In the final chapters of *Anne's House of Dreams* Leslie reveals her feelings to Anne and finds it almost impossible to believe what has happened in her life.

> "Anne, my happiness frightens me," whispered Leslie. "It seems too great to be real - I'm afraid to think of it. It seems to me that it must just be another dream of this house of dreams and it will vanish when I leave here". (*House of Dreams*, 215)

In the end of the novel, however, it is not Leslie's happiness that disappears, but Leslie and Anne themselves. As Anne closes the doors of her House of Dreams and says goodbye, at the same time the readers are forced to say goodbye to both of these women. Now they have both been brought to the safe haven of marriage and their stories have come to a closure. This point reveals a conflict once again in developing the storylines further, since Anne's and Leslie's friendship would have offered Montgomery a chance to explore their friendship and further development as women, and in addition to that also their marriages from the inside. However, Montgomery chose another route and in her next novel, *Rainbow Valley*, which moves on to describe the childhood of Anne's children. Both Anne and Leslie lose their roles as active individuals and are only rarely mentioned with distant sounding titles of Mrs. Blythe and Mrs. Owen Ford.

5.1.2.2 Rilla in *Rilla of Ingleside*

From *Anne's House of Dreams*, there is a big gap to *Rilla of Ingleside*, which is a story of Anne's youngest daughter, who lives her teenage years during the first world war and is thus forced to grow up faster than the characters

before her in the novels. In Epperly's words, *Rilla of Ingleside* is more than any of her other novels, Montgomery's celebration of the female. (Epperly 1992: 112) She points out that the novel is important already in the sense that it is an authentic description of what really happened in the homefront, where the women became real life heroines while the men fought in the battlefield (Epperly 1992:112)

Thus, though the title suggests that the novel is about Rilla, on a larger scale it is essentially a novel about Canadian women in World War I. The novel describes how the women tried to keep their spirits up, and also the men's spirits up in the battlefront, when the shadow of the war was a part of every day life and how they acted in unforeseen circumstances at home. As to Anne, who has been to some extent in the background already in *Anne's House of Dreams*, she almost completely ceases to exist in *Rainbow Valley*. Epperly describes the novel as follows, "in this novel about values (most especially chivalry) and the childhood of free humanity, Anne is reduced to an echo, an image, a reminder of the past". (Epperly 1992:96) The same is also true when we take a look at *Rilla of Ingleside*. Epperly continues that the Anne in Rilla of Ingleside is "a mere place marker for her former self. The energy of the book is with the other characters, and Anne serves sometimes as a device within the narrative, an audience for Rilla's resolves or a recipient of Susan Baker's pungent remarks. [...] Anne has finally been absorbed completely by the roles conventially prescribed for her - ones that Montgomery challenges only obliquely." (Epperly 1992:114-115)

The novel is about heroism and the female in the context of war, but still, in addition to being an authentic description of Canadian women in the homefront, the novel is first and foremost about Rilla, who is in the beginning of the novel, described as follows:

> Rilla, whose best friends could not deny her share of vanity, thought her face would be very well, but worried over her figure, and wished her mother could be prevailed upon to let her wear longer dresses. She, who had been so plump and roly-poly in the old Rainbow Valley days, was incredibly slim now, in the arms-and-legs period. Jem and Shirley harrowed her soul by calling her "Spider." Yet she somehow escaped awkwardness. There was something in her movements that made you think she never walked but always danced. She had been much petted and was a wee bit spoiled, but still the general opinion was that Rilla Blythe was a very sweet girl, even if she were not so clever as Nan and Di. (*Rilla*, 12)

Even though Anne was vain in her early years, somehow her vainness did not come forward as directly as Rilla's. If we compare Rilla to her mother, it is obvious that she is not driven by educational goals like her mother, but what is surprising in Anne's behavior toward Rilla, is that she does not even encourage her daughter towards greater achievements in her career. If we think about the Anne of the first three *Anne* -novels, her views about Rilla's education seem surprising in *Rilla of Ingleside*.

> "Is Rilla going to Queen's when Shirley goes back?"
> "It isn't decided yet. Her father thinks she is not quite strong enough - she has rather outgrown her strength - she's really absurdly tall for a girl not yet fifteen. I am not anxious to have her go - why, it would be terrible not to have a single one of my babies home with me next winter. Susan and I would fall to fighting with each other to break the monotony." (*Rilla*, 7)

Even though the abovementioned statement seems strange, coming from Anne, it has to be noted that in Anne's words, "Rilla is the only one of my flock, who isn't ambitious. I really wish she had a little more ambition. She has no serious ideals at all - her sole aspiration seems to be have a good time". (*Rilla*, 7).

If we think about these statements, and what is going to happen in the novel, it is clear that Montgomery did not want to concentrate on

educational success anymore. She had done that with Anne. In *Rilla of Ingleside* she is suggesting that Anne's other children have inherited their parents' ambition and thus, are following their parents' footsteps. Further, in the last *Anne* -novel, the main focus is indeed the war and in Rilla she probably wanted to show, how a vain young woman can grow up to be a woman of great accomplishments, even if this does not happen in the educational level, as with Anne in the early novels.

Rilla's education, in this context, not in the academic sense, takes place at home. In the course of the novel she grows up very fast as she has to grow up during wartime. She learns responsibility, when she takes the war orphan, baby Jims, in her care and learns the joys of motherhood without being the biological mother. She learns the tragedy of loss, as all of her brothers go off to war one by one and as her dearest brother Walter dies in the battlefield. However, as a character, Rilla is not as many faceted as the young Anne and thus, does not probably bring out the same instant sympathy out of the reader that he/she has felt for Anne. On the other hand, it could also be that since Rilla does not have educational goals, she is not as appealing to readers as Anne. Even though Rilla is perhaps not a traditional female heroine, in the educational aspect she is more traditional than Anne, in the sense that she is not yearning for any kind of education.

In Rilla, it is also noteworthy that she is neither the academic type nor the traditional housewifely figure. Even though she may have some romantic, girlish dreams about Kenneth Ford, dreams about a family do not seem to be very prominent in her mind. This she states clearly in the following example.

> "But have you any notion of going to college this fall?"
> "No - nor any other fall. I don't want to I never cared for all those ologies and isms Nan and Di are so crazy about. There's five of us

> going to college already. Surely that's enough. There's bound to be one dunce in every family. I'm quite willing to be a dunce if I can be a pretty, popular, delightful one. I have no talent at all, and you can't imagine how comfortable it is. Nobody expects me to do anything. An I can't be a housewifely, cookly creature either. I hate sewing and dusting, and when Susan couldn't teach me to make biscuits nobody could. Father says I toil not neither do I spin. Therefore, I must be a lily of the field," concluded Rilla, with another laugh. (*Rilla*, 16)

She even clearly states that she does not like children, which she realizes to be an unheard of statement from any woman at a time when motherhood was the main goal and purpose of a woman's life.

> "I don't like babies one bit - though when I say so people look at me as if I had said something *perfectly shocking*. Well, I don't, and I've got to honest about it. I don't mind *looking* at a nice clean baby if somebody else holds it - but I wouldn't *touch* it for *anything* and I don't feel a single real spark of interest in it. [...] Mother and Nan and Di all adore babies and seem to think I'm unnatural because I don't." (*Rilla*, 45)

However, Rilla changes very much during the novel. Educational goals remain in the background for the simple reason that wartime efforts took most of everybody's spare time. Rilla's principal of "not toiling, neither spinning" changes drastically as she finds herself in Junior Red Cross activities, knitting socks to soldiers on the front and taking care of baby Jims. She learns to enjoy the hard work and realizes that while she has been taking care of her war orphan without any motherly feelings in the beginning, she has even learned to love him as the time has gone by.

Rilla's change from a woman of many goals to a wife does not happen during the novel, but an indication of this is found in the last page of Rilla of Ingleside, as Kenneth Ford comes back from the war and comes to see Rilla.

> Ken took the uncertain hand she held out, and looked at her. The slim Rilla of four years ago had rounded out into symmetry. He had left a school girl, and he found a woman - a woman with wonderful eyes and a dented lip, and rose-bloom cheek - a woman altogether beautiful and desirable - the woman of his dreams.
> "Is it Rilla-*my*-Rilla?" He asked, meaningly.
> Emotion shook Rilla from head to foot. Joy - happiness - sorrow - fear - every passion that had wrung her heart in those four long years seemed to surge up in her soul for a moment as the deeps of being were stirred. She tried to speak; at first voice would not come. Then -
> "Yeth," said Rilla. (*Rilla*, 277)

Even though Rilla's life differs much from the lives of Anne and Leslie, their development as women follow very similar patterns. Every one of them are doers in their years before finding the right husband. Even though life gives them obstacles to overcome, not one of them gives up but struggles for a better tomorrow. And in the same way, as they finally find the right man to marry, the personal development ends and in Anne's and Leslie's case, they cease to exist as active individuals and the story goes on with their children. With Rilla, her finding the right man marks the end for the whole *Anne* -serial. However, it can be argued from the experience gained by previous novels that if Montgomery had written more sequels, she would have probably moved on to Rilla's family life, eg. telling stories of her children quite similarly as in *Rainbow Valley*.

As the women in the novel go through similar patterns in life, it is clear that the character development has a great effect on the storyline development as well. This is what we will be dealing with in the following chapters.

5.2 Compromises in storyline description

The division between compromises in character and storyline descriptions is not unambiguous, since it often happens that when it is possible to detect a character description changing, it usually leads to the storyline changes as well. However, in the next chapters, the compromises in the storyline will be explained in detail and also, what does it entail in the larger scale as we compare different storylines with each other.

5.2.1 Anne, Leslie and Rilla - similar paths, identical solutions

In the previous chapters, Anne's life story is described in detail and it has led to the conclusion that in her writing progress, Montgomery has been forced to make radical compromises in her writing as she has been pondered over what would be the suitable solution in each twist of the plot. With Anne's character she has gone the farthest in the educational sense, since she has dealt with Anne's education in many of the novels. Anne proved to be an educational success already in the *Anne of Green Gables*. In *Anne of Avonlea,* Anne worked as a teacher in the Avonlea School and found success in her teaching position, even though most parts of the novel are still located in the domestic sphere, where Anne also took care of Marilla's new twins, Davy and Dora. In *Anne of the Island,* she continued her studies and reached the long-awaited B.A. degree. Her educational career would have ended there with *Anne's House of Dreams,* which turned Anne into a housewife, if Montgomery had not continued her story with yet another novel, *Anne of Windy Poplars,* in which she worked as the principal of Summerside school. However, with Anne, Montgomery dealt mainly with education.

In Leslie's story, the main point was Leslie's unhappy marriage and Leslie's development. It has been mentioned that Leslie was also a success at school, but her education did not go very far, since she was forced to marry Dick Moore to settle her family's debt and thus, gave up her possible education for her family. However, Leslie is still pictured as very intelligent and very ambitious, until the marriage took away all of her dreams.

> "[...] But not long after Leslie's old grandmother West died and she left Leslie a little money - enough to give her a year at Queen's Academy. Leslie had made up her mind to pass for a teacher if she could, and then earn enough to put herself through Redmond College. That had been her father's pet scheme - he wanted her to have what he had lost. Leslie was full of ambition and her head was chock full of brains. She went to Queen's, and she took two years' work in one year and got her First; and when she came home she got the Glen school. She was so happy and hopeful and full of life and eagerness. When I think of what she was then and what she is now, I say - drat the men!" (*House of Dreams*, 72)

The story above, told by Cornelia Bryant describes Leslie's life before marriage quite clearly. However, Montgomery's focus within Leslie's story is not about her educational ambitions but more about her being a woman, deprived of her dreams and prisoner of an unhappy life. Even though Leslie's future seems very dark indeed, she seems to manage to get rid of most of her bitterness and even though she appears to be yielding to her fate, there is still something in her that keeps her hoping for a happier future. Thus, Leslie's development is clearly to be seen in her actions and behavior, unlike Anne's, who is very much the same girlish figure throughout the whole serial. Leslie's story also points out the fact that the development did not end with the first marriage to Dick Moore, since the marriage was an unhappy one. Further, Leslie and Dick never had any children. If Leslie had had children with Dick, the storyline would probably have developed in another direction, since the children would

have given purpose to Leslie's otherwise meaningless existence. However, this viewpoint is not really worth of debating since Montgomery chose another kind of life for Leslie, where all of her dreams came true as she marries Owen Ford.

In Rilla's story, Montgomery does not concentrate on the educational aspects anymore, since Rilla's ambitions lie elsewhere. Or more accurately, in the beginning of *Rilla of Ingleside* she does not seem to have any ambitions at all, but as the novel continues, she proves herself to be very determinate and ambitious in other areas of life as opposed to scholarly achievements..

However, the element that is common to all of the three women is their fate in the end. Anne 'disappears' already in *Anne's House of Dreams* as Leslie enters the story. Even though Anne still is a character in the novel, all the action revolves around Leslie, and Anne is reduced to be a wife, who does not do much except fulfils her role as a wife and a mother. Ironically, the same happens to Leslie, as she is freed from her unhappy marriage and, enters into a happy marriage as Owen Ford's wife. Rilla does not get married during *Rilla of Ingleside*, but as the ending of the novel suggest, the next major incident would probably be Rilla's marriage to Leslie's son, Ken Ford. However, this suggestive ending is the end of the whole *Anne*-serial and thus we will not know what happens to Rilla and Ken in the future.

Still, all of these three women go through a similar pattern in life. They are interesting and worth telling about as they struggle with their own difficulties in life, be that an educational career, unhappy marriage or wartime battles in the homefront. But as the difficulties end with a happy marriage, there is nothing more to tell about these women in question. It is obvious that in all three cases, there is a conflict with what could have been made of the future of these three characters and what has

been chosen, since even if not being identical, the pattern is the same. It is not clear how much this pattern is due to Montgomery's own experiences, since she did not have any experience of a happy marriage. Her writing career was an unquestionable success, since her novels keep on living even today and are also an inspiration to many studies and researches, such as this, and also on a much larger scale. It will remain a widely discussed subject, to which extent Montgomery's own experiences affected her writings and on the other hand, what would she have written, if the society of the time would have been more ready to accept different kind of stories.

Ironically, as Montgomery describes Anne's and her friends' writing habits in the Story Club in *Anne of Green Gables* it is impossible not to make a comparison between Diana and Montgomery herself while reading the following passage, told by Anne:

> [...] Then Diana puts too many murders into hers. She says most of the time she doesn't know what to do with the people so she kills them to get rid of them. I mostly always have to tell them what to write about, but that isn't hard for I've millions of ideas. (*Green Gables*, 210)

While Diana kills off her characters by letting them get murdered, Montgomery seems to kill off her characters by letting them get married, and so to speak, gets away with murder every time, if we do not consider the reader's disappointment.

Thus, it can be claimed that Montgomery's writing process also has included the question of how to balance the children's world with the adult world and what to do with the characters as they grow up. This question will be discussed in the following chapter.

5.2.2 Childhood versus adulthood

It is interesting that it is not only the individual characters whose lives create unsatisfying tensions in the storyline, but rather one could say that when a character reaches adulthood, or more accurately when they marry, the conflict has reached its peak and after that, the writer solves the the problem by going on to other characters. It has been concluded that Anne's growing up was difficult for Montgomery, since the usual problems of a grown up woman were hard, if not impossible, to attach to Anne.

This leads us to the conclusion that Montgomery was at her best when depicting children, especially the girls, since they had the potential to grow up to be women of education and knowledge. Montgomery's focus on academic success in Anne's life is a clear indication of her appreciation of women's education. She has undoubtedly been a spokeswoman for women's educational goals through her novels, but not without essentially sacrificing her characters to the belief of what has been expected of a woman in the beginning of the 20th century.

It is clear that Montgomery is a master of describing the feelings, doings and difficulties of adolescent girls at the turn of the century, but as her characters grow up to women, Montgomery abandons them and goes on to tell the story of other characters, who still have either some kind of improvement to look forward in their lives, such as Leslie, or to the children, whose whole life before them is a clean slate with no mistakes and who still have the opportunity to improve themselves as persons.

Furthermore, it is clear that Montgomery was most at home when describing children and their lives. The whole serial is based on a story in a real life newspaper, of an 11-year-old who gets adopted by two elderly siblings. And if the public demand had not been so great, Montgomery would probably not had written any sequels to *Anne of Green Gables.*

However, in *Anne of Avonlea*, where Anne is a sixteen-year-old teacher, it is already clear that Montgomery's need to write about children - and to children - makes her create other characters, who haven't yet left the imaginative world of the child. In *Anne of Avonlea*, Anne gets closely acquainted with one of her students, Paul Irving, who is a kindred spirit to Anne and lives in the same fairyland as Anne before. A more prosaic character, but still a child with vivid imagination and actions according to his imagination is Davy Keith, one of Marilla's adopted twins, who has 'inherited' the getting-in-trouble side from the earlier Anne. If we consider these traits and how they move on to other generations as Anne has to grow up, it is clear that in Montgomery's mind children were in many aspects more interesting to write about than adults, or, her abilities and possibilities were limited when she would have liked to deal with the adult life in her writing.

However, Anne's character, even as a child, has not convinced all of the readers and/or researchers. Cadogan and Craig have critiziced Anne's character quite harshly commenting that Anne is constantly presented as imaginative, but the quality of her imaginings is not always original or enlightened and where Anne's observations are not banal, they are often nauseating. (Cadogan and Craig 1976:96) Further, they have pointed out that the problem of a character who grows up during the story is one which only a few children's writers have managed to deal with with success. Apparently they do not include Montgomery to this category, since they imply that "for the kind of sugary innocence which Anne [...] embodied, a child is the only valid symbol; transferred to an adult, or semi-adult it is bound to ring false" (Cadogan and Craig 1976:97) Further, they conclude that the novel *Anne of Green Gables*, after the first half of the novel, can, or should, please no one, since the children as readers cannot identify with a heroine for whom growing up has meant that the zest is

taken out of her and the adult, in turn, is irritated by the falsity of the sentiment. (Cadogan and Craig 1976:98-99)

It can be questioned if a child reader will be unable to identify with the idealized character of the young Anne, but very likely that an adult reader will have problems with seeing Anne as a real person the way she is described in the novels, since there is simply something missing in her.

In the next chapter, we will discuss how Montgomery has included in Anne's story elements that could not have been openly discussed in her time.

6. CLASHES AND THE USE OF SYMBOLISM

The *Anne* -serial includes many symbolic elements which Montgomery has used on many different levels. For instance, in the novel *Rainbow Valley*, the symbolic level brings out a whole different meaning to the text. On the surface, the novel describes the every day life of Anne's children and the Meredith -children. However, if the reader tunes in to the symbolic level, it is obvious that the novel is also very much about patriotism and premonitions of the World War I, which is the central element of the last novel *Rilla of Ingleside*. It is clear that in every case, symbolic level offers a whole different view to the novel in question, but there are also many different reasons why the text demands symbolic elements. In *Rainbow Valley*, the symbolic level (the premonitions of war) is a tool with which Montgomery ties the novel to the following book *Rilla of Ingleside* (life during the war) and thus it is not relevant in this context as we are observing the clashes in *Anne* -novels. Similarly, Montgomery has used the traditional symbolic imagery connected with different types of women. The author has used the traditional images of women in a way that the

reader will automatically have an image of the character traits of a certain character on the basis of how her outward appearance is described, thus certain traits in appearance symbolize certain character traits. However, Montgomery's use of 'eternal types of womanhood' (see: Gilbert and Gubar 1979: 16-17) is not there to discuss certain things that cannot be discussed in explicit terms, but simply as stylistic device Montgomery has used in depicting her characters.

Since the main objective here is to find clashes between what has been told and what is found below the textual surface, it is logical to concentrate on those symbolic elements which describe facets in the text that could not have been discussed or dealt with openly.

In the following chapters the theme of symbolism is discussed from two different points of view. Firstly, it will be shown how Montgomery has used symbolism in order to discuss areas that have been too sensitive to deal with openly with straightforward terms. As it has been pointed out before, sexuality and sensuality were not areas that could be included in this genre directly. Further, sexuality in general was something that women were not supposed to hardly know about, let alone discuss. These facts have led Montgomery to use symbolism when describing the sexual side of a woman in her character of Leslie. This will be examined in the following chapters.

6.1 Sensuality and sexuality in Leslie

The topic of sexuality may seem irrelevant when dealing with traditional girls' books. It is unquestionable, that even though sexuality is an important part of a woman's life, the subject has been largely avoided in the genre. Total denial of any hints or sexuality in girls' books may ring

false, but it is still very understandable that if the subject is avoided even today, it should not be a surprise that sexuality was not discussed in girls' literature in the early twentieth century. During this period the tendency was to regard good children's books as aids to correct socialisation; thus they had to be clearly instructive, elevating and sexually acceptable (Reynolds 1990:34). And in this context, sexually acceptable means that sexuality is not even mentioned. As Gillian Avery points out, in *Anne* - serial there is certainly childbirth but nothing to indicate how this has come about (Avery 1975:228). This same kind of evasive description or use of euphemisms is noted also by Gilbert and Gubar (1976:109), who claim that using euphemisms, such as referring to a childbirth with the phrase 'the House of Dreams was visited by a stork', led to a hybrid literature, wholly regressive in effect and execution as the authors attempted to represent adult experiences in terms comprehensible to (and suitable for) children.

Cadogan and Craig have pointed out in their work that 'of all biological phases, adolescence is the phase in which bodily experiences are of paramount importance; yet for reasons of convention, squeamishness, and the idea that their audience was in need of moral guidance at every level, children's authors until recently have been prohibited from mentioning many of its fundamental aspects'. (Cadogan and Craig 1976: 97.) This is why in *Anne* also, any hints of awakening sexuality are avoided as much as possible. Anne's character has been accused of being totally asexual, and for this reason her spirituality had to be emphasized. Even though the boys are discussed among the Anne and her friends in *Anne of Green Gables*, Anne sees them more as friends and/or intellectual rivals without giving even a thought to the sexual aspect, which appears somewhat unrealistic even if we consider the timeframe.

At this particular point it is very important to stress the effects of the Victorian period, which is known for its puritan ideas about sexuality and especially about women's sexuality. In the context of literature, before the Victorian era the genre of women's gothic and romantic fiction included so called seduction stories, where the young and innocent protagonist had to fight the seduction of a male counterpart. This kind of fiction, however, vanished almost completely after the beginning of the early nineteenth century (Mussell 1981:5), which can be explained to a certain point by the Victorian ideas in society. Thus, it was not only children's literature at the time that had to be stripped from any connotations to sexuality.

Even though in the mid nineteenth century there was not a complete consensus on the nature of woman's sexuality, it was largely claimed that women did not and should not feel sexual impulses. This is naturally in contradiction with the fact that the principal aim of a woman's life was to marry a man and have children by him those ends were, however, to be entirely free of any erotic implications. As a female author from the time declared: "Normally man desires wife for sake of having the woman; woman desires a husband for the sake of having the child" and continued this thought by a biological explanation "...With men nature has avoided the danger of race extinction by implanting a strong sexual craving; with women nature has supplied no such safeguard". Further, it was even improper for a woman to know anything about anatomy or physiology - not to mention studying them -or about the human body or its ailments in general. (Campbell 1976:3)

Even though the subject of sexuality is very much absent in Anne novels, mostly because of the genre of girls' fiction and the conventions of the time, the theme is not completely absent in the serial. In the first four novels, it can be claimed that even though there are characters who show

interest in the opposite sex or are themselves the object of interest, this all happens in the frame of friendship and schooltime crushes and did not include anything of sexual quality. This is in fact very logical, if we consider that sexuality in the minds of adolescent girls was not accepted, since the upbringing they received did not include any - or at least very little - information about sexuality. And even though married women were also expected to repress any sexual feelings, it was obvious that with marriage, the area of sexuality became familiar to them. Thus the aspect of sexuality could not be dealt with in connection with adolescent girls, since they were considered to be beyond that area. However, this did not prevent Montgomery from dealing with the sexual aspect in connection with grown-up women. Even though she could not deal with the theme in a direct way, there is no question that she dealt with sexuality in ways that are not explicit, but on the other hand, they are very obvious if we consider the character of Leslie in *Anne's House of Dreams* and the use of symbolism attached to her.

Since Montgomery's main character Anne was very much of a spiritual and a romantic character, to whom any kind of sexual connotations could not be attached to explicitly, Montgomery did not or could not introduce sexuality with her, but she did invent another character, Leslie Moore, through whom she could introduce the other side of a woman, the sexual and the sensual side. Åhmansson (1991:156-157) has pointed out that the characters of Anne and Leslie 'could be interpreted on a symbolical level as the two aspects of the same woman, a split image', where Anne represents the innocent and virginal Mary, even if married, and Leslie the other end of the polarization, Eve, the temptress. Here again, Montgomery returns to the 'eternal types of womanhood' described before, but this time she deals with the theme in connection with grown up women instead of adolescent girls. By

expanding the innocent (Anne) to the temptress (Leslie), she is able to extend the whole image of a woman further than before.

6.2 Symbolism in colors and use of allusions

In addition to Leslie's situation, in which she is deprived from any feelings from love and security in her own home, she has also been described as follows: 'She is in essence a living symbol of captive female sexuality trapped inside a dead marriage, where conventions as well as family considerations help to keep the trap secured and where death is the only escape.' (Åhmansson 1991:157). Leslie's sexuality is presented in two levels. Firstly, by the use of symbolism in forms of colors red and crimson and with the allusions to Venus[9] and Danae[10], both captivating female figures in the classical mythology, and secondly, by Leslie's own behavior, which occasionally is freed from all restraints and lets her femininity and sensuality surface. These two levels will be discussed in the following chapters.

The most important symbolic element indicating Leslie's sensuality is the use of the color crimson. The crimson spots are pointed out in the very first scene, in which Anne sees Leslie for the first time. She had already noticed the hint of hostility in Leslie's eyes, but that was not the reason that most attracted Anne's attention.

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[9]ancient Italian goddess of gardens and spring, identified by the Romans with Aphrodite as the goddess of love and beauty. (Webster 1989:1586)

[10]*Class. Myth.* a maiden who became the mother of Perseus after Zeus, disguised as a golden rain, visited her in the tower where she had been imprisoned by her father, the king of Argos. (Webster 1989:366)

> But it was the girl's beauty, which made Anne give a little gasp -a beauty so marked that it must have attracted attention anywhere. She was hatless, but heavy braids of burnished hair, the hue of ripe wheat, were twisted about her head like a coronet; her eyes were blue and star-like; and her figure, in its plain print gown, was magnificent; and her lips were as crimson as the bunch of blood-red poppies she wore at her belt. (*House of Dreams*, 24)

In Anne's second meeting with Leslie, she, again, sees the hint of envy in Leslie's eyes, but dismisses the thought almost instantly as her attention is drawn to Leslie's extraordinary appearance.

> The girl of the golden hair and sea-blue eyes was sitting on a boulder of the headland, half-hidden by a jutting rock. She was looking straight at Anne with a strange expression - part wonder, part sympathy, part - would it be? - envy. She was bareheaded, and her splendid hair, more than ever like Browning's "gorgeous snake," was bound about her head with a crimson ribbon. She wore a dress of some dark material, very plainly made; but swathed about her waist, outlining its fine curves, was a vivid girdle of red silk. Her hands, clasped over her knee, were brown and somewhat work-hardened; but the skin of her throat and cheeks was as white as cream. A flying gleam of sunset broke through a low-lying western cloud and fell across her hair. For a moment she seemed the spirit of the sea personified - all its mystery, all its passion, all its elusive charm. (*House of Dreams*, 63)

For Anne, Leslie was a mystery in more ways than one. Firstly, she could not understand why a woman like Leslie happened to be in a relatively secluded place as the Four Winds, since for her, even Leslie's appearance was everything she ever wanted to be. Not only had she a perfect figure, but also her star-like eyes and golden hair are described in many different occasions. Even though Anne was more than happy and secure in her marriage, her insecurity about her looks even made her worry at some point that Gilbert would like her more if her hair looked more like Leslie's (*House of Dreams*, 80). However, Leslie initially considered her beauty more

of an enemy, since it was the reason Dick Moore had wanted to marry her in the first place and thus, her beauty was the reason her life had gone to waste. (*House of Dreams*, 65) Leslie's beauty is described in several different passages in the novel in a highly symbolical language. Frequently used are similes connected with light, stars and sky, which contrast her brilliant but buried personality with the darkness of her surroundings. (Åhmansson 1991:158). Examples of this are found in the following passage:

> She stood just where the warm yellow light flooded her from the open door. She wore a plain dress of cheap, cream tinted cotton voile, with the usual girdle of crimson. Leslie was never without her touch of crimson. She had told Anne that she never felt satisfied without a gleam of red somewhere about her, if it were only a flower. To Anne, it always seemed to symbolise Leslie's glowing, pent-up personality, denied all expression save in that flaming glint. Leslie's dress was cut a little away at the neck and had short sleeves. Her arms gleamed like ivory tinted marble. Every exquisite curve of her form was outlined in soft darkness against the light. Her hair shone in it like flame. Beyond her was a purple sky, flowering with stars over the harbour. (*House of Dreams*, 136-137)

Leslie's sensuality is also brought forward with the allusions of Venus and Danae. These two are very important figures, if we consider Leslie as a figure of a thwarted womanhood and the implications these mythological creatures tell about Leslie. Venus, as the goddess of love and beauty in the Roman mythology, is referred to in its planetary form in the following passage, where Anne, Gilbert and Leslie are walking to the Four Winds Point and see the planet Venus casting its shadow on Earth.

> The sun had set and in the southwestern sky hung Venus, glorious and golden, having drawn as near to her earth-sister as is possible for her. For the first time Anne and Gilbert saw the shadow cast by that brilliant star of evening, that faint, mysterious shadow, never seen save when there is white snow to reveal it, and then only with averted vision, vanishing when you gaze at it directly. (...)

> "I have heard that you can see the shadow of Venus only once in a lifetime, and that within a year of seeing it your life's most wonderful gift will come to you," said Leslie. But she spoke rather hardly; perhaps she thought that even the shadow of Venus could bring her no gift of life. Anne smiled in the soft twilight; she felt quite sure what the mystic shadow promised her. (*House of Dreams*, 96-97)

Venus being both the Roman goddess of love and beauty and the planet next to Earth, gives the passage a two-dimensional meaning. If we consider the description about Venus, the planet, in the first part of the passage, it is given same kind of attributes that are used to describe Leslie's appearance, such as golden, glorious and brilliant. In fact, we can see the two planets, Venus and Earth, representing the two women watching the shadow of Venus falling on Earth. Especially revealing is the line where 'Venus, glorious and golden, having drawn as near to her earth-sister as is possible for her', since it describes at the same time Anne's and Leslie's relationship, where Leslie in turn distances herself from Anne and in turn comes closer, but only 'as near as is possible for her'. Even though in reality, both planets orbit around the Sun, in this literary context, however, the Earth has been portrayed more stabile, whereas Venus is the planet making the movements of distancing and approaching.

Further, Venus's mysterious shadow casting over Earth and the whole mystery surrounding the planet, is similar to the affect Leslie has on Anne. Leslie's deeper emotions are seen to Anne only in fleeting moments in her eyes, 'and then only with averted vision, vanishing when you gaze at them directly', if we choose to use the original quotation above. If we consider the portrayal of Anne in the previous novels as the spiritual type of a woman, the image of a mother earth seems to be in conflict with Anne's character. However, the other paragraph of the passage ends with Anne smiling and feeling certain about what the shadow of Venus

promised her, which is the first clue in the novel that she is pregnant with her first child. In this respect, the idea of Anne changing into a mother earth, and thus fulfilling the expectations for a woman, is not as far fetched as it may seem when thinking about Anne as a young girl. After all, she has now lived up to the expectations, whereas Leslie is still searching no matter how pessimistic she is about the future.

Secondly, in addition to the planet Venus, the allusion to the goddess of love and beauty is very largely personified in Leslie. As we have seen, Leslie's beauty is described in detail several times throughout the novel and the aspect of Leslie representing the goddess of love is in fact emphasized with her life, completely deprived from love throughout her adulthood. The 'touch of crimson' somewhere about her without which she does not feel complete, can be interpreted as a visible sign of the vast reserve of love she has inside, but to which she can not find an outlet. Another interesting detail about the goddess of love, Venus - or the Greek counterpart, Aphrodite - is the myth about her birth, in which she is born from the foam of the sea. This is another fact tying Leslie together with the mythological goddess of love, since the descriptions of Leslie often include references to the sea - which alone, is a symbol of femininity - and sometimes even a clear mystical element: 'For a moment she seemed the spirit of the sea personified - all its mystery, all its passion, all its elusive charm.' (*House of Dreams*, 63)

The comparison with the other mythical character, Danae, is made by Owen Ford, as he catches a glimpse of Leslie in a moment she thought nobody was watching.

> "... She had taken the opportunity of what she expected to be an afternoon alone to wash her hair, and she was standing on the veranda in the sunshine to dry it. It fell all about her to her feet in a fountain of living gold. When she saw me she hurried in, and the

> wind caught her hair and swirled it all around her - Danae in her cloud." (*House of Dreams*, 151)

The differences between Anne and Leslie are not shown only by the symbolic elements attached to Leslie, but also in her behavior. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

6.3 Leslie's behavior - passion and strength

If we consider the idea of a split image, presented by Åhmansson, it is very clear why Anne had to remain the virginal and innocent character she had been since the beginning. Even though during the eight novels of the serial Anne becomes a mother of six children (having given birth to seven children, of which the eldest, Joy, died shortly after birth), in a way she remains a girl throughout the whole serial. Åhmansson (1991:157) claims that Anne behaves like a young girl up till the death of her firstborn baby, but even though her baby's death must have been the first truly tragic incident in her life, her behavior, however, does not change all that much. Anne's longing for romance and beauty around her remains the same and her tendency to observe the world through rose colored glasses does not allow room for stronger emotions, sometimes even strongly negative emotions, which were clearly apparent in Leslie. It can be claimed that even though Anne learns about the hardships in a woman's life as she loses her baby and moreover, as she learns about Leslie's life, her range of emotions is presented as far more limited than Leslie's. When Leslie is introduced in *Anne's House of Dreams*, she is described as a woman envying the happiness Anne has as a newly married bride arriving with her husband to their house of dreams at the Four Winds:

> They had not met anybody on the moist, red road that wound along the harbour shore. But just before they came to the belt of birch which hid their home, Anne saw a girl who was driving a flock of snow-white geese along the crest of a velvety green hill on the right. [...] The girl was tall and wore a dress of pale blue print. She walked with certain springiness of step and erectness of bearing. She and her geese came out of the gate at the foot of the hill as Anne and Gilbert passed. She stood with her hand on the fastening of the gate, and looked steadily at them, with an expression that hardly attained to interest, but did not descend to curiosity. It seemed to Anne, for a fleeting moment, that there was even a veiled hint of hostility in it. (*House of Dreams*, 23-24)

Already at this point it is clear that Leslie has the capacity of strong feelings, even negative feelings, such as jealousy and bitterness, which seem to be completely out of Anne's range. Despite of Anne's unhappy childhood before the age of eleven, and despite of her tendency to occasionally fall into 'the depths of despair' (eg. *Green Gables*, 26; 215) her years in Green Gables were a dream come true for an orphan girl and it was hard for her to understand all the hardships Leslie had gone through in her life.

> The girl's beauty and sorrow and loneliness drew her with an irresistible fascination. She had never known anyone like her; her friends had hitherto been wholesome, normal, merry girls like herself, with only the average trials of human care and bereavement to shadow their girlish dreams. Leslie Moore stood apart, a tragic appealing figure of thwarted womanhood. (*House of Dreams*, 77)

Leslie's sensual side is usually described through the symbols discussed above, but occasionally, it also comes to surface in her actions. In comparison with her usually restrained behavior, the effect of letting the barriers down is even stronger, as we can see in the following passage, in which Leslie is invited to a dance by Marshall Elliott at the celebration of the New Year's Eve:

> Leslie danced like one inspired; the wild, sweet abandon of the music seemed to have entered into and possessed her. Anne watched her in fascinated admiration. She had never seen her like this. All the innate richness and colour and charm of her nature seemed to have broken loose and overflowed in crimson cheek and glowing eye and grace of motion. Even the aspect of Marshall Elliott, with his long beard and hair, could not spoil the picture. On the contrary, it seemed to enhance it. Marshall Elliott looked like a Viking of elder days, dancing with one of the blue-eyed golden-haired daughters of the Northland. (*House of Dreams*, 99)

Again, Leslie is depicted as a mythical character, a figure conjured up from ancient times and distant places. Anne's fascinated admiration is an indication of the fact that even though she herself is a warm and loving person, she has never been and never will be able to the same range and depth of emotion as Leslie is capable of. In order to illuminate this further, it is necessary to return to the use of colors in a symbolic level. It can be stated that in general, red is the color symbolizing love, passion and sexuality. However, it has to be noted that there are many shades of red that represent different aspects of love. Since the beginning of *Anne*, Anne has expressed in several occasions that her favorite color is pink (eg. *Green Gables*, 37), whereas Leslie's craving for crimson has been pointed out in many instances. Montgomery has used this traditional symbolism attached to the different shades of red in the end of *Anne's House of Dreams*, where Leslie's story is brought to a closure. In the passage below, Leslie discusses with Owen Ford, a man who came to Four Winds to write Captain Jim's life story and fell in love with Leslie:

> "I love the red roses," said Leslie. "Anne likes the pink ones best, and Gilbert likes the white. But I want the crimson ones. They satisfy some craving in me as no other flower does."
> "These roses are very late - they bloom after all the others have

> gone - and they hold all the warmth and soul of the summer come to fruition," said Owen, rose is the flower of love - the world has acclaimed it so for centuries. The pink roses are love hopeful and expectant - the white roses are love dead and forsaken - but the red roses - ah, Leslie, what are the red roses?"
> "Love triumphant," said Leslie in a low voice.
> "Yes - love triumphant and perfect. Leslie, you know - you understand. I have loved you from the first. And I *know* you love me - I don't need to ask you. But I want to hear you say it - my darling - my darling!"
> Leslie said something in a very low and tremulous voice. Their hands and lips met; it was life's supreme moment for them and as they stood there in the old garden, with its many years of love and delight and sorrow and glory, he crowned her shining hair with the red, red rose of a love triumphant. (*House of Dreams*, 213)

Firstly, the passage above shows how the different shades of roses - the flower of love - represent different kinds of love. Anne's pink roses represent 'love hopeful and expectant'; they do not simply reflect Anne's attitude toward life, but are also indications of her innocence and her childlike character that does not change with age and experience, but remains the same since this is what Anne is by nature. Leslie's preference of red roses does not only symbolize her 'full womanhood' (Åhmansson 1991:167), but describes her whole life story as something that blooms after all the others have gone - and holds all the warmth and soul of the summer come to fruition. With the help of the symbolic use of the roses, Leslie is portrayed as a mature woman who achieves 'the love triumphant' after many hardships, compared with Anne's innocence and relatively carefree life. However, in Gilbert's case, the white roses cannot be straightforward representatives of the love Gilbert is capable of, since even though in the background, his love for Anne is certainly not 'dead and forsaken'. Åhmansson (1991) has pointed out that Gilbert's preference to white roses is perfectly consistent with the choices of the two women, since if they stand for his ideal in women, the innocent and totally

childlike dependence, Anne's choice supports the idea that they indeed have found each other's complementary part. On the other hand, if the white roses are representatives of Gilbert himself, they speak of rationality and common sense, which can be seen as positive attributes in a man.

However, as Gabriella Åhmannson points out, both Anne's and Leslie's marriages described inside the romantic code also serves to rob them of credibility, since both of the marriages are idealized out of proportion. "The tragic position of Leslie Moore seems ridiculously exaggerated and this excess draws the reader's attention away from what Leslie Moore's disastrous marriage might have to say about women's position in general had the story not been told in the tragic mode. The idealized qualities in the Anne/Gilbert marriage also help reduce Anne from the position of strength which she has enjoyed in previous books to a position of dependency. A happily married woman could not at this time be independent or unconventional; she was by definition conformist or she could not be called happy. (Åhmansson 1991:153-154)

Despite of the fact that the women in Anne -novels usually end up marrying and thus losing their position of independency, Montgomery's position is always the woman's point of view. This concentration on female characters has brought up the idea of matriarchal utopia with the connection of Montgomery's text. This idea will be discussed in the next chapter.

7. THE IDEA OF MATRIARCHAL UTOPIA

Even if Montgomery played according to the rules made up by her society and time, she did emphasize the woman's role not just as a traditional homemaker and wife, but also as an independent subject, who also has her

own goals and - even more importantly in Anne's case - her own ambitions. Åhmansson (1991) has brought up an interesting detail of the whole community of Avonlea: she considers it to be a form of a matriarchal utopia (Åhmansson 1991:134). This view is supported by the fact that the main characters are indeed women who rule many of the things that happen. Perhaps they do not do it very openly but many female characters in Avonlea can easily be seen as the ones who 'pull the strings' not only in their own families but also in the whole society, whereas the men are kept in the background and referred to as someone's husband, son, etc., just as women have always been described in relation to men (Ruthven 1984:72-73). Examples of these characters are e.g. Marilla, who quite clearly is the stronger one when compared to her brother Matthew and Mrs. Lynde, who not only completely runs her own family but also knows everything that happens in Avonlea (*Anne of Green Gables*, 1) and is thus a very influential character in the whole community. This kind of strong women also come forward in later Anne-books, e.g. Leslie Moore and Cornelia Bryant in *Anne's House of Dreams*.

However, as opposed to traditional utopias by female writers, where men have been left out to the point of non-existence, Montgomery does not exclude men completely, but leaves them in the background and gives them qualities that have been thought of as feminine characteristics. This is clearly to be seen in Matthew, whose silence, tender-heartedness and tendency to retire to the background are not very typical attributes in description of male characters. Montgomery also has other male characters, who are not only left in the background, but only mentioned in relation to their wife's, sisters, or other women characters, which is exactly how women have usually been perceived in traditional patriarchal society. This is best illustrated in the following passages from *Anne of*

Green Gables and *Anne's House of Dreams,* in the descriptions of Mr. Thomas Lynde and Mr. Dick Moore:

> Thomas Lynde - a meek little man whom Avonlea people called "*Rachel Lynde's husband*" - was sowing his late turnip seed on the hill beyond the barn; [...] (*Green Gables*, 2; emphasis added)

> "Who lives in the house among the willows up the brook?" asked Anne.
> "Mrs. Dick Moore," said Captain Jim - "and her husband," he added, as if by way of an afterthought. (*House of Dreams*, 29)

Both men are in a sense weaker than their wives, which makes the whole communities treat them as additions to their wives, not the other way around. It is a clear indication that abovementioned definitions in the relationships between men and women in Montgomery's mind had not anything to do with the sex, but everything with the strength of the character.

When we observe the types of woman in Montgomery's *Anne,* it is however important to note that all the women are so called "womanly women" as opposed to the "unwomanly women", as labelled in Elert (1979:30-31). The women who engaged in the movements for female emancipation were generally regarded as "unwomanly woman" and this type of woman is largely absent from the *Anne*-serial as a whole. However independent a woman may be, such as the characters of Marilla or Cornelia Bryant, the involvement in politics or other similar activities are in a way seen strictly as men's activities and a woman's involvement in them would somehow decrease woman's value as a woman. The good and the bad women, which both appear to some extent in *Anne,* can be described as representatives of different poles of femininity but they were both "womanly women". This aspect is noteworthy also in Anne, since girls' novels by nature are attempting to instill a positive role model in

their readers, in which case the portrayal of an unwomanly woman would have been highly questionable, whereas the use of the different types of womanly women offered a useful tool to establish guidelines for the readers of what to do and what not to do in order to grow up to be an ideal woman within the standards of the time.

During *Anne of the Island*, Anne also gets to experience independent living, when she, Philippa Gordon, Priscilla Grant and Stella Maynard rent a house, Patty's Place, in Kingsport to live in during their studies in college. However, as opposed to today's conventions, it was not suitable for young girls to live by themselves, so they asked Stella's aunt, Aunt Jamesina, to live with them. Patty's Place is described as a true home, compared to the austere surroundings of boarding houses, which were usually the places where young women lived if they studied away from home. Åhmansson (1991) points out that the life in Patty's Place was as close as possible to the idea of matriarchal utopia, since this was indeed a small community consisting of five women, where men did not have a place:

> Inside the parameters of this fictional world the girls are given all the opportunity they need to develop intellectually and at the same time traditional, female duties are not neglected. The girls live independently of men, they support each other and they form a front against the outside world. And they have a great deal of fun. No wonder that this female world, with its sense of belonging and its joy of achievement, has had an endless appeal for girls all over the world. (Åhmansson 1991:142)

However, even though the life in Patty's Place did offer an ideal lifestyle for a certain period in Anne's life, it is clear that eventually, after she has finished her studies, she must find her place in the world. When all of her friends start to marry and raise a family, she was starting to feel very much of an outcast, who tries to comfort herself with her educational

success and a probable position as a teacher, but still finds very little comfort in her thoughts.

> Anne was always glad in the happiness of her friends; but it is sometimes a little lonely to be surrounded everywhere by a happiness that is not your own. And it was just the same when she went back to Avonlea. This time it was Diana who was bathed in the wonderful glory that comes to a woman when her first-born is laid beside her. Anne looked at the white young mother with a certain awe that never entered into her feelings for Diana before. [...] It gave her a queer desolate feeling that she herself somehow belonged only in those past years and had no business in the present at all. (*Island*, 232).

Epperly has also interpreted this passage as 'a loud, clear message about the necessity for and desirability of marriage'. She also states that the way Montgomery has poignantly reflected (or replicated) the cultural pressure on Anne to get on with what is apparently meant to be the real work and only blessing of life - to be married and to hear her baby call her 'mother'... (Epperly 1992:69). The passage above, with it's descriptions of 'Anne's *awe*' and 'the *glory* surrounding Diana' also clearly describes the almost sacred quality that began to emerge in the context of motherhood in the turn of the century in Canada, when men left home to take wage labour jobs and women were left at home to take care of the children. (Light and Parr 1983:109). With the historical aspects in mind, where marriage and motherhood are the only acceptable goals of woman's life, it is easy to understand that even with her youth and a B.A. from Redmond, Anne's thoughts about belonging only to the past are very believable. At this point of the *Anne* -serial it seems like the intellectual superiority of Anne when compared to Diana, which had been accentuated in the previous *Anne* -novels, seems to have turned against her in the demands of cultural surroundings. Even though Montgomery might have been reluctant to

have Anne surrender to the cultural expectations, she was forced - by the same expectations - to continue Anne's story as a wife in her marriage to Gilbert.

8. CLASHES BETWEEN REALITY AND ROMANCE

Anne -serial is not only a representative of children's literary genre, but it can also be seen as a romantic novel, belonging to the genre of romance. Romantic fiction has had the same problem as childrens literature among literary critics and historians, which is their status as literary not really worth to be studied in a serious manner. Historians have been reluctant to grant aesthetic status to the books and their authors. (Mussell 1981:69) However, this has also been changing during the last decades.

The romantic nature of the novel comes forward probably most clearly in Anne's character description. Her yearning for beauty and romance does not really change even with age. Another factor in *Anne* - novels that is clearly an indication of the romantic genre are for example the many overly sugar-coated love stories that end in marriage with the basic idea of living happily ever after without any difficulties in the relationship.

The romantic code comes forward also in the many nature descriptions, which are both plenty and detailed in the novels, eg. the following description of the view from the window of the east gable room where Anne spent her first night at Green Gables.

> Below the garden a green field lush with clover sloped down to the hollow where the brook ran and where scores of white birches grew, upspringing airily out of an undergrowtht suggestive of delightful possibilities in ferns and mosses and woodsy things generally. Beyond it was a hill, green and feathery with spruce and

> fir; there was a gap in it where the gray gable end of the little house she had seen from the other side of the Lake of Shining Waters was visible.
> Off to the left were the big barns and beyond them, away down over green, low-sloping fields was a sparkling blue glimpse of sea. (*Green Gables*, 31)

In a similar manner Montgomery also describes inanimate objects such as houses, or things such as plants and seem to give them almost a human air about them by using personification in her descriptions. In the following, she has described Patty's Place, the house where the girls lived at Kingsport.

> Just on the crest, where Spofford Avenue petered out into a plain road, was a little white frame house with groups of pines on either side of it, *stretching their arms protectingly* over its low roof. It was covered with red and gold vine, through which its green-shuttered windows *peeped*. (*Island*, 48; italics added)

Descriptions like the one above accentuate the beauty which Montgomery has chosen to record in her writings. Even though it is easy to blame the author for overly romantizing practically everything she writes about, it has to be remembered that the describtions above are typical for the romantic genre.

However, as we scrutinize the aspect of romance in the *Anne* -novels in a critical manner, it is not possible to let everything sink in to the mind of the reader without considering the question of believability, both in the character or nature depictions, or in the plot of the novel in question. This believability -factor will be discussed in the following chapter.

8.1 The question of believability in romance genre

Romantic fiction can be described as a love story within a domestic drama. Opposed to gothic novels, where the heroine was usually up against a villain, who builds obstacles for the heroine and thus attempts to prevent the heroine from finding her hero and happiness. Gothic novels usually contain elements of adventure and mystery, which are lacking from the romantic novel. The romantic novel features a woman who experiences love, courtship, and usually marriage, and whose problems on her path towards the marriage are mainly caused by her own actions, not by outside factors as in gothic novels. (Mussell 1981:xi)

According to Mussell (1981), a romantic novel takes one of two forms: the drama of courtship and marriage within a setting of domestic detail, or the story of an already-acheived marriage with difficulties between husband and wife being resolved at the end, and the wife being rewarded with either a better marriage to her current husband or a new marriage with a new lover. The third version of the romantic novel can be described as the "anti-romantic" type, in which the values and the world view are the same, but in which the heroine behaves in such a way that she cannot be rewarded with marriage in the end. This type of romantic fiction includes romance, even though the inversion of the storyline makes the stories serve as cautionary tales rather than as models to be emulated. (Mussell 1981:xi-xii)

If we consider these abovementioned characteristics of romantic fiction, it is clear that in Anne -serial, they are all included. The whole serial is set on the domestic setting, the protagonist are always female and the happenings within the novels concentrate on the heroine finding a suitable husband. This line of development is seen in Anne's story. Leslie's life follow the other form, where the difficulties in the marriage lead to a

resolution where the heroine is freed from the difficult marriage and finds another lover, after which the story follows the same pattern as Anne's story. Thirdly, the "anti-romantic" form is dealt with Anne's friend, Ruby's fate (*Island*, 110), where her unsuitable behavior is punished with death.

The question of believability does not entail merely the question if the plots and sub-plots in the novels are believable eg. if they could happen in real life. If that was the point, it would be easy to conclude that all the happenings in the serial could also happen in real life. The serial does not include any fantastic elements that would detach the story from ordinary life, which can be the case with gothic novels. However, the factor that robs Anne -serial some of its credibility is the fact that no matter how believable the plot or the sub-plots are, there is always a certain predictability in every twist, which suggest the fact that the stories follow a pattern which is characteristic to the romantic genre.

In Anne -serial the good will be rewarded and the bad - as far as there are any bad characters; the accurate way to describe these bad characters is "a good character with somewhat unsuitable behavior" - will be punished. This is the factor that separates *Anne* -serial from realistic or life-like fiction, where the resolution cannot be detected from a character's behavior. Thus, if the reader wants absolute reality in literature, romance genre is not where to search for it.

However, even though Montgomery has been faithful to the romantic genre she had chosen, she has also peppered her romantic writing with comedy, irony and even downright sarcasm, which add another dimension in her novels. These balancing aspects will be discussed in the following chapter.

8.2. Balancing the romantic code with other elements

It has been concluded that *Anne* -serial includes many characteristics that are typical for romantic fiction. Montgomery has written within the demands of the romantic genre, but in addition to that, she has used other literary devices to add different dimensions to her writing. In the following, we will see how Montgomery has used comical and ironical elements to add reality to the novels.

If we label the novels according to themes, we can label *Anne's House of Dreams* as a novel about marriage. The previous novel of the serial, *Anne of the Island*, is a novel that includes many romantic stories about couples finding each other (eg. Philippa Gordon and Jonas Blake, Diana Barry and Fred Wright, Janet Sweet and John Douglas), but even though Anne is proposed to six times during the novel (Epperly 1992:61), the reader has to wait for the happy ending till the last page. Again, keeping in mind the romantic code in which the Anne-serial is written and also the underlying purpose of educating the readers about a woman's role, it is obvious that the writer had to build a few obstacles for her heroine before letting her find true happiness. In order to observe this a little closer, it is necessary to introduce a few of Anne's proposals, which vary in their tone from overly romantized scenes to straightforward comedy before the true love comes along. Montgomery used these proposals in her Anne novels again as tools for education for the readers, not to be blinded by romantic reveries, but on the other hand, when Anne finally agrees to marry, the scene is maybe more inclined to arouse romantic reveries in an adolescent reader than any other storyline before.

However, keeping in mind Anne's romantic nature, it is only natural that her dreams about her first proposal were as romantic as they could be. In reality, the incident was as far from a romantic encounter as

possible, since her first proposal was not presented by the possible husband-to-be, Billy Andrews, but by his sister Jane, one of Anne's closest friends.

> "Do you like Billy?" asked Jane bluntly.
> "Why - why - yes. I like him, of course," gasped Anne, wondering if she were telling the literal truth. Certainly she did not *dis*like Billy. But could the indifferent tolerance with which she regarded him, when he happened to be in her range of vision, be considered positive enough for liking? *What* was Jane trying to elucidate?
> "Would you like him for a husband?" asked Jane calmly.
> "A husband!" [...] (*Island*, 59)

The first proposal was a cold shower for Anne, since it truly came out of the blue and destroyed Anne's dreams of the most important moment of her life. In her romantic mind she had imagined that if and when she will be proposed, it would be by a dark, handsome man and she would be overwhelmed by happiness. However, the scene is everything but romantic and even though for Anne, the moment is downright catastrophical, the reader can detect clear comical elements.

Unfortunately Anne's second proposal was also a disaster, as she in fact was proposed to by the man of her childhood and girlhood imaginings, she found out in a moment's revelation that the man of her dreams, the dark-eyed Roy Gardner, was not what her imagination had led her to believe.

> Roy asked Anne to marry him in the little pavilion on the harbor shore where they had talked on the rainy day of their first meeting. Anne thought it very romantic that he should have chosen that spot. And his proposal was as beautifully worded as if he had copied it, as one of Ruby Gillis' lovers had done, out of a Deportment of Courtship and Marriage. The whole effect was quite flawless. And it was also sincere. There was no doubt that Roy meant what he said. There was no false note to jar the symphony.

> Anne felt that she ought to be thrilling from head to foot. But she wasn't; she was horribly cool. When Roy paused for his answer she opened her lips to say her fateful yes.
> And then - she found herself trembling as if she were reeling back from a precipice. To her came on of those moments when we realize, as by blinding flash of illumination, more than all our previous years have taught us. She pulled her hand from Roy's. (*Island*, 224-225)

The whole scene is described in a way that makes it obvious for the reader that the feeling and love is missing, even though up to this point Roy definitely seemed to be Anne's dream of a husband. If we consider the readers, it has been obvious from the beginning whom Anne should marry eventually. Unfortunately Anne herself had to go through several embarrassing moments before realizing that her true love was from the start on always Gilbert Blythe, her old school chum, who did not only give her challenge on an intellectual level, but also offered her friendship that would eventually develop into love, and from there, to the ultimate goal of a woman's life, a marriage. Roy's proposal is not comical. It seems for the reader more of an irony that the highly romantized situation can turn into a worst moment of one's life. In this scene, Montgomery had clearly had aspects of upbringing in her mind, thus to prove to the reader that the real happiness can be closer than one could see.

Anne's final proposal, which finally led to marriage, was spoken out by Gilbert, a man, who clearly was meant for Anne in everybody's but her own mind until now, in a moment when Anne simply ran out of words because of sheer happiness.

> "I asked you a question over two years ago, Anne. If I ask it again today will you give me a different answer?"
> Still Anne could not speak. But she lifted her eyes, shining with all the love-rapture of countless generations, and looked into his for a moment. He wanted no other answer. (*Island*, 242-243)

Epperly (1992) points out that *Anne of the Island* suggests that even though marriage may be inevitable for somebody like Anne, her happiness is by no means inevitable, and her choice of mate is dependent of her knowledge of self. (Epperly 1992:57) The novel is clearly about Anne getting to know herself, since as in her childhood, when several unwanted incidents taught her to get rid of certain shortcomings (eg. vanity) (*Green Gables*, 227), she was also cured from over-romantizing the choice of a future husband, since the first proposals before Gilbert proved to be far from romantic.

Montgomery has brought up many comical elements to balance the romantic code also with certain characters. In *Anne of Green Gables* Marilla - and to some extent - Mrs. Lynde are characters who bring Anne back to the real world when she is about to lose herself to her imaginings. Especially Marilla is by nature very sarcastic and always trying to weed out Anne's romantic aspirations. The same kind of no-nonsense characters are Cornelia Bryant and Susan Baker, in the later *Anne* -novels. All of these characters are kind-hearted, but not willing to observe the world through any kind of rose-colored lenses. These characters add reality to the serial, where it otherwise would go to far into the romantic unreality. These characters may reveal many of Montgomery's thoughts in their own opinions, as in the following, where Susan is asked by one of Anne's children about her thoughts about being unmarried.

> "Do you like being an old maid, Susan?"
> "I cannot truthfully say I do, my pet. But," added Susan, remembering the lot of some wives she knew, "I have learned that there are compensations. [...]" (*Ingleside*, 160)

Similar characters are found in many of the romantic sub-plots in the serial. If we consider the shorter romance plots in the novels, we will find

that to every romantized character, there is a counterpart found either in the comedy, or the realistic code in some form or another. In *Anne of Avonlea*, Lavender Lewis' over-romanticed fairytale character finds her counterpart in her servant, Charlotta the Fourth, who, in turn, is a very comical character.

> There was a patter of steps inside and a rather odd little personage presented herself... a girl about fourteen, with a freckled face, a snub nose, a mouth so wide that it did really seem as if it stretched "from ear to ear," and two long braids of fair hair tied with two enormous bows of blue ribbon. (*Avonlea*, 186)

Similar counterpart can be found to Rosemary West in *Rainbow Valley*, where her sister Ellen West is the realistic, even cold-hearted character, who in a witch-like manner is trying to stand in the way of her sisters happiness. And again, in Janet Sweet's and John Douglas' love story in *Anne of the Island*, the obstacle in the way is John Douglas' mother, who will not accept her son marrying Janet as long as she is alive. In a way, these characters may even accentuate the romantic aspect of the stories, since in every fairytale there must be some forces of evil trying to destroy the couples happiness. On the other hand, however, they are also balancing elements, which prevent the storyline from falling too deep into the trap of romanticism.

On the whole, L. M. Montgomery is certainly an author who cannot be labelled by one single definition. She is one of the most popular writers of girls' fiction, but her writing can also be described as romantic fiction, which quite surprisingly includes clearly feminist views no matter how hidden they might seem at a first glance.

9. CONCLUSION

As shown by the present thesis, L. M. Montgomery's *Anne* -serial is a multi-faceted story that can be looked upon from many different viewpoints. As literary history shows, the serial was initially considered children's literature that does not offer any kind of basis for serious research. Traditionally, the few researches on L. M. Montgomery have concentrated on her biographical details and her first novel, *Anne of Green Gables*. It is however important to also study the other books, since they reveal much more of the author than the first novel alone. It is also important to note that new approaches in literary criticism have helped to lift the serial from its undermined position into literary proper.

The feminist literary theory is a logical starting point when one sets out to examine *Anne* -novels, since they are novels written by a woman, and according to researchers (eg. Åhmansson), for a female audience. Further, the setting is very much the domestic sphere, which has been traditionally seen as the area ruled by women, even when they take part in other activities outside the home and the society around the home.

Even though *Anne* -serial can be considered as very faithful to tradition, the author has given her characters traits that are also familiar to a woman of the 21st century. Self-expression, educational goals and being an active member of one's environment go hand in hand with the more traditional goals such as motherhood or marriage. These aspects have all been dealt with in *Anne* -novels, but what is more fruitful to a researcher, the texts also offer other levels below the surface, which are an interesting object for study.

For an adult reader, the novels may offer the same reading enjoyment as they did when the reader was in his/her adolescence. However, the adult reader is more englightened than a younger reader

and thus it is easier for him/her to encounter certain tension points in the novels which indicate that there are compromises in the writing. These compromises can be seen in instances where a certain storyline appears repeatedly (eg. marriage for female characters as the ultimate goal). Further, in some cases the author resorts to symbolic level, when she is describing things that cannot be openly discussed (eg. sexuality). Thus, there are many levels in the text that may only be discovered by an adult reader.

When we are revealing those levels, it is necessary to present some questions, such as: What are the historical facts about the time, when the novels were written? What is the author saying and what is her purpose of the stories? What is hidden behind the symbolism and euphemisms? What are the restrictions of the genre in question? As the answers are found, the clashes in the text will come to the surface and reveal more of the author's intentions than the text alone. Naturally, we can only suppose what the writer is intending to say, but since some of the symbolism (eg. use of colors and mythological characters and the associations attached to them) is very clear and unambiguous, it is difficult not to draw certain conclusions about their implied meaning.

The Victorian period set strict limitations to what was possible to discuss and express in literary works. In addition to that, Montgomery was bound by the genre of children's literature, which also restricted her writing. In this thesis, we have found that L. M. Montgomery has used literary devices eg. symbolism and allusions to deal with questions that were too sensitive to talk about in an explicit form. Some researchers, eg. Cadogan and Craig (1976) have criticized Montgomery for escaping to awkward euphemisms when dealing with themes such as childbirth and sexuality, but on the other hand, they have not considered enough the importance to the timeframe while critizising Montgomery's choices. In

their defense, however, it has to be noted that many earlier critics have considered *Anne* -novels, usually consentrating on *Anne of Green Gables*, as purely children's literature, without dealing with the other aspects of the serial. Other researchers, such as Åhmansson (1991) and Epperly (1992) have put more emphasis on the romantic approach, which explains many choices in Montgomery's writing. Her use of symbolism and highly romantized language is not caused by lack of ability or weaknesses in expression, but conscious choices made by an author who has been well aware of the limitations coming from outside. Further, DuPlessis (1985) has studied the twentieth-century women writers and their narrative strategies and concluded that women have indeed searched for other means to express themselves than the traditional solutions.

The most important thing in studying Montgomery's works and girls' books in general is the idea that the researcher needs to note the cultural limitations and outside expectations and respect the author's choices, but yet be able to lift the novels away from their traditional context and thus, see more in the novels than it would be possible if he or she considers them only as representatives of Victorian children's literature.

In this thesis, it has been shown that even though Montgomery has been traditional up to a point, she has also dealt with themes that have not been typical in girls' fiction. This has created in her writing different layers, which in turn explain the lasting success of the novels generation after generation and among different age groups. However, it has also been shown that the cultural context has seriously limited Montgomery's writing, and thus some of her literary choices are clearly due to the restrictions laid upon her, which have made her settle in traditional solutions. It will remain unanswered in this thesis what kind of choices she would have made if she had not been bound by restrictions above. To

answer that question it would be necessary to combine close reading of her fiction with close reading of her journals and even though the task would be interesting, the question could still remain unanswered.

The objective of this thesis has been to reveal clashes between what the writer has wanted to say and restrictions laid by society upon her. Further, it has concentrated on the different ways in which it is possible to find out these clashes. It has been shown how compromises in character and storyline description are indications of a clash taking place, since the solutions often seem to be like an easy way out from a situation or development that could not be discussed by traditional means. Similarly, when the author has escaped to symbolism and allusions, it is an indication that she had been unable to discuss the matters in explicit terms. Here we have to make a distinction between matters that could not be discussed openly (eg. sexuality) and matters that have been described in a highly symbolic language (eg. nature descriptions), since the first indicate a clash and the second is a literary device used widely inside the romantic fiction.

In a wider perspective, the purpose of the present thesis has also been to prove yet again the fact that girls' literature is indeed a very fruitful area of research, not only because it has been an area not yet widely studied. This thesis has taken all the *Anne* -novels into consideration while examining the clashes in the texts, but looking back, it is clear that the novels would have offered many other details which could have been taken into account if the purpose had been to produce a work of many volumes. Even though Montgomery's biography has been noted only shortly in this theses, it would be extremely interesting to study her works in a comparative manner with her own life. It is clear that for example the novel *Rilla of Ingleside* is a novel about the World War I and it reveals many of Montgomery's own views about the war. However,

it only reveals about Montgomery's views about historical facts and her reactions to them, whereas comparative research with her works and her journals would be likely to reveal many factors that have affected her writing at the time of every particular work.

The main problem in the present thesis is the time that has passed between the years Anne -serial was written and this study. Even though it can be claimed that the author would probably have chosen different ways to complete storylines and character descriptions if she had had complete literary freedom, this is still impossible to prove even through close examination of the texts. Since the writer of the present thesis is as much product of her time as Montgomery was hers, it is difficult to say to which extent it is possible to be absolutely objective and rely solely on the texts while drawing conclusions. Further, after reading *Anne* -serial time and time again for the past twenty years it has been difficult to draw limits to the present thesis, since the novels offer many details and many layers worth looking into.

Fortunately, the academic interest has been so wide that the number of researches on Montgomery and her works is growing all the time. L. M. Montgomery Institute, an independent institute of the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada, was established in 1993 and it has also contributed much to the growing interest around Montgomery. Conferences, held in for the first time in 1994, concentrate on Montgomery, her works and career and it is clear that her life, along with her production offers a wide and extremely interesting area to study for many decades to come.

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