

“GO ABROAD AND FEEL AT HOME” – ON
DOMESTICATION IN TRANSLATED HEBREW
CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

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This article examines how “domestication” – the process of transforming foreign elements of a translated text into familiar ones – has historically served to ease the tension between the strange and the known, by making what is foreign – familiar and recognized.

Based on several late nineteenth and early twentieth-century translations into Hebrew of classic works of children’s literature, including texts such as *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Max und Moritz* and *Das doppelte Lottchen*, I maintain that at an early stage of its development, when the newly-emerging Hebrew culture used translated literature to build up a body of Hebrew children’s literature, translators felt a need to sustain and to fortify the new culture’s own identity. In order to do so they endeavored to make translated literature look and feel like an integral part of the Hebrew-language native bookshelf. Their approach to domestication involved converting nearly everything possible that belonged to the world of the source system into the world of the target system: first names, colloquial expressions, customs, religious holidays, and calendars, references to Jewish history and allusions to the Jewish canon. Only later,

when Hebrew literature was more confident in its existence as a robust and autonomous entity, did it open its gates to invited “strangers” and incorporate them in their own form – no longer cloaked in domestic garb but as legitimate strangers.