Translation, Rewriting, and Fan Fiction: A Literary History of Transformative Work

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TRANSLATION, REWRITING, AND FAN FICTION: A LITERARY HISTORY OF TRANSFORMATIVE WORK

A Dissertation Presented

by

SHANNON K. FARLEY

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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TRANSLATION, REWRITING, AND FAN FICTION: A LITERARY HISTORY OF TRANSFORMATIVE WORK

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, who has been a model for me in her ability to balance both professional life and fandom life as well as the best friend and cheerleader I could ask for during the years I spent writing this dissertation.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my husband Jay and our children Cassandra and Quentin, who have been nothing but supportive while I returned to graduate school and put large swathes of our life on hold while I completed this work.

I love you all.
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Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my adviser, Professor Maria Tymoczko. Her work on enlarging the definition of translation inspired my study of fan fiction as a form of translation, and her rigorous methods made this dissertation a much better
production than I ever would have been able to complete on my own.
ABSTRACT

TRANSLATION, REWRITING, AND FAN FICTION: A LITERARY HISTORY OF TRANSFORMATIVE WORK

SEPTEMBER 2017

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This dissertation explores the relationship between rewritings of source texts and their cultural contexts in an attempt to raise the prestige of fan fiction. In these early years of the twenty-first century, it's becoming increasingly clear that we're living in a “participatory culture,” in which consumers of texts are becoming more and more engaged with the texts they are consuming. Producers of films and television shows create fictional websites for fans to visit and continue interacting with the stories outside of their regular viewing schedule. Fans have created their own communities, mostly online, where they analyze, debate, deconstruct, reconstruct, and continue the stories. This dissertation explores the ways in which storytelling has always included, and in many cases depended on, similar rewriting of existing texts throughout history. With separate chapters on the Homeric epics, Vergil's Aeneid, the English Renaissance, the development of literary fairy tales, Sherlock Holmes, and modern media fandom, I explore the systemic commonalities and structural similarities between different forms of
rewriting in different settings. Using a systems framework to discuss cultural context and translation theory to discuss the impact of linguistic choices on the meaning and reception of different rewrites, I argue that fan fiction is much more than an ephemeral expression of internet culture, and belongs in a discussion of the history of literary rewriting.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In these early years of the twenty-first century, it is already becoming increasingly clear that we're living in what media scholar Henry Jenkins calls a “participatory culture,” in which consumers are becoming more and more engaged with the texts they are reading and watching.\(^1\) Producers of both films and television shows create websites with fictional content so that fans can continue interacting with the stories outside their regular viewing schedule.\(^2\) The fans themselves create their own communities, usually online, where they analyze, debate, deconstruct, reconstruct, and continue the stories. When commentators discover these phenomena, collectively known as “fandom,” and the rewritten and expanded stories, known as “fan fiction,” their first reaction is usually to credit the Internet and its ability to connect large numbers of diverse people with similar interests.\(^3\) That the Internet is a large part of the growth of participatory culture is undeniable. What is usually missed is the fact that engaging with and retelling the texts and stories of one's culture is hardly a new phenomenon. Before

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\(^1\) Jenkins explicitly calls it this in the subtitle of *Textual Poachers: Television Fan and Participatory Culture* (1992).

\(^2\) Examples include the creation by ABC of a real website for the fictional “Dharma Industries” from the television series *Lost,* or the “Stark Expo 2010” website publicizing Tony Stark's technology exhibition in *Iron Man 2.*

\(^3\) “Fandom” can refer to the collective group of people who engage in fannish behavior, but it can also refer to particular groups of fans of particular texts, such as “Doctor Who fandom” or “Sherlock Holmes fandom.” Within the context of fannish archives, it can also serve as the noun which refers to that particular source text. When browsing the Archive of Our Own, for example, the source texts are disambiguated under the collective noun, “fandoms.” “Fan fiction” is also spelled as one word, “fanfiction” and often shortened to “fic” within fandom. For this dissertation, I have chosen the more academic “fan fiction” and the singular “story.”
cinema and television made the consumption of stories ostensibly a passive affair and the increase of literacy made it possible for people to read silently in isolation, sharing stories was a social activity, one in which the audiences were fully engaged. This dissertation explores the ways in which storytelling has included and in many cases depended on the transformative “writing” and “rewriting” of existing texts throughout history.4

The importance of making this argument at this point in history can be demonstrated by an examination of the conflicts that arise between corporate “owners” of various texts and the fans that rewrite and reimagine them. Many authors and their publishers operate under an interpretation of copyright law that declares the publication of fan fiction unequivocally illegal. Some fans are also convinced that what they do is illegal and many take steps to disguise their identities or hide their works from the possibility of prosecution wherever possible, whether they agree that what they do is illegal or not. There are other groups of fans who believe that the practice of writing fan fiction is protected under copyright law as a form of “transformative work,” and one such group has formed a not-for-profit organization—the Organization for Transformative Works (hereafter OTW)—to advocate for the legality of transformative fan works and to defend creators against prosecution, among other things. In the years since the OTW was founded, some corporate content owners have attempted to find ways to monetize fan fiction, but economic legitimacy is not equivalent to literary legitimacy. I use the term 4

Transformative “rewriting” must include oral literature and therefore is not writing in the strictest sense. I use the term “rewriting” most consistently because of its common use, especially in the field of translation studies. When I am writing specifically about oral literature, however, the term “retelling” may be substituted.

2
“transformative” throughout this dissertation to describe not only fan fiction, but other forms of literary rewriting that take interpretive license.

The legal and corporate norms regarding fan fiction are in a period of transition. In May 2013 Amazon.com made the announcement that it would begin accepting fan fiction for publication on its Kindle ebook platform.

[Kindle Worlds is] the first commercial publishing platform that will enable any writer to create fan fiction based on a range of original stories and characters and earn royalties for doing so. Amazon Publishing has secured licenses from Warner Bros. Television Group’s Alloy Entertainment division for its New York Times best-selling book series *Gossip Girl*, by Cecily von Ziegesar; *Pretty Little Liars*, by Sara Shepard; and *Vampire Diaries*, by L.J. Smith; and plans to announce more licenses soon. Through these licenses, Kindle Worlds will allow any writer to publish authorized stories inspired by these popular Worlds and make them available for readers to purchase in the Kindle Store. (sic. press release, May 22, 2013)

The announcement and subsequent terms of service indicated that stories would only be authorized if they were written within the parameters of both Amazon and the copyright holders: they could not contain explicit sex, and could not cross over with other sources. Reception of the announcement was mixed; professional speculative fiction authors such as John Scalzi emphasized the chance for fan fiction writers finally to get paid. By contrast, fan writers who had seen attempts to monetize fan fiction appear and fail multiple times brushed off the suggestion that any fan writer would actually make much from a deal with Amazon even if they wanted to. Fandom has had its own economy for decades and that economy is based on story as gift to be given rather than as commodity.
to be sold (Hellekson 2009). Fandom is not a monolith however, and the increasing visibility of fans who have “filed off the serial numbers” and published what was previously a work of fan fiction—E.L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey*, originally a piece of *Twilight* fan fiction, is only the most recent and well-known example—indicates that not all fans are satisfied with the gift economy and would like to turn their hobby of writing new adventures for established characters into a career.

As this blurring of the line between hobby writing and professional writing has become more conspicuous, mainstream media sites have begun noticing and writing about fan fiction. *CNN*, the *Guardian, Forbes, Business Week*, and the *Atlantic* all published articles about the announcement of Kindle Worlds, which then meant that they needed to define and describe what "fan fiction" was to audiences that had never heard of the phenomenon. Meanwhile, fan-run news sites such as the *Mary Sue* or the *Daily Dot* problematized Amazon's contract with fan writers, while at times also emphasizing the widespread fannish belief that fan fiction is as old as Shakespeare, as Vergil, as Homer.  

Although this dissertation grew out of a similar urge—I am a reader and writer of fan fiction as well as a doctoral student in Comparative Literature—I would theorize the relationship between fan fiction and literature not by saying “all literature is fan fiction”
but instead by saying that fan fiction participates in a transformative impulse and a mode of relating to stories that has existed throughout the history of literature. The particular qualities of fan fiction and the community of fandom(s) that make the phenomenon of fan fiction possible at this moment in time are unique and cannot simply be mapped onto the qualities and communities that generated all other transformative rewritings of texts. Nonetheless, there is a structure and a series of patterns that can be traced across many different examples throughout history of significant texts that came to exist because their authors or communities were rewriting earlier narratives to their own interpretation. These patterns can best be represented in terms of systems theory. This dissertation is an attempt to do just that, as well as to emphasize the ways in which rewriting has frequently been a mode of writing utilized by marginal members of a given cultural system, particularly women. At present much of fan fiction most definitely participates in this kind of marginalized rewriting.

Translation and fan fiction are both forms of rewriting. In discussing rewritings I rely on the first chapter of André Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992), in which he argues that non-professional readers (by which he means the bulk of readers rather than students and professors of literature) generally do not “read literature as written by its writers, but as rewritten by its rewriters” (Lefevere 1992, 4). Because rewritings—and in this category Lefevere includes translations, abridgments, editions, and anthologies, among others—are not only the
means by which the majority of “non-professional” readers are exposed to literature but also “can be shown to have had a not negligible impact on the evolution of literatures in the past” (Lefevere 1992, 7), Lefevere therefore calls for studies of rewritings. He suggests, “[t]hose engaged in that study will have to ask themselves who rewrites, why, under what circumstances, for which audience” (Lefevere 1992, 7).

Lefevere argues that rewriters are “responsible for the general reception and survival of works of literature among non-professional readers, who constitute the great majority of readers in our global culture” (Lefevere 1992, 1). By this he means that rewritings ensure the afterlife of literature, as Walter Benjamin argued in 1923 in “The Task of the Translator.” Lefevere worries that educational institutions that “function as a 'reservation' where high literature, its readers, and its practitioners are allowed to roam in relative, though not necessarily relevant freedom . . . also further contribute to the isolation of the professional reader” (Lefevere 1992, 3). The non-professional reader by contrast often reads literature as rewritten by rewriters: in translations, edited versions, and anthologies. Lefevere insists that there is no value judgment implied in “professional” and “non-professional” reader—that these terms are merely descriptive. His dichotomy, however, has no room for the fans who do not identify as academics and yet who have expertise, as media and fan scholar Henry Jenkins argues in Textual Poachers—Television Fans and Participatory Culture (1992).

. . . the intimate knowledge and cultural competency of the popular reader also promotes critical evaluation and interpretation, the exercise of a
popular “expertise” that mirrors in interesting ways the knowledge-production that occupies the academy. Fans often display a close attention to the particularity of television narratives that puts academic critics to shame. Within the realm of popular culture, fans are the true experts; they constitute a competing educational elite, albeit one without official recognition or social power. (Jenkins 1992, 86)

These fans “read” their literature carefully, both high and low, and they also read and write the rewritings.

Both translators and fan fiction writers have been subject to cries of “thief” and “traitor” as they practice their art. In her essay, “Writing Interpreting, and the Power Struggle for the Control of Meaning: Scenes from Kafka, Borges, and Kosztolányi” (2002), Rosemary Arrojo theorizes the struggle between the author of a work and its translator in terms that are very familiar to writers of fan fiction who have been accused of violating the Digital Millenium Copyright Act (hereafter DMCA) by the authors of their beloved source texts.\(^6\) She spends some time with Kafka’s “Der Bau” (1931), in which an unnamed animal constructs an underground burrow but is filled with “. . . recurring doubts regarding the actual composition of his work and his painful obsession to create a totally flawless structure, an object that could be absolutely protected from invasion and deconstruction” (Arrojo 2002, 66). The conclusion of Arrojo’s reading of the Kafka story is meant to be an argument for translation as a legitimate act of interpretation, but it is just as easily (if not more easily) read as an argument for fan fiction.

\(^6\) The Digital Millenium Copyright Act of 1998 criminalized copyright violations by means of digital technology while limiting liability for Internet service providers. The text of the law can be found online at http://www.copyright.gov/legislation/dmca.pdf.
If the construction of a text/labyrinth is inevitably related to revision and reinterpretation, forever resisting any possibility of completion or perfect closure, we find the creating animal painfully divided between his human condition, which binds him to the provisional and the finite, and his desire to be divine, that is, to be the totalitarian, sole master of truth and fate. As a dazzling illustration of such a division, Kafka’s character reflects the pathos of every author and of every interpreter, inevitably torn between the desire to control and to forever imprison meaning, and the human condition, which subjects both writers and interpreters to an endless exercise of meaning production. (Arrojo 2002, 69)

Who controls meaning? Authors or readers? Creators or translators? Executive producers or fandom? Arrojo doesn't explicitly engage with reader response theory in this article, but it is not difficult to draw parallels between “control of meaning” in a translation studies context and in a reader response context. In Paul de Man's introduction to Hans Robert Jauss's Toward an Aesthetic of Reception (1982), he explicitly links reader response theory to Benjamin's essay, arguing that counter to earlier readings of Benjamin as resistant to reception as a source for meaning, “The Task of the Translator” “. . . establishes however that, as far as poetry and history are concerned, there can be no question of essences” (Jauss 1982, xvi).

Arrojo goes on to discuss Dezső Kosztolányi’s “The Kleptomaniac Translator” (1933). A translator himself (from English into Hungarian), Kosztolányi writes about the struggle between the creator of a mediocre source text and a talented translator who improves upon it in his translation. Gallus, the kleptomaniac translator of the title, “steals” objects from the text he is translating by leaving them out of his translation.
Arrojo highlights the way in which this story “epitomizes, for instance, the widespread disregard for translation as both a theoretical issue and a legitimate profession” (Arrojo 2002, 77). One is again reminded of the ways in which fandom is often denigrated as an illegitimate and even illegal hobby at present. Kosztolányi’s intent was clearly ironic, demonstrating the absurdity of calling a writer a thief on account of leaving objects out of a translation. He highlights the ridiculousness of fighting over the interpretation of any given text, particularly translation. Yet it is actually more than feasible that a writer of fan fiction will at some point be accused of thievery. Arrojo’s conclusion is that texts as objects are “the inevitable result of a comprehensive, incessant process of rewriting that is forever reconstituting them in difference and in change” (Arrojo 2002, 65). Arrojo applies this notion to translation specifically, but she does not rule out other forms of interpretation. Just as there is no “true” or “definite” interpretation of a text, there is no true or definite form of interpretation. Fan fiction is one of many legitimate forms of interpretation.

The definition of translation has been enlarged by scholars such as Maria Tymoczko, who in her *Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators* (2007) challenges the Western modes of defining translation, highlighting the "cultural equivalents of translation" such as *rupantar* (to change in form) and *anuvad* (speaking after) in India, or *tarjama* (definition) in Arabic, or *tapia* and *kowa* in Igbo, both of which mean a variation of "break apart and tell again" (Tymoczko 2007, 68–71). Even if one doesn't
think of writing fan fiction as a form of translating, it's hard not to agree that it constitutes a deconstruction and a retelling, a change in form and speaking after, or even occasionally as a definition.

Translation studies as a field has been enlarged as well, in part by scholars such as Maria Tymozcko, André Lefevere, Susan Bassnett and others participating in the “cultural turn,” which is inextricably tied up with the use of systems theory in translation studies. In a recent article, “Translation Studies at a Cross-roads,” (2012) Susan Bassnett recalls the excitement of the cultural turn and the use of systems theory in translation studies beginning in the mid-1970s at the same time that she points to some future trends, such as viewing “translational practice through personal and affective factors, with a focus on the translator's task and sense of self” (Bassnett 2012, 22). There are suggestions that the humanities in general is taking a “translational turn,” with the accompanying anxiety among translation studies scholars that applying translation as a metaphor or spending too much time talking about “cultural translation” and not “translation proper” dilutes the field. This dissertation participates in the enlarging of translation by applying some translation theory to acts of textual transformation that are not specifically interlingual. It attempts to bridge the gap however, by including many examples of interlingual translation that also participate in the same kinds of system-specific transformative rewriting that the phenomenon of fan fiction does. It also must be noted that some fan fiction is written in languages other than English, or translated from those
languages to English, and vice versa. In fact, when a fan gives permission to translate their fan fiction it is usually in the same context that they give permission to write other more transformative work of their stories.

Translation is a word that is regularly used in ways other than those in which translation scholars use it. The word translation can refer to interlingual translation, namely translation between two different verbal sign-systems. In common parlance we also talk about “translating” concepts into simpler diction and “translating” skills into wealth. A skit from the Key and Peele show on Comedy Central introduces “Obama's Anger Translator” who “translates” President Obama's normally calm rhetoric into angry (and ostensibly more honest) invective. Translation is accepted as being more than just an interlingual activity, especially among those who have never heard of translation theory. Translation theory has had room for these different modes of translation for more than five decades, however.

Roman Jakobson's essay, “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation” (1959), posits that there are three different kinds of translation: interlingual, intralingual, and intersemiotic.

These three kinds of translation are to be differently labeled:

1. Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs
by means of other signs of the same language.

2. Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

3. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems. (Jakobson 1959, 233)

Interlingual translation is what most people think of as “translation” in a straightforward sense: transferring words from one distinct language into another. Intralingual translation is a transfer of a source text within the same language, which can also occur between dialects or era-specific language. Modern English translations of *Beowulf* are an example of intralingual translation. Finally, intersemiotic translation occurs when a text is transferred from one distinct sign-system to another. “The Lizzie Bennet Diaries,” in which the story of *Pride and Prejudice* is told through the medium of Lizzie's vlogs⁷ on You Tube is an example of intersemiotic translation. Jakobson's example for intersemiotic translation, transferring meaning from a text to a film or painting, is sadly underdeveloped. In recent decades, with the advent of the Internet, intersemiotic translation has developed in myriad and richly diverse ways. Fan fiction in particular represents a manifestation of the intersemiotic creativity of a subset of the consumers of new media.

The work of fans constitutes translation in all three of Jakobson's dimensions. At

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⁷ A vlog is a combined form of “video” and “blog” and refers to a specific genre of videos on the Internet in which a narrator delivers journal-like monologues to her audience.
present the vast majority of fan fiction is produced by means of written text but is based on source texts that are primarily visual, such as movies and television shows. In order to move the setting, characterization, and plot from a cinematic medium to a primarily textual one, semiotic shifts must take place. In many cases, the premise of a piece of fan fiction is to shift a familiar set of characters into an unfamiliar setting—or to shift a familiar set of characters to an entirely different source text (a move known as a “crossover”). Thus, often fan fiction takes the form of intralingual translation as well. Even when a story is not such a crossover, fandom has a culture and a language that is distinct and specific enough such that immersion in the vocabulary and usage is necessary for full understanding of fan fiction and its metatexts. Finally, as I discuss in more detail in the next chapter, some fan works explicitly write “against” their source texts in a postcolonial mode and some of those works utilize languages other than English to make their points. In this way, interlingual, intralingual, and intersemiotic translation are all present in the literary system of fanwork. Fan fiction and translation have enough in common that the former can be both written and read through the lens of translation theory, and doing so is relevant to understanding the influence of rewriting throughout the canon.

An integral part of the foundation of my argument is the particular version of systems theory put to use in the work of translation theorists André Lefevere and Itamar Even-Zohar. Systems theory is one of the fundamental heuristic tools I use throughout
this dissertation. I begin with a systems framework in analyzing the case studies of each of the literary systems discussed in the chapters to follow. I indicated that André Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992) is a theoretical lynchpin for my argument above. In short, I argue that we can trace varied uses of transformative rewriting (or “retellings”) and the ways in which they recursively were formed by and also formed their specific literary systems.

There are many applications of systems theory: literature is but one example of a system that is a part of a larger “system of systems,” namely culture. The use of the word *system* indicates that it is made up of many moving parts. Literature is not a monolith but rather a tapestry with many threads, woven in different directions, making up a whole piece of cloth that can, in turn, become a piece of something else. Additionally, as Lefevere argued in “The Dynamics of the System: Convention and Innovation in Literary History,” his chapter from *Convention and Innovation in Literature* (1989), literature is a “contrived” system, because it is a system of both the texts and the humans who read, write, rewrite, edit, and publish those texts. As I indicate in this multimedia analysis, we must add the humans that watch, listen to, and remix texts.

The system works on human agents as a series of normative constraints, often unrecognized by the participants within the system itself. It is simply “what is done.”
Lefevere gives the example of Shakespeare writing in Elizabethan England: he had to refrain from offending the Queen, avoid the displeasure of Puritan authorities, stay in his patron’s favor, and hold the interest of the public all at the same time (Lefevere 1992, 13-14). When a text is rewritten, it is rewritten to satisfy the requirements of a particular system, whether with in terms of form or social norms—and often these things are intertwined. Whether it is the heroic couplets of Pope’s *Iliad* mixed with his highlighting of imperial power and disparagement of activity deemed immoral by eighteenth-century England, or the casting of Brad Pitt as Achilles and the rewriting of Patroklos as Achilles’s “cousin” in Wolfgang Petersen’s *Troy*, the system influences the choices of the author, rewriter, translator, or fan.

Systems theory is particularly useful when tracing rewritings through cultural systems in different time periods because it provides one means to untangle the influences on the rewriters’ choices. To answer Lefevere’s questions (who is writing? under what circumstances? why? to what audience?) we must discuss the parts of the system and the cultural conventions and norms that define the system’s constraints. These constraints can be seen most starkly looking at interlingual translations. Both Lefevere and Itamar Even-Zohar have additional points to make in discussing translation in terms of systems theory. According to Evan-Zohar, in the forward to his *Papers on Historical Poetics* (1978), “Literature is herein conceived of as a stratified whole, a polysystem, whose major opposition is assumed to be that of ‘high’ or ‘canonized’ versus ‘low’ or
‘non-canonized’ systems” (Even-Zohar 7). This view is especially useful when discussing translations and other rewritings of Homer because of the high level of prestige the Homeric epics command with regard to other Eurocentric literary systems. When Homer is translated, the translation generally enters the system at the “high,” “canonized” level, often filling a “deficiency” (to use Even-Zohar’s terminology) in a system that may include much in the way of “low” native literature, but little in the way of the Eurocentric canon.

Another aspect of rewritings and retellings that is significant whether we are discussing Vergil's rewriting of Homer or a fan's rewriting of Harry Potter is metonymy. As Maria Tymoczko argues in Translation in a Postcolonial Context (1999), metonymy is a basic feature of rewriting.

The rewritings of classical myths have been a staple of Western literature, from Ovid's Metamorphoses to the Old French Eneas and the Middle English Sir Orfeo, through Shakespeare's Troilus and Racine's Phèdre, to Joyce's Ulysses, Anouilh's Antigone, and Camus's Mythe de Sisyphe. Any single version of these myths calls up in a reader all other versions of the same story: the part (a single version) stands for the totality of the myth. (Tymozcko 1999, 44)

Within the small subcultures in which fan fiction is written, there are certain elements of a story that are unnecessary to exposit precisely because every reader is assumed to already be a fan of the source material. Just as Vergil could assume a certain familiarity with the Trojan War in his audience, a fan that is engaging in a character study of Neville Longbottom can assume that readers already know that he was a classmate of Harry
Potter, that their parents were all members of the Order of the Phoenix, and that Neville destroyed the last Horcrux in the fight against Lord Voldemort. Therefore, the fan writer can engage with her own story in a more focused way without needing to give context or exposition that detracts from her main goal.

Tymoczko discusses metonymics in rewriting, and specifically translation, because she is interested in distinguishing between translations of Western canonical texts that can rely on cultural familiarity with said texts and translations of marginalized texts from liminal cultures that cannot. What is particularly interesting in the case of fan fiction is that, although the texts being rewritten within fan culture are frequently quite mainstream, especially within modern Western culture, the fan cultures themselves are socially marginalized. Fandom offers a case study for ways in which systems, rewriting, and metonymy are all in play but work in different ways than have been previously theorized. In short, fan cultures offer an opportunity to re-theorize translation in terms of systems as well as in terms of Jakobson's forms.

In order to argue fully that the writing of fan fiction is not significantly different from the history of rewriting, especially in the forms of translation and re-representation that literary rewriting often takes, I examine several different literary systems across a long arc of time. Chapter 2 begins with fandom itself, which is a literary system often
characterized by postmodern narrative devices and an acute sense of social justice. I talk specifically about the sector of female-dominated fandom that is described in Jenkins's *Textual Poachers* (1992), Camille Bacon-Smith's *Enterprising Women* (1992), Rhiannon Bury's *Cyberspaces of Their Own* (2005), Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse's *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* (2006), and Anne Jamison's *Fic: Why Fanfiction is Taking Over the World* (2013).

From fandom, I move backward in time in order to trace the connections of the transformative rewriting mode from fandom through other literary systems. Moving backward in this way demonstrates that the activities of fandom are not as disruptive to the norms of literary practice as they are commonly thought. Chapter 3 explores the literary world of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes both in its original form with its original fans and in the forms of the most recent modern rewritings, as well as the massive fandom that these rewritings have created. The popularity of the BBC's *Sherlock* in particular, with its rendition of a texting Sherlock Holmes and a blogging Watson deserves special attention when considering the role the receiving system plays in the changes made to a source text.

Chapter 4 discusses the rewriting of folklore, especially that done by the Grimm Brothers, taking oral sources and creating a literary tradition of fairytale. Their cultural
system and personal worldview had particular effects on their rewriting and the further systemic rewritings of literary fairy tales that came afterward. In addition, Chapter 4 examines the female-dominated salon in Berlin in the 1840s known as the Kaffeterkreis. The women of the Kaffeterkreis, like modern fan writers, wrote their own literary fairy tales under pseudonyms and shared them in their closed community. Some of these stories engaged in feminist criticism of their influences, such as the Grimm Brothers' tales. In addition, this chapter takes a close look at the particular constraints on the Walt Disney studio's rewriting of fairy tales in both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and the way that they have grown to rewrite their own canon at the present time with the ABC television show *Once Upon a Time*. The transformative nature of the oral tradition folklore in general is deep and rich enough to result in a dissertation on its own. For the sake of maintaining a manageable scope for this project, I focus only on literary and modern cinematic rewritings, rather than on the repeating motifs of oral literature.

Chapter 5 moves on to the profound systemic rewriting of Classical culture that characterizes the English Renaissance. The writers of the English Renaissance saw deficiencies in their own system that rewriting—especially rewriting Classical narratives—could fill. Chapter 4 explores some of Shakespeare's work rewriting classical literature, especially *Troilus and Cressida*. It also explores the phenomenon of “genderswap” in Shakespeare's rewriting of John Lodge's novella *Rosalynde* as the source text for *As You Like It*. Chapter 4 also discusses translations in the English Renaissance apart from
translations of Homer, which are part of the scope of Chapter 7.

Chapter 6 focuses on the *Aeneid* and the ways in which it was both a major transformative rewriting of Homer’s epics and was rewritten in ways that defined the literature of the Middle Ages. The way in which Vergil rewrote Odysseus in particular reveals a deep ambivalence held by Romans towards Greeks as the Roman Empire grew. For Vergil, rewriting Homer into the *Aeneid* meant rewriting national identity and borrowing the cultural prestige of the Greeks to do it. As Chapter 6 considers the afterlife of the *Aeneid*, it argues that rewritings in the cultural system of medieval Christian Europe erase or efface its troubling pagan roots in an attempt to put to religious use the prestige of what became the ultimate example of Latin eloquence.

Finally, Chapter 7 examines the Homeric epics themselves, exploring the ways that the epic poems were a coalescence of pieces of story that concurrently existed as a form of oral performance tradition, and also the ways that Homer has been rewritten almost constantly since the poems were first composed. Since Classical Greek times, the Homeric epics have been used as a piece of cultural currency that confers prestige upon the culture that “owns” it. In the Western European tradition, the most enduring translations of Homer largely belonged to the most powerful cultural systems of their day. Homer continues to be rewritten in new and groundbreaking ways—even to the extent
that author Madeline Miller sheepishly accepts that her novel *The Song of Achilles* qualifies as “Homer fan fiction.” The rewriting of Homer's works underlines my contention that there is simultaneously nothing new about rewriting and something very exciting about the ways different cultural systems succeed in wholly reinventing familiar stories. The creativity and deep analysis that can be observed in some works of fan fiction rival that of Vergil and Shakespeare. One must only read with an open mind and a sensitivity to cultural context in order to see it.

I cannot conclude without acknowledging that a great deal of my study consists of the examination of the writing practices of dead, white, male authors. This fact is useful in my argument that the literature considered the greatest of “Western literature,” the “canon,” is largely made up of rewritten works that have much in common with fan fiction. This fact also both lends prestige to fan fiction and throws into relief the fact that fanwork, created by a community that is primarily women, is easily and frequently denigrated on this ground per se. It is my intention to bring the work of “the canon” and the work of largely female fans into some balance with regard to both prestige and power.
A. Introduction

“Fandom” is a term that is used both as a general descriptor of fan culture and also to refer to groups of fans and the communities they form around a specific text or hobby. For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on the fandoms that surround media texts and create their own texts in the process of their engagement. Kristina Busse and Karen Hellekson argue in the introduction to their 2014 anthology, *The Fan Fiction Studies Reader* that fan studies is truly interdisciplinary.

The disciplines of English and communications interpret fan artifacts, their creation, and the rhetorical strategies they use to make meaning; anthropology and ethnography analyze the fan subculture; media, film, and television studies assess the integration of media into fan practice and artworks; psychology examines fans' pleasure and motivation; and law analyzes the underlying problems related to the derivative nature of the artworks, including concerns related to copyright, parody, and fair use. (Hellekson and Busse 2014, 1-2)

Busse and Hellekson continue by suggesting that the various modes of analysis in which these different disciplines engage can be usefully divided by whether the focus is on the fan creators, the fan texts, the texts' consumers, or a combination of the three.

This dissertation focuses firmly on the texts. Because my theoretical foundation
rests on translation theory in general and systems theory in particular, the cultural contexts of the texts and their creators are a strong secondary focus. This argument then is almost entirely a literary one and should be read as such.

It should also be noted that there is a school of thought in fan studies that argues for a larger scope when discussing fan culture and focuses on the creators and consumers using the framework of cultural studies and sociology. Matt Hills's *Fan Cultures* (2002) and Cornel Sandvoss's *Fans* (2005) are important works that situate themselves at the intersection of cultural studies and fan studies. I acknowledge their significance, but I base my position on that of Henry Jenkins in his groundbreaking *Textual Poachers: Television Fan and Participatory Culture* (1992). Hills criticizes *Textual Poachers* as reducing fandom to an “idealized university seminar” (Hills 10).\(^8\) Hills begins his argument against Jenkins with the personal claim, “the fans that Jenkins wrote about differed from my experiences of fandom” (Hills 2002, 1) and never acknowledges that the reason he fails to identify with the kind of fannish activity described in Jenkins's work is that the fans that Jenkins portrays are almost entirely female. Moreover, his claim that fandom is defined by its “competitive, argumentative and factional possibilities” (Hills 2002, 1) may well be a largely gendered difference.

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\(^8\) It should be noted that the term “idealized research seminar” is quoted by Hills from John Michael's *Anxious Intellects: Academic Professionals, Public Intellectuals, and Enlightenment Values* (2000). However, Hills makes his agreement with this assessment, as well as his contempt of Jenkins's characterization of fandom as such, abundantly clear.
To be sure, the women of fandom can be competitive and factional, and there are men who participate in the sections of fandom that do self-identify as idealized university seminars. There are also fans who fail to identify with either of these groups. Fandom is a decentralized culture, organic and anarchic, with identifiable structures but also systemic inconsistencies. Fandom contains multitudes. It is not the intent of this chapter to reduce fandom to a unified culture and then to systematically analyze its component parts. Rather, I intend to focus specifically on the sections on fandom that operate in ways that identify it as a literary system. From there my argument for its similarity to historical literary systems, especially in regards to its use of rewriting, becomes more apparent.

When in the course of making this argument I use particular fan fiction stories as case studies, I occasionally use Mieke Bal's vocabulary from *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (1985). By referring to Bal's taxonomy of narrative texts while analyzing the shifts between source texts and transformative works, I can make very specific distinctions between the levels of fabula, story, and text that elucidate the differences between the sources and the rewritings, but also tie together the similar practices of transformative literary systems through history.
B. The history of fan culture and the rise of Internet fandom

When Henry Jenkins published his seminal study of fan fiction, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* in 1992, the Internet was not yet the pervasive, social, and indispensable medium it is no, nor were academics familiar with the culture of fandom and the transformative work it was doing. *Textual Poachers* was a groundbreaking work—an ethnographic study of media fans, their “social institutions and cultural practices, and . . . troubled relationship to the mass media and consumer capitalism” (Jenkins 1992, 1). In his introduction, Jenkins outlines at least five distinct dimensions of fan culture: “. . . its relationship to a particular mode of reception; its role in encouraging viewer activism; its function as an interpretive community; its particular traditions of cultural production; its status as an alternative social community” (Jenkins 1992, 1-2).

Jenkins begins by deconstructing the view—prevalent in 1992 and still pervasive today—that the aesthetic taste of fans is suspect. He invokes Bourdieu with regard to the fallacy of a universal “good taste:”

> these tastes often seem “natural” to those who share them precisely because they are shaped by our earliest experiences as members of a particular cultural group, reinforced by social exchanges, and rationalized through encounters with higher education and other basic institutions that reward appropriate conduct and proper tastes. (Jenkins 1992, 16)

This view complicates Lefevere's concept of the “professional reader” (Lefevere 1992, 1), which seems to imply a sort of elevated taste level as well as a greater likelihood of
having encountered canonical texts in their original forms. With another quote from
Bourdieu, Jenkins deconstructs the boundary between academic and fan, between
professional and non-professional reader.

As Bourdieu (1980) suggests, “The most intolerable thing for those who
regard themselves as the possessors of legitimate culture is the
sacrilegious reuniting of tastes which taste dictates must be separated”
(253). Fan culture muddies those boundaries, treating popular texts as if they merited the same degree of attention and appreciation as canonical texts. (Jenkins 1992, 17)

Fans utilize all kinds of traditional “academic” reading strategies and apply them to very non-traditional texts. What Jenkins doesn't discuss, but what has become increasingly true as the next generation of fans and academics come of age in a context that is slowly becoming more accepting of this muddied boundary, is that many fans are also academics and many academics are also fans—a point to which I return below.

The majority of media fans are women, and, as Jenkins points out, this is no small part of why media fandom is largely dismissed in mainstream culture, although sports fandom is considered perfectly normal (Jenkins 1992, 19). Jenkins discusses at length theoretical explanations for the large number of women who participate in community-based media fandom. He resists essentializing, even while generalizing about female and male reading practices based on socialization to cultural norms. In discussing Twin Peaks fandom, he distinguishes between “Female fans . . . . [who] embraced its paradigmatic dimensions, particularly the friendship between Sheriff Truman and Agent Cooper which becomes the focus of fan fiction,” and male fans, who “introduced their own 'scripts,'
[which] centered around the creation of new narrative enigmas rather than developing more fully the character relationships” (Jenkins 1992, 112).

Jenkins recognizes what will be further explored below: the power women wrest from the narrative in order to deconstruct the power dynamics surrounding and pervading the media.

In practice, both the teller and the tale are often “radically other” for women within a world where publishing, broadcasting, and the film industry are all dominated by men; where most narratives center upon the actions of men and reflect their values; where most existing generic traditions are heavily encoded with misogynistic assumptions; and where educational institutions reward masculine interpretive strategies and devalue more feminine approaches. (Jenkins 1992, 112-3).

Fan fiction writers frequently rewrite narratives either to highlight the misogyny of a source text or to ameliorate said misogyny in order to make the text more palatable. Additionally, much of fan fiction is written as explicit erotica that addresses the desires of female readers and writers in ways that erotica written and filmed from a male gaze is not. Beyond misogyny, however, twenty-first century fan fiction includes deconstructions based on race, sexuality, non-binary gender identity, disability, and other marginalizations of identity.

Jenkins uses Michel de Certeau to place fannish reading of texts in the realm of active engagement and frequently frustrated criticism. It is from de Certeau that Jenkins borrows the concept of “poaching.” He quotes de Certeau (1984): ““Far from being
writers . . . readers are travellers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves’ (174)” (Jenkins 1992, 24). Just as Arrojo used Kafka, Borges, and Kostolányi, Jenkins uses de Certeau to frame the struggle for possession of the text and control over its meaning. He argues against the positivist hermeneutic that maintains that only an author of a given text can ever know its “true” interpretation, and complicates the author-reader relationship further by adding a critique of capitalist modes of production and pointing out their reliance on passive consumption. By doing so, he aligns modern fandom with earlier types of audiences:

. . . the members of the “pit” in 19th-century theatre who asserted their authority over the performance, not unlike the readers of Dickens and other serial writers who wrote their own suggestions for possible plot developments, not unlike the fans of Sherlock Holmes who demanded the character’s return even when the author sought to retire him. Fans are not unique in their status as textual poachers, yet, they have developed poaching to an art form. (Jenkins 1992, 27)

This is one point that this dissertation in general and this chapter in particular argue: fandom's engagement with beloved source texts is not a new phenomenon but the ways in which fans have elevated their modes of devotion and criticism alike have reached a singular level.

Jenkins's study is generally considered the gold standard in the nascent field of fan studies and is the foundational work that informs all others. However, in some respects it is out-of-date—particularly when it comes to the movement of fan communities to the
Internet in the time since he wrote this book. The edited volume by Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* (2006), is a more recent look at some aspects of online fan culture. In their introduction, Hellekson and Busse update Jenkins's study of fans who shared mimeographed 'zines containing their fan fiction and VHS tapes in which they had collected episodes of their favorite shows, describing the migration of fannish communities from Usenet and listservers to journal-based communities such as LiveJournal.\(^9\)

Fan texts are now overwhelmingly electronic, and many are transient. Moreover, demographics have shifted: ever-younger fans who previously would not have had access to the fannish culture except through their parents can now enter fan space effortlessly; financial resources have become less of a concern because access to a computer is the only prerequisite and national boundaries and time zones have ceased to limit fannish interaction. (Hellekson and Busse 2006, 13)

In the move from predominantly in-person conventions and fannish watching parties to online chats and journals (though all of these things continue), the fannish discourse has also changed. From those earliest 'zines to the email-based listservers, fan discourse occurred mostly in private spaces. The movement to blogging websites such as LiveJournal made fannish discourse more public. LiveJournal gives one the ability to make posts private, that is locked to only one's “friends” or the members with whom one chooses to share content, but a majority of fans choose to make most of their fannish posts public and rely on the anonymity that comes with the size of the Internet and the fannish norms that require one to avoid linking someone's journal to the “outside”

\(^9\) 'zines, an abbreviation of fanzines, refers to homemade collections of fan fiction and other fan work curated and distributed by fans either at conventions or through the mail before the advent of the Internet.
without permission. Those norms are beginning to change again, especially with the most recent fannish migration to Tumblr, a site that offers no privacy filters and is structured to facilitate “reblogging,” or the practice of sharing another user's entire blog post to one's own blog with the touch of a button. The effects of this most recent shift have not yet been fully analyzed nor even fully felt. It is certain however that fandom will continue to adapt and grow within the new discursive parameters, and that the field of fan studies will continue to observe and analyze that discourse.

C. On fandom as a literary system

For this chapter on the literary system of fandom, it may be most effective to describe the ways in which the cultural system of the Internet in our twenty-first century globalized culture is both similar and markedly different from Itamar Even-Zohar's conception of the opposition between the “high” and the “low” levels of literature, or perhaps more accurately in this case, between the center and the periphery. Even-Zohar argues for the category of “translated literature” to be treated as its own system within the literary system (Even-Zohar 1978, 22). Similarly, fan fiction operates at the periphery of the literary system of both the United States and the globalized Internet culture at large. Like translated literature, it both resists and impacts the “center” by commenting and critiquing on mainstream cultural texts in ways that effect subsequent texts. Even-Zohar emphasizes the dynamism of translated literature in his model:

To say that translated literature maintains a primary position is to say that it participates actively in modeling the center of the polysystem. In such a situation it is by and large an integral part of innovatory forces, and as such likely to be identified with major events in literary history while these are taking place . . . . Moreover, in such a state when new literary models are emerging, translation is likely to become one of the means of elaborating these new models. (Even-Zohar 1978, 23)

We are beginning to see this sort of activity in the case of fan fiction as well. Fan fiction is moving out of the periphery and into the center of our literary system, or at least to a more central position than it has previously held. E. L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey*, which, as noted above, began as a piece of *Twilight* fan fiction before it was published by Knopf in 2011, might be considered peripheral when compared to the kind of literary fiction that academics usually choose to analyze; nonetheless, the series has become such a phenomenon that media outlets that previously avoided mention of fan fiction are now finding themselves in the situation of having to define it for their readers. Fan fiction has some of the specific qualities of translated literature and also behaves in ways similar to translated literature within the literary system.

Additionally, fan fiction exemplifies a kind of intersemiotic or intralingual translation in every case. Usually fan fiction stories are based on sources that are primarily visual—or at least not primarily textual—and are translated into textual forms.¹¹

¹¹ The Archive of Our Own is the archive of fan fiction owned by the Organization for Transformative Works. It divides fandoms into the following media categories: Anime & Manga, Books & Literature, Cartoons & Comics & Graphic Novels, Celebrities & Real People, Movies, Music & Bands, Other Media, Theater, TV Shows, Video Games, and Uncategorized Fandoms. Of these, only the “Books & Literature” category is primarily textual. The total number of stories in each category is not supplied, but the top five fandoms in each category, as listed on the archiveofourown.org/media page add up to 123,549 stories for “Book & Literature,” whereas “Movies” alone adds up to 222,436 stories. This is
Even the stories that are based on textual sources have metatextual vocabulary that must be translated for readers from outside of fandom. Terms such as *gen*, *het*, *slash*, *AU*, *crossover*, and *beta* are familiar to members of fandom but they are all but impenetrable to newcomers to the culture. Like any other culture, fandom must be learned thoroughly before one attempts to translate into or out of it. Some of us are born into the culture, some learn the language of fandom as children, and some acquire it later in life.

As a system, fan fiction participates in what is broadly referenced as “remix culture” and what Lawrence Lessig calls “read/write culture,” or what Henry Jenkins now calls “participatory culture.” In his 2008 work *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy*, Lessig distinguishes between “read-only culture (RO)” and “read/write culture (RW).” His language is a reference to the two different sets of permissions that can exist for a digital file: either the user has permission only to read the file or she has permission to overwrite or change the file in addition to reading it. Lessig frames his discussion of the shift between the two cultures with a story about John Philip Sousa's testimony on the topic of copyright in 1906. Sousa was concerned that the new technology of the player piano and the phonograph not only appropriated his work without profiting the artist (which the then lax U.S. Copyright laws allowed), but that the

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12 *Gen*: for general audiences—that is, not erotica. *Het*: features a heterosexual relationship. *Slash*: features a non-canonical, generally same-sex male relationship. *AU*: alternate universe—takes place in a non-canonical setting. *Crossover*: a narrative combination of two or more different source texts. *Beta*: a combination first reader and editor, or the verb form of that person's activity. These and more fandom specific terms are supplied in the glossary appendix to this dissertation.
machines would replace the folk practice of playing and singing popular songs on the porch every evening. As Lessig extrapolates,

These “machines,” Sousa feared, would lead us away from what elsewhere he praised as “amateur” culture. We would become just consumers of culture, not also producers. We would become practiced in selecting what we wanted to hear, but not practiced in producing stuff for others to hear. (Lessig 2008, 25)

Lessig's overall argument is that the trend of the twentieth century toward more and more highly professionalized culture, and read-only professionalized culture at that, is a historical anomaly. Additionally, he argues that there can be a happy medium between artists fairly profiting from the sale of recordings of their work and the freedom of consumers to remix that work.

Lessig argues largely within the context of music and film remix, but his arguments apply to the textual remix of fan fiction as well. Henry Jenkins's *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (2006) explores the ways in which young Harry Potter fans created “affinity spaces” in which they could learn to become better readers and writers through their participation in fan culture.

Educators like to talk about “scaffolding,” the ways that a good pedagogical process works in a step-by-step fashion, encouraging kids to try out new skills that build on those already mastered, providing support for these new steps until the learner feels sufficient confidence to take them on their own. In the classroom, scaffolding is provided by the teacher. In a participatory culture, the entire community takes on some responsibility for helping newbies find their way. Many young authors began composing stories on their own as a spontaneous response to a
popular culture. For these young writers, the next step was the discovery of fan fiction on the Internet, which provided alternative models for what it meant to be an author. At first, they might only read stories, but the fan community provides many incitements for readers to cross that last threshold into composing and submitting their own stories. And once a fan submits, the feedback he or she receives inspires further and improved writing. (Jenkins 2006, 187)

Not all fandoms become these kinds of teaching labs, but many of the fandoms based on young adult-centered source texts do. The Harry Potter fandom operated as a smaller literary sub-system—a literary community that self-regulates through feedback. Fandom as a whole also works this way, although the sub-systems that organize around specific source texts have different feedback norms.

In an article titled “Remixing the Remix: Fannish Appropriation and the Limits of Unauthorized Use” (2013), co-written with Kristina Busse in the special “Remix” issue of M/C journal, a journal of media and culture, I explore the tension between fan writers and professional writers, as well as among fan writers, when struggling for the control of meaning, as Arrojo calls it. One might expect that fans who ascribe to a philosophy of “anything goes” when it comes to rewriting source texts would feel the same way about other fans rewriting another fan's story, but generally they do not. Remixing someone's story without permission is a violation of norms within the system of fandom. This appears at first glance to be a double standard, but in fact there are very good reasons for it.
In discussing the limits of unauthorized use both by and within fandom, it is important first to make a distinction between plagiarism and copyright violation. The first is an ethical issue and the second is a legal one. Plagiarism is defined by the norms of the community for which a piece is created. The definition of plagiarism is different in an academic context than it is in a literary one or in a journalistic one. Copyright, however, is relatively strictly defined as a matter of law. Moreover, copyright explicitly does not extend to ideas—it is only a protection that covers the particular product created by a particular author in the form in which it was produced. That protection also explicitly extends to “derivative works,” defined by United States copyright law as:

. . . a work based upon one or more preexisting works, such as a translation, musical arrangement, dramatization, fictionalization, motion picture version, sound recording, art reproduction, abridgment, condensation, or any other form in which a work may be recast, transformed, or adapted. A work consisting of editorial revisions, annotations, elaborations, or other modifications, which, as a whole, represent an original work of authorship, is a “derivative work.” (U.S Copyright Law, section 101)

The protection of copyright extends only to the “material contributed by the author of such work, as distinguished from the preexisting material employed in the work . . .” (U.S Copyright Law, section 103). The very acknowledgment that the author of a derivative work owns her own unique contributions is significant. However, the right to prepare a “derivative work” is reserved for the copyright holder. This is why translations, adaptations, and annotated editions cannot be published without the license of the copyright holder.
Exceptions to this exclusive right include “fair use,” defined as use “for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research,” which is not an infringement of copyright (U.S Copyright Law, section 107). The distinction between work that is merely “derivative,” and work that is “productive” or “transformative” is not explained in U.S. Copyright law, but is found in case law that has come out of challenges to the limits of fair use. In her 1997 article “Legal Fictions: Copyright, Fan Fiction, and a New Common Law,” Rebecca Tushnet writes, “In Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc., which concerned a parody of Roy Orbison's song 'Oh Pretty Woman' by the rap group 2 Live Crew, the Supreme Court held that transformative use is favored by the law, even if the transformed text is commercial” (Tushnet 1997, IIIb). Tushnet goes on to quote the decision, which states:

The goal of copyright, to promote science and the arts, is generally furthered by the creation of transformative works. Such works thus lie at the heart of the fair use doctrine's guarantee of breathing space within the confines of copyright. (Tushnet 1997, IIIb)

The legal status of fan fiction is still undefined, as there has not yet been adequate case law to test the Organization for Transformative Work's legal theory that fan fiction qualifies as “transformative work” under the legal definition. There is enough interpretive flexibility here to undermine the claims by some professional authors that fan fiction is illegal however.

13 It should be noted here that Rebecca Tushnet is a member and former member of the Board of Directors for the OTW.
As noted above, plagiarism is a different issue. A work that is out of copyright can still be plagiarized, for example, and even if one adequately cites the source of copied material, excessive copying can still violate copyright law. Fandom as a whole has a number of normative conventions that are used to demonstrate that neither copyright infringement nor plagiarism has taken place. Many works of fan fiction published online include a number of disclaimers that state that no infringement was intended (though intent is irrelevant in copyright law) and that the author does not gain any commercial benefit from the publishing of the work (which is relevant.)

Fandom at large rewards creativity in transformative fanwork. The more creative the premise, narrative structure, or interpretive stance an author expresses, the more attention her work will receive. Plagiarism is not tolerated—neither in the appropriation of the original source, nor in the appropriation of the work of other fan artists. Stop_plagiarism, a community on LiveJournal, was created in 2005 specifically to report and pursue accusations of plagiarism within fandom, whether the copying without attribution is of professional published works or of other works of fan fiction. Stop_plagiarism keeps a list of known plagiarizers that, at the date of this writing, includes the names of more than one hundred fan writers. Thus, to claim that fan fiction writers never plagiarize would be inaccurate, but it should be noted that fandom polices itself with regard to plagiarism. Moreover at this point it should go without saying that
fan fiction is not by nature equivalent to plagiarism. Both copyright infringement and plagiarism can only be determined on an individual basis—just as is the case with professional literary fiction.

Nonetheless, as stated above, plagiarism is defined by the ethical norms of a particular community, and what many fans consider akin to plagiarizing in fandom appears at first glance to be the same behavior that fan writers practice. Put simply, fandom as a whole does not tolerate the borrowing of original characters, settings, plot points, or narrative structures from other fans without permission, even if the source of the inspiration is cited. Prima facie, this norm can seem to be hypocritical: if borrowing characters and settings from one's favorite authors, television shows, and movies is ethically acceptable, then why is borrowing from other fans unacceptable? Some of the tension seems to come from the divide between fans who approach fandom in a more academic manner and those who do not. An example of this divide can be seen in a Fandom Wank writeup from 2006 sarcastically titled “SGA Fandom on SGA Fanfic: It's *all* just theft anyway, right?”

14 Fandom Wank was a community, originally based on LiveJournal but moved to journalfen after complaints and accusations of violating that site's terms of service, founded for the purpose of rounding up and mocking, in the site's own words, “Self-aggrandizing posturing. Fannish absurdities. Circular ego-stroking. Endless flamewars. Pseudointellectual definitions.” Notable Fandom Wank posts reveal plagiarism, scams, and other bad behavior on the part of fans. The site itself is down at the time of this writing, but the specific Fandom Wank entry in question can be viewed at via the “Wayback Machine,” a site that archives web pages for later reference. https://web.archive.org/web/20150401193848/http://www.journalfen.net/community/fandom_wank/987506.html
The events that the writeup describes center around a challenge for the Stargate: Atlantis fandom in which existing fan fiction stories may be rewritten in the form of a “mission report.” The original directions for the challenge state that “If you choose to write a mission report of somebody else's story, we'll ask you to credit them, but we won't require you to ask their permission.” Within the norms of academia, this would be perfectly acceptable—one must cite the work that provides the inspiration (thus avoiding plagiarism), but there is no need to ask permission to cite someone else's work.

The bulk of the fannish response to this challenge was outrage. The author of the Fandom Wank entry came down on the side of outraged, calling the desire to opt out of having one's work transformed “sensible” and referring to the commenters who suggested that the requests for permission were inconsistent with the overall philosophy of fan fiction as “scolding.” Responses to the challenge itself largely consisted of fans being anxious that their stories would be reinterpreted in ways which they did not approve. Several replies to these concerns question the expectation that the stories fans write based on the characters and worlds of professional authors don't require permission and yet those they write based on each other's fan fiction do. At the heart of the debate lies the issue of community norms. Remixing another fan's work without permission while citing the source is not plagiarism, nor is it copyright violation (because fan fiction is not copyright violation in the first place.) It is a violation of manners as certain

15 A fan fiction challenge is a kind of game in which participating writers are required to write a story within certain parameters before a certain deadline. It is one of the most common modes in which fan fiction is written, and constitutes a major component of the fannish literary system. This particular challenge can be found at http://sga-flashfic.livejournal.com/419598.html
sections of the community define manners. Once again the decentralized nature of fandom affects this issue. Ultimately in the case of this challenge, authors were given the option to opt out of having their story considered for “mission report” remixing. However, cesperanza, the challenge moderator, notes that she “remain[s] philosophically committed to the idea that people have the right to make art based on other art provided that due credit is given the original artist” (http://sga-flashfic.livejournal.com/419598.html, accessed 8/13/14).

Another discussion about fannish norms with regards to unauthorized use took place in 2012 in the LiveJournal of stoney123, concerning the Glee fandom. Glee fandom is based on a show about and directed to teens; it is largely populated by teenage fans. Stoney states in her introduction to the post that she's been active in fandom for decades, and her LiveJournal dates back to 2004. As of the writing of the post in question, Stoney had been noticing that some of the younger fans had been crossing the lines of fannish etiquette and thus made a post titled: “So you're new to fandom! Let's talk.”16 The fandom conventions that she lays out concern adding a disclaimer to one's fan fiction17 and a reminder not to try to make money selling fan fiction, as well as warnings against plagiarism. She distinguishes between tropes and more detailed components of a story, and warns the young fandom against “taking people's well known stories and rewriting it [sic].”18 In her post, stoney conflates plagiarism and the sort of rewriting that blurs the

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16 The post can be found at http://stoney321.livejournal.com/543429.html
17 As noted above, intent is not actually relevant according to copyright law.
18 Stoney defines tropes as: “the buddy cop. The meet-cute whimsical romance. The young girl/boy falls for a vampire. High school AUs. Merman meets sexy starfish. Firemen...” Not one of us owns that
The community of fans who write stories in a particular fandom is relatively small, and most of them are familiar with each other online. Though writing fan fiction about Harry Potter may influence the way a particular group of fans interpret the novels, it is unlikely to effect the overall reception of the work. Within fandom, however, there are few stories that have the kind of reach that professional fiction does, and it is just as likely that a fan
will come across an unauthorized remix of a piece of fan fiction as the original piece itself. In this respect, the reception of fan fiction is more fragile than the reception of professionally published works, and fans are justifiably anxious about their stories being affected by the presence of unauthorized remixes. Moreover, the size of the community makes it more possible to ask for permission before doing a translation, adaptation, or other kind of rewriting of another person's story. Doing so without permission is neither copyright violation (arguably) nor plagiarism (as long as you cite the source); what it is, however, is a violation of fannish etiquette. In a system based on the economy of gifting and sharing, etiquette is the lubricant that enables the gears of the system to function.

This is one of the significant ways in which fandom is unlike traditional literary culture. Vergil did not need to concern himself with asking permission from Homer or his literary estate before he wrote the Aeneid. Moreover the way that texts have been rewritten and reworked before copyright law existed did not take the authors' personal feelings into account. Fandom is a different system, however; and as in the case of every system that I discuss in this dissertation, it has its own norms. These norms are what makes it possible for fandom to exist as a self-regulating system separate from the system of mainstream popular culture, but simultaneously engaging with it. The “disclaimer” asserting that a fan does not own the source text that she is rewriting may not be relevant in terms of copyright law, but it acts as a semiotic marker separating fan fiction from its source texts. The requests for permissions keep the community ties strong, and lubricate the social interactions between fans who may be strangers in every other way but share their love
Several years after the incidents described above which took place between 2006 and 2012, more and more fans are posting blanket permissions on their LiveJournal profiles and every other place that they post fan work. This may be due to the popularity of a new form of fanwork, recording one's reading of another fan's story and uploading it as a podcast for distribution. As it has become more common, podcasting has required that the norms concerning permissions shift to ensure accessibility. As the norms shift to allow podcasting of fan fiction, they also enlarge to accept other forms of retelling. In a post to her personal journal published in August 2013 titled “[Meta] Permissions Statements Are Awesome,” thefourthvine praises blanket permission statements for removing the stress of interaction with unfamiliar people in fandom every time one seeks approval for a podcast. She also gives a template for a sample permission statement.

If you want to podfic any of my stories, go right ahead - no need to ask permission. Just please link back to the original story when you post your work, and let me know so I can go revel in whatever awesome thing you’ve done. Same goes for art or other creative or transformative works you might feel inspired to do. Just don't use my work for anything commercial, please! (http://thefourthvine.dreamwidth.org/178813.html, accessed 8/14/14)

Thefourthvine also discusses the ways one might modify the blanket permission statement to make clear what one is willing to allow in terms of transformative work. The

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20 A podcast is an audio file that can be downloaded and played at the audience's convenience. Many people subscribe to and download podcasts to their phones to listen to them as they do music files. Podcasts can be professionally produced, such as the ones National Public Radio makes available of its broadcasts, or amateur.
result of this post and others is a very long list of fan artists and their blanket permissions, totaling over 1200 as of this writing, uploaded to the OTW's wiki site Fanlore. It is found at http://fanlore.org/wiki/Blanket_Permission_to_Podfic. In contrast the list of fan writers who have made a blanket statement allowing no podcasting of their stories is quite small, nine as of this writing.

The system of fandom self-regulates and shifts, just as all other literary systems do and have done. Its particular idiosyncrasies notwithstanding, fandom is part of the larger system of literature in our culture, responding to both source texts and larger sociological trends.

D. Post-structural theory and postmodern texts

The system within which fan fiction—and, for that matter, most of remix-based Internet culture—operates is characterized by postmodernism. In discussing the ways in which rewriting and remixing have become increasingly common in the Internet culture of the twenty-first century, it is necessary therefore not only to discuss the postmodern era in postmodern terms, but to discuss the ways in which post-structural theory itself has influenced the creation and reception of rewriting. Brian Edwards, in his *Theories of Play and Postmodern Fiction* (1998) makes an excellent case for the connections between the postmodern concept of play and the particular ways that postmodern fiction
engages in that play. He does not discuss fan fiction but much of what he says from a theoretical point of view applies to fan fiction. Moreover the norms and activities that exist within fandom fill in some of Edwards's theoretical gaps.

Edwards does not argue that play with the forms and meanings of narrative is a strictly postmodern phenomenon. He gives the examples of *Don Quixote* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and I discuss other such texts later in this dissertation.

Edwards acknowledges that “game” and “play” are both cluster concepts, though he does not use that term.\textsuperscript{21} Literary play is both interpretive and discursive,

\[\ldots\text{attentive to changing perceptions of aesthetics, cultural politics, identity and knowledge [that] will continue to challenge the restrictive practices of authority systems based upon privilege and hierarchy. Just as cultural production, in its diversity, should provide amazement and opportunity, innovative theorising and interpretation are the best defense against hardening of the critical arteries. (Edwards 1998, xii)}\]

Fan fiction as a form of literary interpretation and literary criticism is a form of that defense.

Fandom is not only playful in its rewriting of source text, it is explicitly playful in the forms the activity takes. Fan fiction is sometimes written alone and never shared—but much more often it is written, collaborated on, revised, posted, discussed, and sometimes even further commented upon by rewrites of the original fan fiction. Journal-based

\textsuperscript{21} A “cluster concept” as explained by Maria Tymoczko in *Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators* (2007, 86) is a category that cannot be defined by one shared characteristic, but rather “must be understood through observation and description.” I find it appropriate here to connect her explanation of *translation* as a cluster concept to another concept that fan fiction resembles.
fandom is full of challenges and festivals that have rules and deadlines, such as the Yuletide rare-fandoms gift exchange challenge, which in its tenth year involved an estimated 2,100 participants.\textsuperscript{22} Yuletide operates like a Secret Santa gift exchange, with each participant asking for stories in three to four specific rare fandoms and up to four specific characters. For example, one year I requested stories in the Quantum Leap, Phineas and Ferb, and The Princess Bride fandoms. In the Quantum Leap fandom, I requested a story featuring Sam Beckett and Al Calavicci, in The Princess Bride fandom I specifically requested a story that featured Buttercup alone, and in the Phineas and Ferb fandom I requested a story with Phineas, Ferb, Perry, and Candace. In turn, each participant also offers three or more fandoms and sets of characters within those fandoms that they are willing to write as a gift for their own recipient. In the same year that I requested the above fandoms, I offered to write in Greek Mythology, Fairy Tales and Related Fandoms, and Haroun and the Sea of Stories. “Rare fandom” is specifically defined, though it has historically been defined in different ways from year to year. For the most part, a fandom is considered “rare” if it does not already have a certain number of stories available in the more popular fan fiction archives such as fanfiction.net or archiveofourown.org.\textsuperscript{23}

Participants are assigned a recipient and many recipients write a letter to their anonymous writers, asking for specific types or stories or giving details about what kinds

\textsuperscript{22} This, and other details concerning Yuletide come from fanlore's wiki entry on the festival at \url{http://fanlore.org/wiki/Yuletide} and from my own personal experience participating in this exchange.

\textsuperscript{23} For the 2013 Yuletide exchange, the designated cutoff for the “rare” designation was 1000 extant stories on fanfiction.net and 250 extant stories on archiveofourown.org.
of stories they like. Stories must be one thousand words or longer, and are revealed on Christmas morning. The identity of one's gift-giver is not revealed until New Year's day, and many participants spend the week between Christmas and New Year's day reading as many stories as they can from the archive and making recommendations for their favorite stories before the author's names are revealed.

Yuletide is clearly a game, as well as a format within which to play with source text, form, and even the definition of “rare fandom.” One of the characteristics of recent Yuletide events is the existence of fan fiction in “fandoms” that would never be written in any other context. Commercials, NPR shows, even viral videos can become “fandoms” within the context of Yuletide and stories are written around them. Take, for example, “Texts from Cephalopods,” a story written for the “fandom:” “Octopus Steals My Video Camera and Swims off with It While It's Recording (Youtube).”24 The story is told through a series of images of a text-message conversation between the Octopus of the viral Youtube video “Octopus Steals My Video Camera and Swims off with It While It's Recording,” and his fictional long-suffering friend, Squid.

Yuletide is a game, and the stories within it are a form of play. Some of them, such as “Texts from Cephalopods,” are more playful than others, and those are the stories that often receive the most attention by means of hit counts, kudos, comments, bookmarks, and recommendations. The “Notable Stories” section of the Fanlore entry on Yuletide

24 The source “text” of this video can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5DyBkYKqnM accessed 8/18/2014.
includes a sado-masochistic Care Bears story, a story in which the set of NPR's “Wait Wait Don't Tell Me” is beset by zombies (entitled “Wait Wait Don't Eat Me!”), and a story that uses the format of the “Guy on a Horse” Old Spice marketing campaign to comment on Yuletide and fan fiction itself.

Look at your fic, now back to mine. Now back to yours, now back to mine. Is your fic this meta? Does it include a fictional character writing meta fic about himself? No, it does not—and why not? Don’t you want your Yuletide fic to look like mine? Look at my excellent characterization and spot on dialogue. This is the fic your fic dreams about being.25

Although Brian Edwards makes a strong case about postmodern fiction embodying game theory in terms of its sense of play, he struggles with applying it to literary work within the actual structure of games with rules. The example of fan fiction challenges fills that gap. Such challenges are not competitive in the way that “game” is theorized; in fact, the sort of play that occurs within fandom is the type that is more often categorized as “feminine,” whether because girls are inherently more interested in play that is centered on narrative and relationships or because they are socialized to be this way. The lack of competition or at least a clear way to “win” does not make fan fiction any less playful in a Wittgensteinian or Derridean sense. The way Derrida describes play in “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences” (1966) makes clear that he means more than just a game. He also sets up his definition of play in terms of systems: “By orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the centre of a structure permits the play of its elements inside the total form” (Derrida 1966, 278-79).

This structural and linguistic play, that is, the room that language gives us to make more than one interpretive leap about a text's meaning, is one of the defining qualities of fan fiction. Fan fiction as a case study makes much more visible the structural and linguistic play that can be found in all other kinds of literature as well.

E. Case study in the forms of fan fiction: The Lizzie Bennet Diaries

This study of many different forms of rewriting and retelling requires a common vocabulary with which to describe the shifts between the texts. Mieke Bal's *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (1985) offers that vocabulary. Bal's taxonomy of a text breaks down narrative into three different levels: the fabula, the story, and the text. The fabula is the deep structure of the narrative, consisting of the events, actors, time and location. The elements of a story are the particular sequence of events, the pacing, the characterization of the actors, and the point of view of the story—what Bal calls the “focalization.” Finally, the text largely consists of the specifics of narration: the narrator, the non-narrative comments, the description, and the levels of narration.

As a case study, I examine both the YouTube series *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, a text that is already a rewriting of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and the fan fiction generated by fans of this series. Launched on April 9, 2012, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* tell the story of Lizzie Bennet, her sisters, her neighbor Bing Lee, and his friend William Darcy in the form of a video blog on YouTube. The web series won a 2013 Emmy Award
for “Outstanding Creative Achievement in Interactive Media” and raised over $400,000 in its Kickstarter campaign to convert the series to DVD form and distribute it. Pemberly Digital, the production company behind The Lizzie Bennet Diaries, continues to adapt classic works to web-based new media formats, using not only YouTube but also Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and others.26

The Lizzie Bennet Diaries has a strong but small fandom, with 965 stories uploaded to the Archive Of Our Own as of this writing. As a rewriting of Austen's novel, the series itself makes its changes largely at the level of story and text. The fabula is largely left intact, with the same deep structure as the source text and locations such as Pemberley and Netherfield changed in only minor ways. The chronology is not noticeably different either. On the level of story, the characterizations of the actors shift in interesting ways as the text is updated for its new media audience. Lizzie Bennet in the twenty-first century is a graduate student in communications, using her personal video blog, or vlog, as an independent study project. She has only two sisters, as the web series chooses to streamline the narrative and include only those sisters who are major actors in the plot: Jane and Lydia. Jane is still the steady sister and Lydia is the flighty one, but those qualities manifest themselves somewhat differently in 2012, and this is reflected in the web series. Finally, the web series makes choices in terms of character that reflect the importance of diversity of representation in twenty-first century media. Mr. Bingley is now an Asian-American man named Bing Lee. Charlotte Lucas, likewise, becomes

Charlotte Lu. Darcy's friend Fitzwallace becomes a gay African-American man. As characters in the fabula, their roles have not changed. These shifts on the level of story, however, mark Pemberley Digital's commitment to diverse representation.

The shifts with the greatest impact are related to the limits of the vlog format. The text of The Lizzie Bennet Diaries is limited to Lizzie Bennet's point of view in a way that the text of Pride and Prejudice is not. Elizabeth Bennet is the focal character of Pride and Prejudice, but there are moments in which the actual narrator comments upon Elizabeth's pride and stubbornness. That narrator also gives a more objective view of other characters' actions than Lizzie Bennet is able to do. The Lizzie Bennet Diaries offers an ingenious mechanism in order to include narrative that does not take place in Lizzie's bedroom, the site of most of her vlog entries. At the level of the text, the narrator's testimony changes between Pride and Prejudice and The Lizzie Bennet Diaries from that of an objective witness to that of a passionately involved party. Lizzie Bennet and her sisters (or anyone else available for recruitment) act out events that take place in other locations. Lizzie marks herself and her interlocutors with clothing and accessories: a cap and bow tie when she is acting out Darcy's part, for example. She calls this section of her vlog “Costume Theatre,” and it not only helps the production to maintain the conceit of the vlog but also becomes an incitement to plot development when Darcy discovers that Lizzie has been sharing her impression of him on YouTube.
Fan fiction stories written for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* fandom includes many different shifts of their own as they rewrite a largely visual source back into written text. One of the most interesting entries in the Archive of Our Own is a piece tagged as “Alternate Universe,” or AU. An “Alternate Universe” story is one in which the actors are left intact, but the setting or some of the events are changed in order to explore a “what if” scenario. In this case, the “author” of this “regency AU” posits what would happen if the Lizzie Bennet and William Darcy of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* were set in an English Regency setting. She titles her fan fiction, “Pride and Prejudice.” The text consists of the entire first chapter of Austen's novel with the names updated to match that of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* (Bing Lee, e.g.). The author, synecdoche, notes at the end of the text, “Please don't sue me. It's in the public domain, I swear. And I'm fully willing to admit that I'm not Jane Austen; this is a joke, please don't take away my ao3 [Archive of Our Own] account” (http://archiveofourown.org/works/637531/chapters/1155235 accessed 8/18/14). Some commenters carry the joke further, writing as if they were unaware that *Pride and Prejudice* exists. The whole exercise is another form of Derridean play with the unstable relationship between the source, the rewriting, and the reframing of the former as a rewriting of the latter.

Other examples of fan fiction in *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* fandom include continuations of the story, moving beyond the fabula of the source text and adding further events while keeping the actors consistent. Many pieces of fan fiction fall into this
category, in any fandom. Whether the added events take place after the source fabula ends or between the gaps left in the original story, this form of rewriting is a common one. Other pieces of fan fiction offer the same events as in the original narrative but from another actor's point of view. “Darcy Diary,” by JaneDoe is an example of one such story, giving the events of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* from William Darcy's point of view.27

*The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* is but one example of a fandom that inspires some typical forms of fan fiction responses. Other source texts can inspire more than just a desire for stories that fill in gaps or give fans an opportunity to play. Some source texts inspire a passionate reception that is more critical.

**F. Critical fan fiction**

Fandom is no longer the zine-based slow-moving fan club that Henry Jenkins described in *Textual Poachers* in 1992. It is still made up of fan clubs, but these fan clubs are geographically splintered and diverse, and each fan has her own soapbox within the blog platforms where online fandom is largely based at this time. The discourse is far-reaching and decentralized, with participants writing their own analyses and commenting on others, either directly on the authors' own sites, on their own, or both. Nowhere was this more abundantly clear than in the events which came to be known as Race Fail '09.

On January 12, 2009, Elizabeth Bear, a professional science fiction and fantasy writer, published on her LiveJournal a post entitled “whatever you're doing, you're probably wrong,” in which she gave advice about writing the Other. Bear, a white woman from New England, suggests that writing the Other is simple, yet not easy: “in the long run, we are all people, and the basic similarities in the Venn diagram are more prevalent than the differences.” Her advice consists of listening, doing research, and not making characters of color into tokens. Her post itself gathered largely positive comments, but two readers posted critical responses to Bear's post in their own online spaces the next day. First, deepad published “I Didn't Dream of Dragons,” which deconstructs Bear's post and her assumption of the basic “sameness” of all people.

The other argument that causes me to flinch reactively is the one which talks about writing the Other just like you would write any character—with respect for their individuality and uniqueness.

You know why I flinch? It’s because the assumptions flatten the problem. A poorly written book has cardboard cut-out characters, and a well-written book has thoughtful, nuanced characterisation. But I have spent a lifetime reading well-written books with nuanced characters that hurt me by erasing or misrepresenting me. Sara Crewe gets sent to boarding school because my home had a bad climate for her to grow up in. Libba Bray can in 2003 write about a lesbian schoolgirl in Victorian England, but posit that Indians sell snakes to eat in a Bombay marketplace. And the White characters in Gone With the Wind, and Atlas Shrugged—two books I idolised and reread voraciously as a teenager—are iconoclastic in their individuality . . .

I distrust universalising statements proclaiming our inherent mutual

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29 Deepad's post was later shortlisted for an award by the British Science Fiction Association in the “non-fiction” category. It was originally published on LiveJournal.com, but moved to dreamwidth.org when deepad, along with large swaths of fandom, left LiveJournal. [http://deepad.dreamwidth.org/29371.html](http://deepad.dreamwidth.org/29371.html)
humanity because they are uni-directional—they do not make everyone more like me, they make everyone more like you. And I do not want that.

White people decrying their race and culture baffles me, because it is a lie. Your alienation from your own mainstream does not equate with your fundamental similarity to my differences with your culture. Even when we feel or are called “White” or “Western,” we cannot shrug off our identity; we become the vanguard of its complexity. And we are far, far more immersed in your culture, than most of you could ever be in ours.

The discourse which Bear had begun in simple, universalistic terms—probably intended for an audience she visualized (likely unintentionally) as largely like her—had been expanded to include a postcolonial critique from an Indian fan with a more nuanced point of view. “Your definition of individuality, just like your definition of politeness is culture-specific,” she told Bear.

The same day that deepad posted “I Didn't Dream of Dragons” (but afterward, as she cites it in her own post), Avalon's Willow posted “An Open Letter to Elizabeth Bear,” in which she points out that Bear herself engages in a racist device in one of her novels, *Blood and Iron*:

It's about my personal confusion that an author so highly spoken of by people I respect, would write about a magical negro who gets bridled by a white woman after trying to kill or eat another white woman and, to my horror, becoming some sort of beast of burden/big buck protector; my horror at watching the humiliation of yet another black man so that a white woman can be empowered in front of her peers.³⁰

Friends of Bear, both fans and other professional science fiction and fantasy writers, rushed to her defense. Other fans and professional writers posted their own responses agreeing with deepad and Avalon's Willow that Bear's post, although well-meaning, is full of blind-spots when it comes to larger issues of cultural appropriation. The dialogue continued for three long months at a high intensity, with many fans of color expressing a great deal of hurt and anger over the long-existing prejudices in fandom and their enduring invisibility. There were many and varied other tangential conversations, important and influential, but they are outside the scope of this chapter (and indeed, Racefail '09 is the subject of scholarly work all on its own). One of the things that came out of the discussion was a heightened awareness on the part of white fans and professional writers that science fiction and fantasy has a number of passionate, intelligent, articulate fans of color, and that science fiction and fantasy fandom is not the progressive liberal utopia that many white fans thought it was.

N.K. Jemisin, a professional science fiction and fantasy author of color, wrote on her own blog on January 18, 2010, a year after Racefail '09, as follows.

Since then I’ve been to lots of conventions and readings, chatted with other authors/editors/publishers on mailing lists and in person, and I’ve started to notice changes that I attribute to RaceFail fallout. First the personal: I suspect the increased awareness of the SFF [science fiction and fantasy] zeitgeist re race issues has helped The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms get more attention, since it’s an epic fantasy written by a writer of color, with a protagonist of color. Can’t complain about that. Also, I’ve seen a number of conventions dedicate panels and programming tracks (or
in some cases the whole con)\textsuperscript{31} to discussing race, and trying to attract more fans of color. People are quicker to raise objections now when anthologies and awards purporting to survey the field underrepresent women and people of color; and the usual silly defenses (e.g., “Maybe there just aren’t any [insert group] writing good SFF!”) don’t fly as far. Writers are \textit{thinking} more about what they write, and the unexamined assumptions that might be in their work. Readers are \textit{thinking} more about why their bookshelves might contain an overabundance of white male authors and protagonists . . . And it used to be very noticeable that I could at least broach the subject of race in every other aspect of my life — academia, the counseling psych field, political activism of course, literature/art in general — but not in SFF. The conversations would simply shut down, often thanks to respected personages/fans who would emphatically declare that there was no racism in the genre outside of a few unimportant loudmouths, and no need to discuss race since there was no racism, so let’s move on to something interesting like quantum physics.

Now, suddenly, everyone’s talking about race, and I cannot tell you how happy that makes me . . . \textsuperscript{32}

Another result of Racefail '09 was the creation of numerous new communities and challenges within fandom devoted to authors and characters of color and fan fiction about them. One such community was dark\_agenda on Dreamwidth, founded in October 2009 by dhobikikutti just in time for fandom nominations for Yuletide. As stated in its mission, dark\_agenda was formed explicitly, “to increase the representation of international, non-English, non-Western fandoms in multi-fandom fic, art and vid exchanges and festivals, as well as promote the responsible writing of characters of colour.”\textsuperscript{33} The community made available resources to enable their mission, such as lists of fandoms with non-white creators and non-white characters that participants could use to request and offer their Yuletide fandoms, and a list of knowledgeable beta-readers.

\textsuperscript{31} Original links to iafa.org.
\textsuperscript{32} \url{http://nkjemisin.com/2010/01/why-i-think-racefail-was-the-bestest-thing-evar-for-sff/}
\textsuperscript{33} From the dark\_agenda profile at \url{http://dark-agenda.dreamwidth.org/profile}
available to check stories for inaccuracies and offer other editing. According to Fanlore, when Yuletide 2009 went live, there were 50 stories tagged with the “Dark Agenda Challenge” tag.

In June 2010, dark_agenda issued a new challenge in response to the release of the live-action Avatar: The Last Airbender film in which the Asian characters from the exclusively Asian-influenced original Nickelodeon cartoon were overwhelmingly cast with white actors. The criticism of the movie's casting predates Racefail '09 by about a month; the LiveJournal with the name “aang_aint_white” was created in early December 2008, as was the website racebending.com, though its companion LiveJournal community was created in February 2009. Since its creation as a site for expressing frustration with the whitewashing of Avatar: The Last Airbender specifically, Racebending.com, has become an activist organization, “dedicated to encouraging equal opportunities in Hollywood.”

Quickly “racebending” became shorthand for resisting racist norms in fandom and in fan work. In June 2010, dark_agenda introduced a new challenge titled “Racebending Revenge” with the following instructions: “Re-write one or more white characters in the fandom(s) of your choice as chromatic/non-white/PoC, in a story of at least 500 words, with some acknowledgment of how the racial difference would make a difference to the story being told.”

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35 The “--bending” suffix is a direct reference to Avatar: The Last Airbender in which different styles of elemental “bending” exist as analogues for martial arts as well as a magic system.
36 [http://dark-agenda.dreamwidth.org/7371.html](http://dark-agenda.dreamwidth.org/7371.html) The challenge was hosted at and is archived in the OTW's fan fiction archive: Archive of our Own, also known as AO3.
2010, there were 20 stories written and uploaded specifically for this challenge. As of this writing, there are a total of 34.

Two of the stories in the Racebending Revenge collection are of particular interest to me as a translation scholar. They are "春雨 (Spring Rain)" by mercredigirl and “Promise of the पृवाई" by dhobikikutti. As the titles demonstrate, both of these stories include languages other than English in their rewritings of the source texts, and they both do so with particular anti-colonial intent. Both of these stories serve as postcolonial criticisms of the source texts in the literary sense. They are, to quote Tejaswini Niranjana in *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (1992) “a use of translation that shatters the coherence of the 'original' and the 'invariable identity of sense'” (Niranjana 1992, 170).

The first story, "春雨 (Spring Rain)" by mercredigirl, is a response to the short-lived television series *Firefly* and its cinematic follow-up *Serenity*, created by Joss Whedon, beloved creator of fan-favorite texts such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *The Avengers*. Before I discuss the story proper, some context for *Firefly* and Joss Whedon's place in fandom at large is necessary. *Firefly* is most commonly described as a “space-western.” It takes place 500 years in a future where the United States and China have formed an alliance and a “corporate supegovernment.”

with Kathie Huddleston for scifi.com, Whedon explains the origin of the series as follows.

I read *The Killer Angels*. The minutia of the Battle of Gettysburg and the lives of the people in it really made *Firefly* just pop out of my head. I want to get into people's lives this intimately. I want to do it in the future and show that the future is the past. So I built the structure of the world and the look of the show on the Reconstruction Era . . . We based a lot of things on the Civil War and the 1880s stylistically. We mixed it up with a lot of different cultures. There are a lot of Chinese in their outfits and their culture and their language. Every working-class American-seeming person speaks Chinese as well, because these are the two big powers. The idea is [that] they are the Alliance — the powerful government that our hero fought against. They're not the bad guys. They're just representative of the big government who sometimes comes in and makes things better, and sometimes they come in and [mess] everything up. Just like real big governments do.38

*Firefly* has an ensemble cast of nine main characters—a very large cast by television standards, which Whedon addresses directly in the interview by explaining how much “richer” the stories become when there are so many people in the show that the audience cares about. However, in a world that he creates as being heavily influenced by Chinese culture, not a single member of the large ensemble cast is Chinese, or even Asian. There are a great many Asian extras and much Asian “flavor” to the sets of the series, but the elements of the show that are Chinese are merely background details.

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“春雨 (Spring Rain)” approaches Firefly from a very critical, yet personal position. In an afterword written in 2011, after "春雨 (Spring Rain)” had acquired quite a bit of critical attention, mercredigirl situates herself specifically to avoid being seen as the One True Voice of Chinese criticism.

I am Chinese. I can barely speak and write Mandarin, I can barely speak Hokkien, and I can only understand a smattering of Teochew and Cantonese. I am Hokkien and Teochew by heritage, with traces of Peranakan in my culture. I am Southeast Asian. I am Singaporean Chinese. I am not – I want to make this clear – a diasporan in terms of identification. My sourceland is Singapore. I am from Southeast Asia. I do not have any natal affection for Fukien or Swatow; my family has lived on this Singaporean land for five generations. I am Chinese, and proud of it, and aware of the attendant privilege and oppression. I am Chinese . . .

And I am Anglophone. My first language is English. Anywhere outside of Asia, English might be termed my ‘mother tongue’. But here, because of the way racial politics are encoded into the education system, my mother tongue is classified as Mandarin. My immediate family does not speak Mandarin at home. One set of grandparents does, but even so, their native tongue was Hokkien until the government standardised Mandarin to tap into the PRChinese economy some thirty years ago.

In short: 《春雨》 is not perfect. Its understanding of Chinese culture is not perfect. I had one sentence grammar-picked by a native Cantonese user in the comments (a correction for which I am much grateful). Its understanding of what it means to be Chinese, or what Chineseness entails, must be mediated through the second-hand first-hand existence of a teenaged Chinese girl who is either self-evidently and obtrusively Chinese or else insufficiently so. Other Southeast Asian Chinese readers will, at this stage, be nodding at this. Very possibly mainland Chinese, or Hong Kong or Macau Chinese, or Taiwan Chinese, will understand some of this; and Chinese from outside of Asia also. This is not easy to comprehend at first going. Indeed, part of lived experience is that it can never be put down adequately into words, or understood by outsiders. (mercredigirl, 春雨 (Spring Rain), Archive Of Our Own.)
Mercredigirl's story is only 810 words, but in those words she interrogates the claim that

*Firefly* is “postimperialist.” Simon and River Tam are Chinese in this story, as their surname suggests they were written to be. The story takes place at the beginning of the series, when Simon and River are fleeing the Alliance and its operatives and must decide whether to accept the offer to stay with the rest of the ensemble cast as crew members of *Serenity*, the firefly-class spaceship that serves as reference for the titles of both television series and motion picture. In the story River is introduced as Tan Hena, and by the end of the story Simon has reclaimed his “old name,” Jiaming—“light of the house.” River is arguing that they cannot trust the crew of the Serenity and that they would be better off on their own, although Simon is initially concerned merely with surviving. By the end of the story, River has convinced Simon to reject the captain's offer, and they leave Serenity, taking Kay Lee (turning the name of Kaylee Frye, engineer of Serenity, into an Asian analogue) with them. The text of mercredigirl's story argues explicitly that the “postimperialism” of the Alliance is a lie: “On paper, the Alliance was an equal partnership between the United States and the People's Republic, but economic power did not change how white society worked.” When River resists Simon's attempt to make the decisions for both of them, accusing him of treating her the same way the Alliance did, Simon muses on the balance between their pride and their survival,

> It has always been a fine balance between pride and survival. Simon has never told her of how frenzied 爸 and 妈 became when she fell off the grid – how they panicked, how 爸 wept and 妈 screamed and both of

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39 It is described as such in the *New York Times Magazine* article cited above. The full quote is: "*Firefly* is set in just such a postimperialist universe, after China and America have formed a corporate supergovernment, the Alliance. In essence, it's Coca-Cola as the White House.”
them knew but would not say, *Nobody cares if one more pretty young Chinese girl goes missing*. He might have been disgusted, all his life, at how they fawned over their white colleagues; he might have been disgusted at how he did the same, stifling himself and nodding agreeably with his classmates; but he pitied and understood them then. (mercredigirl, *春雨* (Spring Rain), Archive Of Our Own.)

This is a story about negotiating identity, and as such the majority of the Chinese that is used in the story signifies names—Mother and Father, in the example above, and also 妹妹 and 小妹, the names they call each other, and 家明大哥。The fact that Simon is unfamiliar with both his namesake and his own language is underlined in the course of the story: "Jiaming, *light of the house*. He has not brought much light or glory. He does not even know the dialect for 家明， even though 谭 is a name that comes out of an ancient state in 山东， which journeyed into 湖南， and which has persisted long in his family's old home of 香港。" In the end Hena-mei convinces her brother Jiaming to leave Serenity and to find their own way, taking Kay Lee with them: “The three of them, children of heaven, children of the Qin Emperor and the Red Book and a scattered diaspora and five thousand years of history, flying headfirst into the future with all the past behind and inside of them, far away from the spaceship where the 汉字 are painted all backwards and wrong” (mercredigirl, *春雨* (Spring Rain), Archive Of Our Own).

Mercredigirl's story explicitly addresses the fact that a show that claims a Chinese cultural context does not clearly contain Chinese characters. Her portrayal of Simon's
reluctance to take a stand and assume his Chinese identity echoes Whedon's reluctance to cast actors with Asian ancestry for this show. Whedon has also been criticized within fandom for setting the *Buffy* spinoff *Angel* in Los Angeles and casting very few characters of color, which is not true to the reality of Los Angeles. This pattern of blindness to the racist casting choices made on his shows is highlighted when mercredigirl has Simon and River choose to leave Serenity, for without Simon and River there is no show. In the pilot, the addition of Simon and River to the crew and their need to outrun the Alliance is the event that generates not only the rest of the show, but the major motion picture as well. In this story, the missing Chinese members of the cast become the engine without which Serenity cannot fly.

The power to disrupt the overall reception of a text can sometimes belong to rewriting as André Lefevere describes in *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992). Anthologies, new editions, and other industry-powered reissues, in addition to adaptations and translation can effect the overall reception of a work in a particular system. One fan fiction story alone does not have the power to disrupt the overall reception of *Firefly* in this way, but together with other resistant fan works, a particular interpretive point of view can affect the reception of *Firefly* among some subsections of fandom. At San Diego Comic-Con 2012, Racebending.com's Media Liaison Mike Le stood up and asked Joss Whedon if he would be willing to include Asian or Asian-American performers if he were ever to explore this kind of cultural fusion in
another of his shows." Whedon’s response was bland and non-committal, but Le’s post elicited 118 comments—many written by people who agreed that the lack of Asian representation was a problem but had not necessarily noticed it in *Firefly* before Le had pointed it out.

Talking about the problematic aspects of stories from popular culture can significantly impact one’s understanding of the power structure in a cultural system. I have found in my own teaching practice that using the example of *Firefly* can reach students when a nineteenth-century novel cannot. The struggle of marginalized peoples for representation and power is not new; using an example of representation imbalance from a science fiction western, however, is very new. This updated framing of an old argument serves as a kind of rewriting and creates inroads toward a new reception.

We see some of the same characteristics of the power of critical rewriting in a second story from the Racebending Revenge challenge highlighted here. Dhobikikutti’s “Promise of the पपरववई” is a retelling of the “Mary Poppins” film that reimagines the title

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40 San Diego Comic-Con, or Comic-Con International, is the largest pop culture and media industry convention in the world, according to *Forbes* magazine. Its attendance in 2010 was about 130,000 people and its influence on the media industry, especially in the genres of science fiction, fantasy, comics, and horror, is immeasurably great. See Le’s post at Racebending.com for his account of this event, as well as the ensuing discussion in comment threads: http://www.racebending.com/v4/featured/frustrations-asian-american-whedonite/ accessed 3/19/14.
character as an Indian ayah instead of an English nanny. The story begins with a pointed quote from the song that introduces Mr. Banks: “The Life I Lead.”

It's grand to be an Englishman in 1910
King Edward's on the throne;
It's the age of men
[...]
A British nanny must be a gen'ral!
The future empire lies within her hands
And so the person that we need to mold the breed
Is a nanny who can give commands!

The story immediately situates itself as commenting on British imperialism, and when Mary blows in on the East wind in the first few lines of the story, it is evident that this is a different Mary Poppins:

When she is blown in on the पुर्ववायें there is आयाटा curling up around her skin, फल्लहर throbbing in her breath. Traces of खस and चनन wafted too far from home-land. Sharper lashings from सवगर and sea turn her tongue spicy with salt. The sodden sky is miserable here, smog choked down in her throat – she would be नीलकण्ठ in her haughty triumph over it.
(dhobikikutti, “Promise of the पुर्ववायें,” Archive Of Our Own.)

The use of Chinese language in "春雨 (Spring Rain)" underscores the importance of the Tams' Chinese identities. “Promise of the पुर्ववायें,” however, uses Hindi for more than just names and familial titles and has what translation scholars such as Lawrence Venuti would call a “foreignizing” mission. Foreignizing translation strategies resist fluency and clarity by choosing to leave some unfamiliar vocabulary or sentence structure intact. Readers are reminded that what they are reading is not the “original.” Like translation, fan fiction has the power to resist erasure by “pursuing cultural diversity, signaling
linguistic and cultural differences and unsettling the hierarchies in the translating language,” which Venuti suggests is a responsibility of translation in *The Translator's Invisibility* (Venuti 1995, 266). In fact, in a context like fan fiction, some of the criticisms of Venuti's theory can be ameliorated—because there is no simple linear relationship between source and target in the example of fan fiction. Readers of English have both English and their knowledge of the source text to ground them in their understanding, so the use of foreignizing techniques in a piece of fan fiction may be even more effective than in a translation. Dhobikikutti provides transliterations of the Devanagari within the text so that the online reader of Hindi who is not familiar with Devanagari-script can still read the Hindi, but she does not provide translations. In the comments to her story in the archive, she recognizes that this means those aspects of her story are not accessible to non-Hindi readers, but she also asserts that this story was not written for them. However, fans can, and did, enjoy the story and learn from the feeling of alienation they get in reading a text that was not written explicitly for them as an audience.

“Promise of the परवाई” reframes Mary Poppins as an activist with an anti-imperialist mission.

Come in they will always say, come in, like they said आओआइ आओ "दरआओ like they talked about her poppin' in always poppin' in no notice no sound cat-footed and creeping as any of them queer savage buggers. She

41 See, for example, Maria Tymozcko's introduction to *Translation, Resistance, Activism*: “Foreignization has also been rightly criticized as an elitist strategy, more appropriate to a highly educated target audience than to a broad readership or a cultural situation in which the normal education level is more modest than it is in Europe or the United States.” (Tymoczko 2010, 10)
is पूजना to them, mastered and मैत्र्य and yet they are too arrogant to recognise who they let suckle from her poisoned teat.

She knows how to wedge herself inside, imperial, colonial; a good teacher has always once begun as a good student (बे टीबाकिलियां।) the children are like smug, stupid lambs who will grow up to be sheared sheep, unwitting contributors of tartan wool shawls and अमल абमम abducted and whored out as paisley. They find it whimsical, magical, as though it was all झड़-खेल और चमत्कार, so many great Indian रसस tricks turned. (dhobikikutti, “Promise of the पुरवाई,” Archive Of Our Own.)

Dhobikikutti’s text operates on several levels, telling the story of an anti-imperialist activist at the same time that it serves as anti-imperialist activism itself, risking alienating the hegemonic Anglophone fandom in order to make a point.

Unlike Firefly, which has a clear breakdown between the world it says it represents and the world it presents in practice, “Mary Poppins” is a film that straightforwardly acknowledges British imperialism, nationalism, and capitalism as the norms that inform the characterization and plot throughout the movie. There is the song that Mr. Banks sings to introduce himself that dhobikikutti uses to introduce her story, as well as the neighbor down Cherry Tree Lane who is a former Admiral of the Royal Navy and blasts the cannon on the prow of his house to tell the time to his neighborhood and keep everything “ship-shape.” Though in the film Mary Poppins does succeed in undermining Mr. Banks's love of money and order by encouraging Michael Banks to give his tuppence to feed the birds instead of depositing them in the bank with his father, dhobikikutti’s Mary Poppins goes much further.
The bank breaks, and this is her doing; one सत्याग्रह strike achieved with icily civil disobedience. Someday the पुरवाई will fling her back with more power; she will be the पवन putrid setting the city on fire with her whiplash tail a beacon in answer to mill-mulled bonfires in the सवाम. But for now she is a गिलही breaking the bridge down stone by stone, that binds भारत to the राजन island.

They think it is she who is superfluous, put away and done with; there is so much they do not know, and that she is not paid to tell them. She has sent दशरथ dethroned away along with his children, and in senseless stupor they play games. She will not miss them, she has willingly sacrificed many children to छठे and लाखपुग्नी; she is no गवधवर or क 3कई valuing affection over justice. दममती and दूतपती are her sisters — self-exiled and righteous as any बलिकी. (dhobikikutti, “Promise of the पुरवाई,” Archive Of Our Own.)

In this rewriting, the actors and events of the fabula are basically the same, but the character of Mary Poppins and the focalization of the narrative is radically changed. This Indian Mary Poppins and her very focused, internalized narrative takes the familiar event of the run on the bank and recontextualizes it.

“Promise of the पुरवाई” is postcolonial criticism not only of Mary Poppins, not only of the colonization of India, but of British imperialism in general. Dhobikikutti includes references to other colonized lands and their resources in the course of the story:

“Oh yes, this is how you befuddle the childish natives, how you take the opium and the alcohol, the tobacco and the tea, the cannabis and the cacao, take it and turn it into something addictive and dreamworthy – illusions turned to delusion turned to dissolution” (dhobikikutti, “Promise of the पुरवाई,” Archive Of Our Own). She tagged her
story with “post-colonial fic,” a tag that as of 2016 contains only ten stories. Yet the themes and perspectives with which the “Racebending Revenge” challenge was launched and these two stories were written continue to influence fandom as a whole and are beginning to find their way into the larger discourse among more casual consumers of popular media.

**G. Conclusion**

Internet fandom is a specific literary system with its own norms, but its history reaches back before the rise of the world wide web and its ability to connect fans across the world. Henry Jenkins's *Textual Poachers*, and Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse's *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* describe the specific kind of literary fan culture that I argue parallels historical literary systems that have engaged in rewriting for various discursive reasons. Just as those systems have done, fan fiction is moving out of the periphery and into the center of twenty-first century popular culture.

The intricate way in which fan fiction participates in the postmodern phenomenon of Internet remix culture is specific and unique. At the same time if you look at the history of rewriting through a systems theory heuristic, a pattern can be detected at the macro-level when an overview of historical literary systems is attempted. The community-based nature of fan fiction writing is one unique quality. Though there have
been examples of literary communities in the past, I would argue that none have been so intimate as a group of online slash fans who read and critique each other's erotica. In addition the advent of the Internet and its democratic paradigm of publishing-for-all abolishes the kind of gatekeeping that makes earlier examples of literary rewriting more likely to reflect the norms of the larger cultural system. With fan fiction, there are no gatekeepers limiting what one can write or read, and the discourse that develops has as many heads as the Lernaean Hydra. This chaos, rather than creating cacophony, reflects the reality of an educated audience responding to texts in deeply personal ways.

These deeply personal reactions are frequently characterized by identity, both in fan response and in literary rewriting throughout history. That is, interpretation and community affiliation are often informed, if not defined, by gender, sexual orientation, race, and religion. In some cases, fandom communities form around a project to explicitly interrogate source texts with respect to one of these identities. The “Racebending Revenge” challenge is one such community. Subsequent chapters of this dissertation highlight the ways in which this has been true throughout the history of literary rewriting. One fan community might focus on non-erotic stories about queer characters, and another has a mission statement that informs readers of its intent to improve disability access in fandom—both by improving access at real-life spaces like conventions, and by making recommendations for fan works featuring characters with disabilities. Fans have broken through the limitations that corporate copyright holders have sought to place on them, to
the extent that more and more corporations are attempting to monetize and control fan content. One of Henry Jenkins’s more recent publications, *Spreadable Media* (2013), co-written by Sam Ford and Joshua Green, attempts to persuade media professionals that participatory culture is here to stay by looking more specifically at the industry’s own attempts at transmedia storytelling instead of focusing on fan-led remix culture. At the same time, this argument threatens to flatten the meaning of the word “fan” as it suggests that the changes in the ecology of media consumption and the active ways in which we consume our media—calling up a show on Netflix on our own time, and without ads, instead of being limited to broadcast times, for example—makes everyone a fan now.

The fact that fannish practice is becoming more mainstream is undeniable at this point. The current generation of undergraduates almost all know what “fan fiction” is without my having to define it. Some of them admit in class to writing it. When one takes a larger view, this is not a surprising development. Rewriting as a means to interpret and explore has always been with us. In the next chapter, using Sherlock Holmes as an example, we can see that most of the characteristics of fan fiction were already common throughout the twentieth century.
CHAPTER 3
THE CASE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

A. Introduction

In their 2012 collection of essays, *Sherlock and Transmedia Fandom*, Louisa Ellen Stein and Kristina Busse suggest that the adventures of Sherlock Holmes are “arguably the oldest of media fandoms” (Stein and Busse 2012, 10). A convergence between a longstanding Sherlockian practice and the current norms of media fans began with the appearance of the BBC’s television series *Sherlock* in 2010. Stein and Busse go on to observe that “Fan studies has long sidestepped investigation of the impact of Sherlock Holmes fandom on the evolution of fan communities and fan engagement; *Sherlock* promises a compelling contemporary route to bridge this gap” (Stein and Busse 2012, 10). As a “fandom” that has existed since the nineteenth century, Sherlock Holmes also serves as a crucial link in the history of rewriting that I trace in this dissertation.

The high level of activity in the Sherlock Holmes fandom, as well as its extensive literary history, makes it a very interesting case study for the framing of rewriting as system-dependent. As we have seen earlier, the work of Itamar Even-Zohar theorizes that the major opposition in literature is between “high” or “canonized” versus “low” or “non-canonized” systems and that movement between these opposing systems is largely made possible through translation. This concept, together with André Lefevere’s work on
conceptualizing translation as one of a number of different kinds of rewriting that both reinforces and subverts existing systems, serves as the theoretical foundation of this dissertation. In the case of Sherlock Holmes, the relevant systems are sometimes high, sometimes low, and they are always moving between categories. Whether we are discussing the pastiche of the oldest organized Sherlock Holmes fan club, the Baker Street Irregulars, or the explicit slash fan fiction of the online Sherlock BBC fandom, the rewriting reveals much about the system whence it comes.

The mechanisms that operate in the translational shifts between source and adaptation are very much present in both the film and television rewritings of Sherlock Holmes and in the fan fiction rewritings of those rewritings. In addition, both levels of adaptation can be classified as intersemiotic translation, following Jakobson's model, as the film and television adaptations translate written word to image and sound, whereas fan fiction translates image and sound back to written word. Therefore, looking at these translations from a systems perspective aligns the case of Sherlock Holmes with both the literary system of fan fiction and the literary systems of canonical literature that make up the remainder of this dissertation. Each adaptation of Sherlock Homes is localized, both to time and to place.
This chapter explores several aspects of the fannish reception of Sherlock Holmes that echo both forward and backward in time. First, it discusses the fannish qualities of the Baker Street Irregulars and the scion societies of the early twentieth century as well as Arthur Conan Doyle's engagement with the fans of his original serialized stories in *The Strand*. Second, it explores contemporary Sherlock Holmes media fandom as defined in chapter 2. The Sherlock Holmes media fandom encompasses not only the source texts written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but possibly more often discusses, analyzes, and rewrites the films and television shows that are themselves rewritings of the source texts. This chapter gives additional examples of specific pieces of fan fiction written for the Sherlock Holmes fandom to further reinforce the argument of chapter 2. Finally, it analyzes contemporary commercial rewritings of Sherlock Holmes in the twenty-first century and the ways in which they also participate in transformative rewriting. Sherlock Holmes has always been closely connected with fan reception. There is little that can compare with the depth and the breadth of the afterlife of Sherlock Holmes as a case study of transformative rewriting.

B. Arthur Conan Doyle and his beloved source text

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1859. He trained as a medical doctor but struggled in his early years to establish a successful practice. He

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42 A “scion society” in terms of Sherlock Holmes fandom, is a founded fan community approved by the Baker Street Irregulars. The Baker Street Irregulars (or BSI) only allows new members via invitation. The scion societies are slightly less exclusive.
began writing fiction in his copious spare time and published the first of the Sherlock Holmes stories, *A Study in Scarlet*, in 1886. He wrote many works besides the adventures of Sherlock Holmes and James Watson, but none of them were nearly as successful.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novels and short stories about the adventures of Sherlock Holmes leave many inconsistencies and gaps that invite the kind of rewriting activity in which fans engage. Doyle was a reluctant author of the Sherlock Holmes tales from the very beginning. According to John Dickson Carr's 1949 biography *The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, “Between the beginning of April and the beginning of August, 1891, he sent off six stories. And these were all he intended to write . . .” (Carr 1949, 85).

After *A Scandal in Bohemia* appeared in the July issue of *The Strand* Sherlock Holmes began enjoying a rush of popularity. The editor of *The Strand* was quick to ask for more stories and Conan Doyle refused. Doyle was more interested in writing historical fiction, but *The Strand* was insistent. In a letter to his mother, Doyle suggests that if he asks for the outrageous sum of £50 each, “irrespective of length,” he might reconsider writing more Holmes. But he does not expect *The Strand* to agree. “Seems rather high-handed, does it not?” he asks his mother (Carr 1949, 86).

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was completely surprised by the passion with which his readers embraced Holmes. Even his mother, who served as a second reader and occasional contributor of plots, reacted with great feeling when Doyle suggested to her in that first year that he might kill Holmes off. “‘You won’t!’” she raged. 'You can’t! You
mustn’t!' (Carr 1949, 88). When he finally did kill Holmes off in 1893, he did so with a
great sigh of relief. There are many apocryphal stories about the mourning of his
contemporary fandom, but even Carr's biography cannot cite a source for them. He says
only that “[t]he anecdotes about his demise are too well known for repetition” (Carr
1949, 135).

According to Andrew Lycett’s more recent biography *The Man Who Created
Sherlock Holmes* (2007), Doyle was very savvy about the commercial value of the
Sherlock Holmes stories. He recognized the market for a format in which he told
serialized stories that were actually self-contained plots with repeating protagonists, and
later boasted that he had invented this form (Lycett 2007, 174). Lycett agrees that Doyle
was never overly attached to Holmes, but saw his success as a means to an end. Selling
the Holmes stories freed Doyle from his unsuccessful practice as an eye doctor and gave
him the room to write. Lycett also allows that the “sackfuls of fan mail” Doyle was
receiving by 1892 kept him at what had become the tedious job of inventing new
mysteries for Sherlock Holmes to solve (Lycett 2007, 190). This tedium, when
considered in addition to Doyle's contempt for the Sherlock Holmes stories as a
distraction from his true literary calling, explains the inconsistencies and gaps he left in
the source texts. Doyle did not care enough to make sure his narratives were airtight; this
tendency almost guaranteed the afterlife given Sherlock Holmes by his fans as they
rewrote the source to explain the deficiencies.
C. Early literary fandom and Holmesiana

According to Fanlore, the wiki project on fannish history run by the Organization of Transformative Works, Ronald Knox's “Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes” (1911) was the first work in this oldest modern example of fandom. The Sherlock Holmes stories, written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle between 1887 and 1927, had a devoted following from the beginning but this essay is considered “the cornerstone of Sherlockian Literature,” as it is described in the introduction at diogenes-club.com, a website of Sherlockiana that dates back to 1999. Knox's essay is a satirical piece that not only pokes fun at the Holmesian method of analysis, but on the practice of literary analysis in general.

If there is anything pleasant in criticism, it is finding out what we aren't meant to find out . . . . Thus, if one brings out a book on turnips, the modern scholar tries to discover from it whether the author was on good terms with his wife; if a poet writes on buttercups, every word he says may be used as evidence against him at an inquest of his views on a future existence. (Shreffler 1984, 89)

Knox, who was also an Anglican priest, created an essay that is generally recognized as being a parody of the form of Biblical “higher criticism” associated with the German school that included David Friedrich Strauss, Ferdinand Christian Baur, and Ludwig Feuerbach, as Vera Tobin discusses in “Ways of Reading Sherlock Holmes: the Entrenchment of Discourse Blends” (Tobin 2006, 83).
Tobin's article is a structural analysis of the markers used to indicate the ironic detachment of the work written as participation in “The Grand Game”: the assumption that Sherlock Holmes and John Watson were real people, and that Arthur Conan Doyle was Watson's literary agent. Two such markers used to great effect in Knox's essay are “hyperformality” and “intonational exaggeration.” The first term describes the use of formal rhetoric when describing subject matter that is not formal, and the second describes the use of italics and punctuation that run counter to the norms of regular academic discourse. Knox also makes the satirical nature of the essay clear by citing sources that are clearly fictional, and making arguments about the Holmes canon that parallel the arguments of the “higher criticism” of academia albeit using “low” subject matter (Tobin 84). This kind of writing, although not “narrative,” nonetheless shares the creativity and sense of play that abounds in modern fan fiction. In addition, although Knox's essay predates the creation of the Baker Street Irregulars and the scion societies, such communities grew up quickly in the decades after he first published the essay and in some ways are the precursors of modern fandom communities.

Organized fan clubs for the original Sherlock Holmes canon were formed in both New York City and London in 1934, according to Fanlore. The New York group, the “Baker Street Irregulars” (BSI), founded by Christopher Morley, an editor at Doubleday, was named for the group of street urchins in the source texts who aid Holmes in his cases from time to time. In contrast to modern media fandom—a loosely connected group of
fans, decentralized and anarchic—the BSI was and is highly structured, traditional, and by invitation only. “Scion societies” arose in other cities in the United States, but only those authorized by the BSI can claim true lineage. Though a scion society formed in 1943 was the first to admit women, the Baker Street Irregulars themselves did not do so until the 1990s. This is one of the major differences between modern internet-based fandom and the scions of early twentieth-century Sherlock Holmes fan clubs: the level of tradition, patriarchy, and structure involved, however whimsical the content of the discussions, would likely astonish a typical modern media fan.

In an attempt to bridge the gap, Betsy Rosenblatt—both a long-time Sherlockian and a member of the legal committee of the Organization for Transformative Works—wrote an article for the *Baker Street Journal* entitled “Sherlock Holmes Fan Fiction,” in which she introduces one form of fandom to the other.⁴³ Because she is writing with an audience of Sherlockians in mind, the piece assumes certain familiarity with both the Holmesian canon and the shorthand Sherlockians use when referring to the four novels and 56 short stories that make up that canon. Rosenblatt uses this familiarity to set the idea of Sherlock Holmes fan fiction into a context familiar to a Sherlockian, while invoking Lawrence Lessig and arguing that the Holmesian societies were also remix cultures.

Fan fiction is a way of interacting with text, converting it from a read-only medium to a read/write one. In that sense,

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⁴³ Betsy Rosenblatt is a personal friend and consulted with me for some of the media-fandom aspects of her article.
fan fiction is exactly like the traditional Sherlockiana. What makes fan fiction different is that, in addition to research and speculation analyzing the Canon (what fans would call *meta*), fan fiction also creates new *narrative* for canonical settings and characters. (Rosenblatt 2012, 33)

Sherlockiana is not traditionally narrative-free, per se. Sherlockians refer to stories written in the style of the canon as “pastiche,” however, not “fan fiction,” and it is not their primary mode of interaction with the source text. Further, when Baker Street Irregulars, who include bestselling authors like Neil Gaiman, publish their pastiche, it is no longer “fan fiction” in the traditional sense: it is commercial. Some pastiche is shared within the community, but the bulk of what is written within the Sherlockian fandom is analysis in an academic style. Yet Sherlockian analysis is often fictionalized analysis, as many of the writers in this genre frame it within “The Grand Game,” as we saw above with Knox’s “Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes.” Not all are written as obvious satire, however. Tobin suggests that essays that focus on questions raised by the source narrative, such as what occupied Holmes between his retirement in 1903 and the publication of the next adventure in 1922, “... is more importantly connected to an ongoing discussion of the canonical *fabula* taking place within the Sherlockian community” (Tobin 86). As is commonly done in other fandom communities, Sherlockians attempted to fill the gaps left in the source text by the original author; unlike other fandom communities, the attempts of Sherlockians to fill those gaps were almost entirely written as analytical essays, rather than original narratives.
The fact that modern online fandom shares a family resemblance with early Sherlockian fandom can be easily seen in Philip A. Shreffler's collection of “cornerstone writings about Sherlock Holmes,” *The Baker Street Reader* (1984). The collection includes Knox's seminal essay as well as commentary by Rex Stout, T.S Eliot, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, among others—largely members of the Baker Street Irregulars. One of the pieces is a “radio discussion”: a transcript of an appearance on Mark Van Doren's 1942 CBS radio show, *Invitation to Learning* by Jacques Barzun, Rex Stout, BSI; and Elmer Davis, BSI. It is worth noting that they, and any other members of the Baker Street Irregulars, are noted as such in the text of *The Baker Street Reader, The Baker Street Journal*, and other sources of Sherlockiana. The initials BSI follow their name as if it were an advanced academic degree.

The discussion begins with some meditation on the timelessness of the Holmes stories and the completeness of the character of Sherlock Holmes, but Rex Stout interrupts as follows.

I'm beginning to get mad already because Baker Street Irregulars don't agree that Holmes is a character. Holmes is a man! Holmes is a great man! One of our rules is, you know, that you're not allowed to mention the name of A. Conan Doyle in the Irregulars because there just wasn't any such person. Sherlock Holmes lived, Dr. Watson lived—or Mrs. Watson, whatever you want to call her. (Shreffler 1984, 22)

Stout's insistence on playing the Grand Game while on a national radio broadcast
demonstrates not only that fans focus on their interpretation of the source text but the
playfulness with which they do it. This is true whether Rex Stout is talking about
Sherlock Holmes as a real man or modern fans are reposting Internet conversations they
have concerning the reactions of their favorite characters to novel situations or discussing
their personal “headcanon.”

Sherlock Holmes is an excellent example of André Levefere's discussion about
Though the bulk of “non-professional readers” have not read the entirety of the canon of
Arthur Conan Doyle's stories, it would be difficult to find an individual who was
unfamiliar with the character of Sherlock Holmes. The image of a tall thin man with a
deerstalker hat and perhaps a pipe and a magnifying glass is part of our cultural currency.
In fact, on May 14, 2012, the Guinness World Records announced that Sherlock Holmes
had become the most portrayed “literary human character” in film and on television. The
official announcement, posted to www.guinnessworldrecords.com, goes on to state, in the
words of adjudicator Claire Burgess, “Sherlock Holmes is a literary institution. This
Guinness World Records title reflects his enduring appeal and demonstrates that his
detective talents are as compelling today as they were 125 years ago.” The analysis and
pastiche created by members of the Baker Street Irregulars and the fan fiction and meta
written by fans on LiveJournal or Tumblr contribute to this enduring appeal as much as

44 “Headcanon” refers to the fan's personal interpretation of the meaning of a certain event or of events
that have happened offstage. A related term, “fanon,” more specifically describes something like the
“The Grand Game,” in which a fandom-group has a certain interpretation held in common. Both terms
derive from “canon,” meaning the source text itself.
the officially licensed rewritings out of Hollywood or the BBC do.

D. The resurgence of Holmes fandom and the popularity of “slash”

As of this writing, the “Sherlock Holmes and Related Fandoms” tag at the Archive of Our Own, the Organization for Transformative Works' multi-fandom fan fiction archive, contains 79,628 stories. The earliest is dated 1993 (well before the archive's inception, but fans are able to back-date their entries). Before the first of the films directed by Guy Ritchie was released in 2009, the archive's Holmes fandom tag contained fewer than 100 stories and most were specifically written within the Doyle canon. It was clearly the introduction of the BBC's *Sherlock* in 2010, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman, that really caused the fandom to explode with productivity. Out of the 79,628 stories that are labeled “Sherlock Holmes and Related Fandoms,” 73,210 of them are specifically labeled “Sherlock (TV).” The other major multi-fandom archive, fanfiction.net, does not combine its tags, but contains 52,700 stories under the Sherlock label in its television category, and 2,000 for the Sherlock Holmes movies. Both sites have much smaller numbers for *Elementary*: 681 stories for fanfiction.net and 1511 for the Archive of Our Own. This is partly due to the newness of *Elementary*, but also due to the nature of the show, as will be discussed further below.

The fan fiction for both the *Sherlock Holmes* films and the BBC's *Sherlock* is

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45 The fandom is active enough that this number is constantly changing from day to day. In fact, in the time it took for me to write this section, three new stories were added to the archive.
overwhelmingly interested in further exploring the relationship between Holmes and Watson—most often to an erotic conclusion. This genre of fan fiction, known as “slash,” is one of the most popular and productive categories—and often also gets the most attention. Slash generally involves pairs of men who are close friends (or occasionally intimate enemies) in the source texts but who become lovers in fan fiction. Henry Jenkins, in his foundational work on fan fiction writers *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (1992) suggests that slash “may be fandom's most original contribution to the field of popular literature” (Jenkins 1992, 188).

There has been a fair amount of work on the subversion of structural gender norms and the erotic agency for women that slash fan fiction provides. Joanna Russ, in her essay, “Pornography for Women, by Women, With Love” (1985) suggests that slash is the feminine answer to pornography that caters to male sexual fantasies, and that it is “very, very difficult even for art, with its complexity and thoughtfulness, its inevitable alloy of reflection, its complicated evocations of emotion, to transcend the culture's givens” (Russ 1985, 85). For Russ, slash is not “art;” it is the embodiment of feminine sexual fantasy that is limited by patriarchy and the culturally-inflicted “doubling” of female sexuality—both desire and aversion to the violent and unconsensual ways many girls and women are initiated into sexual life. In an article for *The Journal of Sex Research: “Slash Fiction and Human Mating Psychology”* (2004), Catherine Salmon and

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46 Fan fiction that explores romance between two women who are canonically uninvolved has its own designation: “femmeslash” or “femslash.”
Don Symons describe a study they conducted in which at least 78 percent of their female participants reported enjoying a same-sex erotic romance novel (*The Catch Trap*, by Marion Zimmer Bradley) as much or more than a traditionally heterosexual romance novel, and suggest that

Slash is much more similar to mainstream romance novels than most academic students of slash have realized (e.g., Fraser Lamb & Veith, 1986; Jenkins, 1992; Penley, 1991; Russ, 1985.) For example, a slash story is in essence a love story in which two long-term male partners, usually depicted as heterosexual (however unlikely this may seem), suddenly realize that they have come to love one another. Slash stories typically have a happily-ever-after ending, namely the establishment of a permanent, monogamous romantic and sexual union. (Salmon and Symons, 2004)

This certainly doesn't describe all slash, yet it describes a structure of slash stories that is typical of the genre. Other stories may play with these particular plot devices or explore, for example, the very real life of bisexual men that is so rarely portrayed in media. In any case the relationship of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson is stereotypically primed for slash fan fiction. In fact the two examples with which Salmon and Symons begin their article are the ones that everyone considers historically foundational: Kirk/Spock, and also Holmes/Watson. It is the very “slashability” of Holmes and Watson that makes the pairing so popular in fandom and this particular fandom so popular within fandom-at-large. Out of the 79,628 stories in the “Sherlock Holmes and Related Fandoms” category, 39,796 are also tagged “Sherlock Holmes/John Watson,” a tag that indicates that particular romantic relationship is central to the particular story.47

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47 As of January 15, 2015. Every time I revise this chapter, the numbers grow but the proportions stay very similar.
Not all of the stories are explicitly erotic or even sexual, however. Although 8592 of the 39,796 stories are rated “explicit” by their authors, 8567 are rated “general audiences,” which indicates that there is no activity portrayed or language used that could be seen as inappropriate for any age reader. Many published commentaries on slash have concentrated on the “pornographic” aspects of the fiction, but fewer have discussed the ways in which fan fiction deeply explores the emotional relationship between men—also a subversive act in many media contexts. These explorations are often not explicitly pornographic, or even graphic at all. Whether one reads Holmes and Watson as lovers or not, it is hard to deny that it is the relationship between these two characters that is the most enduring detail, no matter the particular rewriting. That the CBS television drama *Elementary* changes the dynamic by representing Watson as a female character proves the rule: there is very little Holmes/Watson fan fiction focused on a romantic relationship within the *Elementary* fandom (394 stories at the Archive of Our Own, out of 1511), and what there is tends to focus on their friendship. Only 45 of those 394 stories are labeled “explicit.” In fact, the majority of *Elementary* fan fiction at the Archive of Our Own—more than half—is labeled “general audiences” or “teen and up audiences.” Stories can be both “slash” and “general audiences;” the slash between Holmes/Watson indicates that the story involves the two characters romantically, but the degree of explicitness varies. The most popular rating for Holmes/Watson slash in the Sherlock BBC fandom is “Teen and up audiences,” which is only one level removed from “general audiences.”
ratings are self-selected, and therefore inexact, but they reveal trends within the system of Sherlock fandom. Slash is popular, but it is most popular in non-pornographic forms.

The high level of activity in the Sherlock Holmes fandom, and its extensive literary history make it a very interesting case study for the framing of rewriting as system-dependent. The traditional Baker Street Irregulars had no interest in queering the relationship between Holmes and Watson; however, when the majority female media fandom began paying attention to these characters in massive numbers, largely thanks to the BBC adaptation, slash became the primary way in which the characters were rewritten. The periphery became the central interpretive frame, to borrow Even-Zohar's polysystems hermeneutic once again.

E. Two examples of transformative fan fiction based on Sherlock Holmes

In Textual Poachers Henry Jenkins suggests that there are ten different ways fan fiction rewrites a television show: recontextualization, expanding a timeline, refocalization, moral realignment, genre shifting, crossovers, character dislocation, personalization, emotional intensification, and eroticization (Jenkins 1992, 162 ff.) When combined with Mieke Bal's taxonomy of narrative texts, we can see that the bulk of fan fiction is written to shift a narrative at the textual or story level. These methods most often play with rhythm, focalization, space, and characterization but largely avoid big
changes in the events, actors, time, or location of the fabula.

“Recontextualization” according to Jenkins is when a fan writes in the gaps of a narrative in a way that reframes events from a source fabula. “Expanding a timeline” refers to narratives that enlarge events that were given little time or emotional heft in the source text. “Refocalization” retells source narrative from the perspective of a less central character. “Moral realignment” rewrites protagonists into antagonists and vice versa. “Genre shifting” explores different interpretations of the source text by means of different genre practices. “Crossovers,” as mentioned previously, combine the characters, settings, and plots from more than one source text. “Character Dislocation” is the closest Jenkins comes to what fandom in practice calls “AU.” Characters are removed from their original situations and given alternate identities.

“Personalization” is the attempt to write a fan's personal experience into the text. This can result in what fandom calls a “Mary Sue,” in which an author blatantly inserts herself into the text as a character. I would suggest that more recent phenomena such as rewriting source characters as fans might also fit into this category. “Emotional Intensification” emphasizes narrative crises in the source text and explores the psychological consequences of these crises when the source text does not. The last category is “eroticization,” which includes the phenomenon of slash and also any explicit fan fiction that explores events and activities that would be considered outside the norms.
There are two particularly literary and postmodern examples of Sherlock BBC (2010) fan fiction that encompass many of these methods of rewriting in one way or another: “The Theory of Narrative Causality” by falling_voices and “The Anatomist” by rosa_acicularis. “The Theory of Narrative Causality” first began to appear at the “Sherlock BBC kink meme” (http://sherlockbbc-fic.livejournal.com) on May 17, 2011, in response to the prompt, “Sherlock is a well-known fanartist whose online antics always land him on fandom_wank. John's a beloved BNF fan fiction author. They meet at a convention; geeky love ensues.” This premise is what in fandom is called an “alternate universe” or AU. It is a narrative format in which the setting and other formal structures are changed in order to explore characterization. In addition, this particular prompt encourages the writer to explore fandom itself and comment on the tropes and norms of the fandom community. It is a contemporary embodiment of Jenkins's “personalization.”

The story was first posted in 46 parts anonymously on the community site. Two months later its author posted it to her personal LiveJournal, complete with formatting (completed by a fan of the story, not falling_voices herself) that recreates the LiveJournal, Journalfen, and GoogleTalk posts visually as well as textually. falling_voices thanks a number of people for their contributions in the community that the reception of the fic created. Personal LiveJournals—that is, fictional diaries—had
been created for each of the characters while the story was still being posted in the meme, as well as Twitter and Tumblr accounts for some of them, and several fans wrote additional fic or created art or icons based on the story.

“The Theory of Narrative Causality” concerns the fannish exploits of consulting_detective and jumperfucker, Big Name Fans in the Sherlock Holmes fandom which, as the story explains,

...had been small and refined for the longest time. (Many would have it that it's the First Fandom Ever, and that Holmes/Watson is the first slash ship sailin' the seven seas, back when all fapping material fans had were 'zines and mail chains.) The original stories have been adapted left, right, and center — see Basil Rathbone and Bumblin' Nigel Bruce, or the scrumptious Jeremy Brett and his two Watsons. And then there's been the '09 movie by Guy Ritchie, starring Robert Downey Junior as a disheveled, scruffy Sherlock Holmes and Jude Law as gambling, gun-savvy John 'REALLY FUCKING HOT' Watson.48

The story itself, then, is situated in a Holmes fandom that exploded into activity as a result of the 2009 Ritchie movie. The fans at the center of the story are clearly the Holmes and Watson of the BBC's Sherlock, however, and the fannish drama that makes up the alpha-story's plot loosely follows the character-driven drama of the first series of Sherlock. consulting_detective is generally unliked and socially provocative, jumperfucker is well-liked and talented, and the two of them become close by being

48 From “The Theory of Narrative Causality,” chapter one, which can be found at http://falling-voices.livejournal.com/18360.html. I have left the formatting as it is found in the story, as the formatting is part of the semiotic intent of the story. Where there are blue words and underlines, a link is implied. Much of the time in this story, the links are fake; occasionally they are not. In this particular example, the first link goes to David Burkes's wikipedia page, and the second goes to Edward Hardwicke's.
assigned as partners for a fandom Big Bang challenge. A second level of narrative, the beta-story's plot, is told in the form of jumperfucker's Big Bang story. In a message to consulting_detective after they are assigned as partners, jumperfucker lists the following as important scenes for consulting_detective to illustrate: “the meeting at Bart's, and there's the Chinese circus bit, and the discussion in the living-room at 221B in the last part but one.” The “meeting at Bart's” is clearly a reference to “A Study in Pink” and the meeting of Holmes and Watson as they are introduced by Watson's former colleague, and “the Chinese circus bit” is a clear reference to episode two of the first series. In addition, the story acknowledges the problematic Orientalism of “The Blind Banker” in an almost offhand way, having jumperfucker tell consulting_detective that he's rewriting “the Chinese mafia subplot” based on the feedback of his beta reader sarah_s (a stand-in for John Watson's co-worker whom he dates in that episode.) He also refers to the “scene at the pool,” which is clearly a reference to the confrontation with Moriarty at the end of episode three of the first series.

What we have in “The Theory of Narrative Causality” then is an alternate universe in which the characters Sherlock Holmes and John Watson of BBC *Sherlock* (2010) are dislocated as members of the Sherlock Holmes fandom who write fan fiction and draw fanart that tell the story of the BBC's *Sherlock*. When jumperfucker's Big Bang fic is finally posted in the last chapter of falling_voices's fic, it is titled, “Backlight, Beyond Compare” and referred to thereafter as the “BBC-verse.” Within the story of the
fans writing the BBC-verse, however, we also get the interpersonal drama between
Holmes and Watson, Molly and Jim, Lestrade and Mrs. Hudson, Donovan and Anderson,
and even Watson's one-time date Sarah, and his sister and her ex-wife, Harry and Clara.
In particular, the revelation that Molly's boyfriend Jim_fromit is actually Moriarty is told
in a typically fannish drama: Moriarty harasses Watson, insulting him with hostile online
messages, and it is later discovered that he was Jim_Fromit's alias, once Internet service
provider addresses are checked and matched.

A significant aspect of the story of “The Theory of Narrative Causality” is the way
it developed from a simple story posted anonymously on one specific community's story-
prompt list to a community-sourced, multi-platform narrative. At the same time that
falling_voices was still posting chapters in the original community in their first reception,
fans were creating the LiveJournal accounts for the characters in the story and
roleplaying them—interacting as their characters in LiveJournal posts and in posts on the
newly created separate community “holmeschat,” which is the name of the community in
which the fans in the story congregate. Some of the characters also created Twitter,
Tumblr, or deviantArt accounts, and all of them created their own dedicated email
addresses. In short, the postmodern fan fiction spawned even more self-reflexive
narrative. The story also inspired additional stories to fill in the gaps that falling_voices
left in her narrative.
Henry Jenkins, in *Textual Poachers* (1992) describes the work of fans on their source texts:

> . . . the intimate knowledge and cultural competency of the popular reader [which] also promotes critical evaluation and interpretation, the exercise of a popular “expertise” that mirrors in interesting ways the knowledge-production that occupies the academy. Fans often display a close attention to the particularity of television narratives that puts academic critics to shame. Within the realm of popular culture, fans are the true experts; they constitute a competing educational elite, albeit one without official recognition or social power. (Jenkins 1992, 86)

The distinction between “professional” and “non-professional” reader starts to lose its coherency when fans create such complex and self-referential narrative structures to explore and expand the boundaries of their beloved source texts.

Another example of a thoroughly postmodern fan commentary on Sherlock Holmes and its fandom is the fan vid “Whole New Way” by mresundance.49 “Whole New Way” is a meditation on the way that Sherlock Holmes fans adapt and create new forms of devotion for each successive version of Sherlock Holmes. The song to which “Whole New Way” is set is the Scissor Sisters track of the same name. This song choice is packed with significance. The Scissor Sisters are well known as a band that emerged from the gay club scene, and the song is overtly sexual. The vid combines suggestive lyrics with suggestive cuts from the respective sources. Thus on one level “Whole New Way” is a

49 A “vid” is distinct from a “video” because it is the specific term for a category of fan work in which the video from a source text is cut and recontextualized by setting it to music. For more on the history of vidding as a specialized form of fan work, see Coppa, 2008.
classic slash vid. At the same time, however, the vid intercuts the subtextual suggestion
with images of fandom activity. There are screencaps of the sherlockbbc LiveJournal
community discussion of “Holmes/Watson in bed,” for example, paired with an
illustration from the Conan Doyle text which depicts just that, and intercut with Robert
Downey Jr. resting his head on Jude Law's shoulder and Benedict Cumberbatch winking
at Martin Freeman. The point of view of the protagonist in the narrative of the song,
therefore, becomes an unstable perspective switching back and forth from Holmes and
Watson to fandom itself. As the vid progresses the lyric “we can talk about relationships
but there's better things to fill your head with” pairs with looks between the respective
Holmeses and Watsons, moves to a naked, tied-up Robert Downey Jr., Benedict
Cumberbatch using a whip on a corpse, and then a screenshot of the header for the
LiveJournal community sherlockbbc_fic, which at the time called itself “Sherlock Kink.”

In this series of images, it is almost impossible to tell who the “we” is and who
the “you” is, but that is precisely the point. The song is sexually suggestive, just as the
fandom frequently is and the adaptations often are. In addition mresundance adds images
of online fandom communities alongside the clips from *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) and the
BBC *Sherlock* (2010), as well as illustrations and actual textual quotes from the source
text. Thus, the lyric “I've got a whole new way to love you” is redirected from an erotic
interpretation to one that encompasses all the different ways fans are reinterpreting
Sherlock Holmes—and then overlaying that argument with the erotic subtext again. In
this way it is a full encapsulation of what slash fans frequently do: integrating erotic subtext with literary interpretation.

A second exemplary piece of fan fiction based on the *Sherlock* BBC version of Holmes is “The Anatomist” by rosa_acicularis. “The Anatomist,” is a piece of critical refocalized fan fiction, rewriting the plot of the first season of *Sherlock* so that Molly Hooper—a recurring minor character who works in the morgue at St. Bart's, helps with cases when there is need and clearly has a crush on Sherlock Holmes. She is rewritten as Molly Moriarty, Jim's twin sister and equal (or even greater) partner. There has been a great deal of discussion, both within fandom and without, of executive producer Steven Moffat's tendency toward sexist comments and narrative choices—not only in *Sherlock*, but in his older show *Coupling* and also in the perennial fan favorite *Doctor Who*, which he took over as executive producer in 2010. Moffat's sexism generally manifests in framing and omission—he has written many strong female characters, but he has also frequently written, both fictionally and non-fictionally, about their crowning glory being marriage and children.50 He deleted his Twitter account after the repeated suggestion from fans that he examine his sexism a little more closely, complaining that there was no way on Twitter to silence voices one didn't want to hear.51

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50 “Steven Moffat sexist” brings up approximately 19,000 results on google as of this writing. For one example, see S.E.Smith, “Steven Moffat, I’m Over Your Lady Issues” on ThinkProgress.org. Posted September 6, 2012.

51 Quoted in “Things we saw today: Steven Moffat deleted his Twitter account” on TheMarySue.com, September 9, 2012.
As frequently happens within fandom, rosa_acicularis addressed Moffat's sexism not by tweeting at him directly, but by rewriting one of his female characters to have much more agency than she does in the source text. Rosa_acicularis's Molly is dark, complex, and brilliant. She hides her true nature from Sherlock Holmes—a feat that only Moriarty has achieved on the show itself—and outmaneuvers her brother, the “Napoleon of crime,” Moriarty himself. The fan fiction expands the series timeline, telling the story of the childhood of Molly and Jim who were raised by a father who was a math professor and sociopathic killer and by a mother who killed herself in order to implicate her husband and send him to jail. It weaves a convincing backstory not only for the canonical Moriarty, but also for his non-canonical twin sister, who is the only other person in the world Jim cares about, but whom he hurts repeatedly and who hurts him back in a dark, co-dependent chess game of a relationship.

In a interview posted at furtherinterest.livejournal.com, a LiveJournal community formed specifically to discuss the female characters in Sherlock Holmes, rosa_acicularis states, after confirming that “The Anatomist” was the first story she had written for the Sherlock Holmes fandom: “I suppose, it was my frustration over the neglected female characters in the show that started me writing. I don't think I would have bothered if I hadn't been so annoyed” (furtherinterest.livejournal.com). Rosa_acicularis's summary for each chapter as she posted it on her LiveJournal was a quote from Jefferson Hope, the villain (and stooge of Moriarty) from the first episode of Sherlock: "You’re not the only
one to enjoy a good murder. There’s others out there just like you – except you’re just a
man. And they’re so much more than that." It is clear from the context and
rosa_acicularis’s intent that Molly Hooper is meant to be so much more than a man. From
a section of the story sub-titled “7,” we are introduced to a Molly of that age:

People think Jim is the clever one, and he is clever. He always knows just what to say and just how to say it, and when their father’s friends from the university come to dinner they watch Jim’s proofs and equations unfold with awe in their whiskey-fogged eyes.

*Impressive*, they say. *Remarkable.* The word *prodigy* gets thrown around quite a bit, though Molly had solved the same equations that afternoon after school, and she’d shown her work.

(rosa_acicularis, Archive Of Our Own.org)

At the end of “The Anatomist,” which was finished before season two of *Sherlock* aired, Jim Moriarty is dead as a result of a confrontation with Sherlock Holmes and John Watson that occurs at the end of season one, but his death is at Molly's hands and she continues to be the criminal mastermind that Holmes and Watson must battle.

“When we’re done here,” Sherlock says, “I’ll give you twelve hours. When those twelve hours are up, I’m telling the police everything I know.”

“And they’ll tell you that even consulting detectives need some sort of evidence to get a conviction.”

The corner of his mouth quirks in something like a smile. “I suppose I’ll just have to take on the case myself, then.”

“I suppose you will.” She lifts her chin. “Make it four hours. I wouldn’t want to start with an unfair advantage.”

“Four hours is absurd. Six.”

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“Five.”

The quirk of lips spreads into a grin. It fits awkwardly on his long, fine-boned face, genuine and sharp. “Five it is.” He snaps on a pair of gloves. “I hope you’re as clever as you think you are, Ms. Moriarty. I don’t intend to hold back.”

“Relieved to hear it, Mr. Holmes. Neither do I.”

(rosa_acicularis, Archive Of Our Own.org)

I would suggest that what rosa_acicularis is doing is a complex weaving together of several of Henry Jenkins's categories, in addition to making a move that is reminiscent of Vergil's rewriting of Homer: he utilizes refocalization while simultaneously using the new story to argue for a particular model of society and culture. Vergil was creating a model of a new Roman Empire, vested with the cultural currency and prestige of the Greeks and powerful enough to tame the Etruscans, while rosa_acicularis has created a model of a more feminist world, in which Sherlock Holmes is met and bested by a female foil who is a match not only for James Moriarty, but for the greatest deductive mind in literary history.

F. Cinematic rewritings of Sherlock Holmes

Contemporary fan fiction stories written about Sherlock Holmes and John Watson are based almost exclusively on twenty-first century cinematic rewritings of the Victorian source text. As of this writing, there are 73,438 stories listed under “Sherlock Holmes and Related Fandoms” at the Archive of Our Own, which includes all Sherlock Holmes-
related stories. The vast majority of these (67,457) are stories that specifically look to the BBC’s Sherlock (2010) as their source text. CBS’s Elementary is the source text to significantly fewer (1338) and the films directed by Guy Ritchie in 2009 and 2011 have inspired 1542 stories. By contrast, only four stories look to the Basil Rathbone Sherlock Holmes as their source. In the following section I briefly discuss the film series starring Basil Rathbone, but I focus primarily on the BBC’s Sherlock, CBS’s Elementary, and Guy Ritchie's Sherlock Holmes (2009) and Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows (2011) in the following section as a means to compare the requirements of the given system when a well-established canonical text is being rewritten.

André Lefevere's questions—who rewrites, why, under what circumstances, for which audience—are as relevant for the systems surrounding fan fiction and popular culture as they are for “high” literature. As I explore the answers to these questions for the cinematic rewritings, I also draw comparisons between their contexts and the contexts for the fan fiction that uses them as source texts.

In 1939, Twentieth-Century Fox released two different film adaptations of Sherlock Holmes stories starring Basil Rathbone as the eponymous detective and Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson. The first was The Hound of the Baskervilles, generally considered a faithful representation of the novel, and the second was The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes based on the contemporaneous play adaptation by William Gillette. After Fox
dropped the series it was picked up by Universal, and in 1942 they released *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror*, an original story that places Holmes and Watson in a contemporary context. Mary Beth Haralovich, in her 1979 article “Sherlock Holmes: Genre and Industry Practice” highlights the shift that takes place when Universal reduced Sherlock Holmes stories to their necessary and sufficient conditions, which no longer include a Victorian setting.

It is *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* that holds the most significance for my purposes since it is the first of the films to shift to a contemporary setting. As the film begins, an argument is made for that very shift. Following the title sequence, the following words appear on the screen: “Sherlock Holmes is ageless, invincible and unchanging. In solving significant problems of the present day he remains—as ever—the supreme master of deductive reasoning” (Haralovich 1979, 54). Haralovich is explicitly interested in tracing the way that the move to Universal, the stripping of the Victoriana, and the B-movie status of the films result in more profit per production. I am particularly interested in the way that the shift to a contemporary setting in a significant year (1942) also introduces Sherlock Holmes to the fight against Nazism. World War II had already begun in Europe in 1939, the year of the Fox studio's Sherlock Holmes films. However, it was not until the United States had entered the war and Universal had secured the rights to Sherlock Holmes that the detective was engaged to fight the Nazis.
*Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* claims to be based on the Sherlock Holmes story “His Last Bow,” published by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in 1917. “His Last Bow” is the last chronological story of the adventures of Sherlock Holmes, though it was not the last published by Conan Doyle. In my edition it is given the subtitle, “an epilogue of Sherlock Holmes.” The story concerns a German spy named Von Bork caught by Sherlock Holmes in the midst of World War I. There is little plot per se, merely the telling of how Holmes disguised himself as an Irish-American and gave Von Bork faulty intelligence for a time before capturing him. *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* is likewise a story of how Sherlock Holmes discovers a German spy named Von Bork, but again the film is set contemporarily in 1942, and the plot bears no other resemblance to “His Last Bow.” *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* is the story of an anti-British radio broadcast that terrorizes the people and the crown with sabotage and mocking commentary. Every time the broadcast occurs there is a simultaneous incident that damages both materiel and morale.

Eventually, Sherlock Holmes uncovers a conspiracy that reaches to the inner council that brought him to the case in the first place. Von Bork is a German spy masquerading as council member Sir Even Barham, who died in German custody during World War I. Throughout the film, characters are called to action via their patriotism. At the end of the story, the false information Von Bork gives the imminent invasion results in their routing, and the German spies are defeated. The film concludes with a direct quote
from “His Last Bow,”

“There's an east wind coming, Watson.”
“I think not Holmes. It is very warm.”
“Good old Watson! You are the one fixed point in a changing age. There's an east wind coming all the same, such a wind as never blew on England yet. It will be cold and bitter, Watson, and a good many of us may wither before its blast. But it's God's own wind none the less, and a cleaner, better, stronger land will lie in the sunshine when the storm has cleared.” (Conan Doyle 1930, 980)

The film's last image is that of the Statue of Liberty and an advertisement for American war bonds.

This film is particularly interesting because it is a self-aware attempt to rewrite Sherlock Holmes in the service of an ideological argument. The story could have been told without Sherlock Holmes as the protagonist—in fact there are some aspects of the film, especially the use of light and shadow, that seem to reference film noir. In using Sherlock Holmes Universal Pictures is borrowing the prestige already attached to him, as well as the particular prestige conferred by Basil Rathbone's version of him. Sherlock Holmes is, as the film itself argues, “the supreme master of deductive reasoning.” There can be no better hero to enlist in the cause against Nazi espionage than he.

Several decades later *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law was the first of the new century's Holmes rewritings. The director of *Sherlock Holmes*, Guy Ritchie, was born in 1968 in Hatfield, Herfordshire, 20 miles north of London. In the DVD extra, “Sherlock Holmes: Reinvented,” we are told that Ritchie had
spent his childhood in British boarding schools where the privilege of listening to Sherlock Holmes radio stories was extended to boys who had behaved themselves that day, and rescinded from those who had not. One of the producers then calls their version “more faithful” than previous cinematic rewritings because of the advancements in technology and the scope of the film. I cannot recall a scene in Doyle's canon that describes Holmes and Watson almost being run over by a steamship, but it is undeniably true that the technology and the budget available to today's filmmakers make almost nothing Doyle could contrive too difficult to film. Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* is, of the three most popular twenty-first-century rewritings, the only one that actually takes place in the Victorian setting in which Doyle wrote Holmes. The film is kinetic—physical—in ways in which other adaptations are not, but the canon sometimes is. The film plays up Holmes's predilection for disguise and his focus on scientific answers to mysterious questions.

The entire plot of Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* revolves around a scheme to make a secret supernatural society believe that one of its members holds true magical power and further, to take control of Parliament. Nonetheless, the film meticulously demonstrates that each of the villain’s attempts to demonstrate his magical powers were in fact explainable by science—however much the narrative tries to make one wonder as the film progresses. It's an interesting move, in view of the fact that even though Sherlock Holmes

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52 In a 2009 article in *USA Today*, Law is quoted as arguing, “‘The physicality, the bare-knuckle fighting, the martial arts are all hinted at in the books. We just hold a magnifying glass over them. A word that Conan Doyle uses an awful lot is “apprehended . . .” We get to show the apprehension.’” [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/movies/news/2009-05-05-sherlock-holmes-main_N.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/movies/news/2009-05-05-sherlock-holmes-main_N.htm)

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is clearly an avatar of the scientific method, Doyle was a noted spiritualist and wrote several treatises on the life of the soul after death. Further, the film makes the villains synonymous with the forces who are working to maintain and enlarge the British Empire, which is probably not something that the Victorian Doyle would have done. Doyle's Holmes is however frequently critical of the nobility and Victorian social norms, which is something one can also observe in Ritchie's films.

Finally, it is worth noting that the end of Ritchie's second film, which concerns Moriarty and ends with his and Holmes's simultaneous death at the Reichenbach Falls, quotes the last paragraph of Doyle's “The Final Problem,” with only a few abridgments.

A few words may suffice to tell the little that remains. An examination by experts leaves little doubt that a personal contest between two men ended, as it could hardly fail to end in such a situation, in their reeling over, locked in each other's arms. Any attempt at recovering the bodies was absolutely hopeless, and there, deep down in that dreadful cauldron of swirling water and seething foam, will lie for all time the most dangerous criminal and the foremost champion of the law of their generation. The Swiss youth was never found again, and there can be no doubt that he was one of the numerous agents whom Moriarty kept in his employ. As to the gang, it will be within the memory of the public how completely the evidence which Holmes had accumulated exposed their organization, and how heavily the hand of the dead man weighed upon them. Of their terrible chief few details came out during the proceedings, and if I have not been compelled to make a clear statement of his career, it is due to those injudicious champions who have endeavored to clear his memory by attacks upon him whom I shall ever regard as the best and the wisest man whom I have ever known. (Doyle 1930, 480)
Jude Law's Watson gives a voiceover at the end of the film, as he watches Holmes and Moriarty drop over the Falls, which takes us through Holmes' funeral to Watson's typing the following words onto paper.

A few words may suffice to tell the little that remains. Any attempt at *finding* the bodies was absolutely hopeless, and *so* there, deep down in that dreadful cauldron of swirling water and seething foam, will lie for all time the most dangerous criminal and the foremost champion of the law of their generation. I shall ever regard *him* as the best and the wisest man whom I have ever known. (*Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows*, emphasis added.)

Most of the differences between the excerpts are a matter of removing exposition. The references to the “Swiss youth” are unnecessary because that character was not present in the film. I have italicized the words that were added to emphasize them. The first two seem somewhat arbitrary—finding bodies instead of recovering them, and adding a “so” for emphasis. The final addition is to make the last, shortened sentence grammatical because it was originally a relative clause.

Even if a member of the audience is not aware that the last words of *Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows* is a direct quote of the Doyle canon, she can receive this impression by seeing Watson at a typewriter as if he were composing the story for publication. More people are probably aware of the narrative structure of the Doyle canon than they are of the actual text, and so when we see Watson writing the story of Sherlock Holmes's death, it feels like a direct reference to the stories—as it is, in fact. *Sherlock Holmes* and *Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows* do not rewrite Doyle's plots,
however. They reuse characters (Holmes, Watson, Irene Adler, James Moriarty), settings (Victorian London, the Reichenbach Falls), and particular events (the fall from the Falls) while inventing completely new plots. Guy Ritchie, an English director, directing a Hollywood version of a British classic, melds the Victorian details of Doyle's London with the Hollywood system's requirement of explosions and daring escapades (as well as Robert Downey Jr.'s shirtless physique). Ritchie's Sherlock films are an enjoyable combination of both systems.

The pair of films directed by Guy Ritchie are generally recognized for emphasizing Holmes's physicality and willingness to fight, but the BBC series *Sherlock*, created in 2010 by Stephen Moffat and Mark Gatiss, modernizes the setting and emphasizes entirely different aspects of both Holmes and the mysteries of the canon. This Sherlock is a self-described “high functioning sociopath,” a consulting detective with no friends until he meets John Watson. Ritchie's pair are well-established colleagues on an entirely invented adventure (though with canonical references), but the BBC production begins with a loose rewriting of the first Holmes novel, *A Study in Scarlet*. Retitled as “A Study in Pink,” the first episode presents us first with John Watson, just back from being wounded in Afghanistan, living a bleak and uneventful life, hobbling on a cane, and seeing his therapist—who recommends that he keep a blog. As in the novel, we are presented with the meeting of Holmes and Watson, introduced to each other by a medical acquaintance of Watson's when he hears that they both require a flatmate. The retelling of
this meeting, though not an exact representation of the one in the novel, resembles the source much more than the overall plot of the episode does. In both texts, Watson's acquaintance exclaims that he is the second man to use a certain expression to him while in search of a flatmate. In the case of the source, however, it is the desire to “get comfortable rooms at a reasonable price,” (Doyle 1930, 16) while in the BBC’s version, it is the question, “Who would want to room with me?”

“A Study in Pink” makes little references to A Study in Scarlet on the level of motifs: these references include the abandoned house where the victim is found, the two sets of pills—one poisonous and one innocuous, the word “Rache” scratched out by the victim, and a cabbie as the murderer. However, the actual plot is very different. A Study in Scarlet is the story of a man who wishes to avenge his fiancée and her father for their kidnapping and murder respectively. The men who had kidnapped his betrothed were former Mormons who believed they had a claim on her after their people had rescued the man and his adopted daughter on their way to Utah. By the time Holmes catches up with him, the cabbie is dying himself, and after having avenged his loved ones, he expires in jail before he ever appears in court. The text is sympathetic to his actions, as Holmes appears to be.

“A Study in Pink,” however, includes no Mormons and the killer is an unrepentant serial murderer, “sponsored” by none other than Moriarty, who does not
appear in Doyle's canon until after two novels and two collections of short stories. This cabbie is also dying of an aneurism, but his cause is not just and he is not treated with any sympathy by the text. In fact he does not die of the aneurysm: Watson shoots him. The word scratched into the floor, “Rache,” means “revenge” (in German) in *A Study in Scarlet*, but in “A Study in Pink” this explanation is suggested and then laughed off, and is revealed to indicate the murdered woman's email password instead. Later episodes follow a similar pattern: the older mysteries are referenced through objects and plays on words and concepts, but the mysteries are new and the plots are unpredictable. In fact, the Holmes stories themselves function as a kind of red herring when one attempts to solve the mystery while watching *Sherlock*—something that is it impossible to do while reading the stories. The structure of the original Doyle stories is as a report filed by John Watson who observes Holmes from the outside and is frequently not privy to all of the clues or even to Holmes's thought process until after the mystery has already been solved. As early mystery fiction for an audience who had different expectations, this was a new experience. For today's audience, which is so inundated with crime fiction on television, in film, and in print that is structured to give the experience of solving the mystery oneself, *Sherlock* must rewrite the structure of the original stories in that way as well.

In Fall 2012 another rewriting of Sherlock Holmes set in a modern context appeared: CBS's *Elementary*, which opened to a viewership of 13.3 million and won its timeslot with its pilot episode. In the summer before *Elementary* premiered, there was a

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great deal of discussion among television critics and the press about whether it was possible to have another modern Holmes without copying the BBC’s *Sherlock* too closely. Two major differences were clear before the pilot even aired: *Elementary* is set in New York City, and its Watson is female, portrayed by Lucy Liu. In an interview for Collider.com during the 2012 Comic-Con, *Elementary* executive producer Robert Doherty confirms that this was one of the specific new ways that he and his co-executive producer Carl Beverly wanted to approach the character of Sherlock Holmes.

I was very familiar with the character. I had always been a fan but needed to re-familiarize myself a bit because so much of what I’d read was when I was younger in school. And so, in addition to re-reading a lot of the stories and books, I read a handful of psychological assessments of the character that real doctors have written up over the years. Somebody classified him as bi-polar. Somebody else thought he had a mild form of Asberger’s [sic]. And, one of them happened to mention that he was classified as a gynophobe. He did not have a terrifically healthy relationship with women. He was a little suspicious of them. It just made me laugh when I read it because I was like what would make him crazier than if Watson was a woman. He’s actually living with somebody who is monitoring him and is also a woman. All of that said, our Holmes is not a gynophobe, is not a misogynist. It’s just what got that ball rolling. (collider.com)

Like Ritchie and Moffat before him, Doherty was a Sherlock fan from childhood, and understands that there are different aspects of Holmes that can be highlighted in different adaptations. In the same interview, Doherty explains some of the ways in which “our” Sherlock differs from Doyle's.

Our Sherlock is a puzzle-solver. I really think that is his obsession, to the point you might call it an addiction. In many senses, he has something of

an addictive personality. In the source material, that turned into a real addiction. The original Sherlock dabbled with cocaine and opiates. Our Sherlock had those same problems, but one of the big differences is that our Sherlock hit a serious wall. (collider.com)

In the case of *Elementary*, Doherty is very clear that he is more interested in the characters and the relationship between them than he is in the particular cases. Further, Doherty and Beverly have no interest in exploring what sexual tension might be exploited by writing Watson as a woman.

Rob often calls it a bromance, but one of the bros just happens to be a woman. He said that from the very beginning and I think it’s really an apt description. There’s this idea that a man and a woman can’t be together on a show especially without needing to be together sexually or in love or whatever, and this is really about the evolution of a friendship and how that happens. Watching that should be as much the story of this show as the mysteries that you see week in and week out about who killed who. We love that and those stories will be great, but the mystery of this relationship and how the friendships come into being, that should be something that draws people in every week, too. (collider.com)

*Elementary*s willingness to explore the close relationship between a male Holmes and a female Watson without making it sexual is largely seen as refreshing and subversive. In *Elementary*, unlike both Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* films and BBC's *Sherlock*, Holmes's addiction to heroin is highlighted both in the character of Holmes and in some of the development of the season's plot arc. Watson is assigned as his “sober companion” in the pilot episode, after he has just barely finished rehab. She has left medicine, and he deduces why at their first meeting, though at first he suggests that she left medicine and became a sober companion because someone close to her had died of drug addiction.

The truth is, you made a mistake during surgery that cost a patient his life.
It takes years of study to become a surgeon, not to mention tremendous ego. Surgeons don't just leave to become addict-sitters; they're forced out. And they're only forced out if they commit the sin of malpractice. I knew it would be a sore subject so I made up the bit about your friend to spare your feelings. (*Elementary*, pilot)

This is a very different Holmes from the one inhabiting BBC's *Sherlock*; that Holmes never spares anyone's feelings. *Elementary's* Holmes, of course, hurts Watson's feelings with this reveal—and he only does it to prove that he hasn't been wrong in any of his deductions since they met. It is a subtle difference, and an interesting one.

*Elementary's* Holmes is still a prickly genius that Watson alone grows to tolerate on a regular basis but *Elementary's* Watson is unafraid to call out Holmes's bad behavior. As a matter of fact, as his sober companion it is part of her job. In contrast, the dynamic between Holmes and Watson in BBC *Sherlock* (2010) is much more worshipful. The first time Holmes demonstrates his deductive power for Watson, showing how much he already knows about Watson's private life, Watson's response is “That was amazing.” “You think so?” is Sherlock's reply. “Of course it was. It was extraordinary. It was quite extraordinary.” “That's not what people usually say,” Sherlock mumbles. “What do they usually say?” “Piss off” (“A Study in Pink”). Watson is quite literally the only person who has ever appreciated Holmes's genius.

Another way in which *Elementary* differs significantly from *Sherlock* is the diversity of its casting and the rather enlightened approach to many subjects of gender and racial identity. Not only is Watson female and Chinese-American, but Mrs. Hudson is
transgender—and introduced in such a way that makes her gender neither remarkable nor part of the plot. In addition Elementary has conflated the characters of Irene Adler and Moriarty, giving an incredibly interesting and critical implication to the similarities and parallels drawn between Moriarty and Holmes in the canon. Irene Adler was the only person to best Holmes in the source canon. She was the one antagonist who got away. Moriarty was bested, but for a brief time was Holmes's equal, his dark mirror. On Elementary Adler was a role Moriarty played in order to get closer to Holmes and learn what makes him tick; what she learned led him directly into the heroin addiction at the end of which the pilot begins.

One particular episode, however, warrants a close reading in order to really distinguish the way in which Sherlock and Elementary deal with issues of race—specifically with regard to Orientalism. The second episode of the first series of Sherlock, “The Blind Banker” is decried by critics and fans alike as extremely problematic. Every Chinese character in the episode turns out to be somehow involved with organized crime, and the mystery’s puzzle depends on no one recognizing the “exotic” system of Chinese numerals, which have been left in various visible places for the smugglers to see, in order to threaten them. In two cases the Chinese numeral for “one,” a horizontal line, crosses the eyes of the image of a human figure—a painting and a sculpture. In “The Blind Banker” there are no Chinese bystanders. Each of the characters we meet is complicit some way in the crimes of the others. Chinatown is isolated and Othered, as are its
The ninth episode of *Elementary*'s first season, titled “You Do It To Yourself,” begins with a scene in which a middle-aged white man is shot in the face by a masked assailant. When Holmes and Watson arrive on the scene, we are shown that both of his eyes have been completely destroyed. What at first may seem like a coincidental reference to “The Blind Banker” and its crossed-out eyes becomes more and more likely a direct answer to and repudiation of the racism of the *Sherlock* episode. The victim is a professor of East Asian studies with a Chinese wife who had previously been his student. As the episode progresses, Holmes—and the audience with him—follows up on several leads. The professor was a gambler, who frequented underground Chinese casinos. He abused and degraded his wife—whom he had never legally married and held virtually hostage on account of her undocumented status. At each turn, when the narrative could have chosen the easy and racist solution to the mystery, it does not. The underground casino is only the setting for the murder—nothing else. His wife, unlike every Chinese character in “The Blind Banker” is completely innocent—is, in fact, a victim of his fetishization of her. In the end, the murderer is the white Asian studies professor himself, who was dying of cancer in his eyes and instructed an assassin to shoot him there to mask this fact. Before he does so however, he frames his wife and his teaching assistant in order to punish them for their affair.
By the end of the episode, the white male teaching assistant of the dead and guilty professor professes his love for the Chinese wife and promises to marry her in order to keep her from being deported—“It's not the way we planned it, but . . .” he states before she throws her arms around him with joy. Throughout this episode the intersections between people of different backgrounds are portrayed not as special exceptions, but as quotidian. In the end, the villain of this episode is a powerful white man with a prestigious job and an Orientalist perspective—and not some shadowy Chinese mob. This appears to be a comment on not only the racism of “The Blind Banker” but of the Victorian perspective of the original canon, in which villains frequently do come from the colonies, and the “exotic” details Arthur Conan Doyle adds to stories such as *The Sign of Four* or “The Yellow Face” reflect the attitude of the Empire towards the Other. As many fans of *Sherlock* have complained, however, for a show that has no difficulty updating everything else about the Holmes canon, leaving intact any of the Orientalism of the original is unnecessary and disappointing. *Elementary* shows us exactly how it is possible to update Sherlock Holmes with regard to identity, as well as setting and plot.

Each one of these commercially licensed rewritings has its own unique perspective on the characterization, motivation, and significant plot points of the Sherlock Holmes stories. In method, they do not differ greatly from the writers of fan fiction discussed above. They recontextualize, expand the timeline of the source canon, dislocate the characters from their Victorian setting, and engage in a modern emotional
intensification. However, they have institutional and commercial power that the writers of fan fiction do not. These three examples of licensed, produced, and broadcasted rewritings of Sherlock Holmes are all controlled by men. The two examples of fan fiction, as well as the majority of fan fiction available online, are written by women. Many female fans have no interest in reaching the kinds of audiences that Guy Ritchie, Steven Moffat, and Rob Doherty do. This disparate, gendered divide cannot go unmarked however. The differences are systemic and evoke the kinds of gender disparity seen in entertainment professionals overall.

G. Conclusion

Sherlock Holmes fandom is one of the oldest groups that can be accurately called by that name. It has not, however, always consisted of the same kinds of people in the same cultural system. The earliest fans of Sherlock Holmes and the first fan clubs such as the Baker Street Irregulars were traditional in structure and membership, if not completely in their work. The playfulness with which these men wrote their exegesis—the invention of “The Grand Game”—is an early indication of the kind of postmodern play that characterizes contemporary fandom.

The recent influx of adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes canon demonstrates the myriad ways in which a given text can be rewritten, according to the priorities of the writer and the system within which he is writing. Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* (2009)
and *Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows* (2011) are characterized by the combination of Hollywood and London that they embody—texts created by a British schoolboy fan for a Hollywood audience. Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, who both have a great deal of experience writing another show beloved by fandom (*Doctor Who*) have crafted a modernization of Holmes and Watson that markedly leaves room for a slash subtext while textually denying any such relationship is possible—Martin Freeman's Watson and Benedict Cumberbatch's Holmes frequently deny that their relationship is romantic within the text of the show. *Sherlock* is dominated by its men, and also leaves much room for feminist rewriting, as demonstrated by rosa_acicularis's “The Anatomist.” *Elementary* does its own kind of subversive, progressive rewriting of both the source and the other adaptations—rewriting John Watson as Joan Watson, not only female but Chinese-American, and challenging the colonialism of *Sherlock* specifically.

In the introduction to their essay collection, Stein and Busse refer to a theoretical suggestion made by fan obsession_inc in an influential metanalysis within fandom. Obsession_inc suggests the terms *affirmational* and *transformational* to distinguish between the kind of rewriting that merely interprets the existing source text and the kind that “aggressively alters and transforms the source text, changing and manipulating it to the fans' own desires” (Stein and Busse, 16). Although there is fan fiction that is affirmational and commercial adaptation that is transformational, I would argue that the bulk of commercial adaptation is affirmation and the bulk of fan fiction is transformation.
The early rewriting of the Baker Street Irregulars also appears to be more affirmational than transformational. Participation in the Grand Game and the kinds of textual exegesis written by these exclusively male fans had a purpose that was analytical and discursive, but did not seek to alter the identities of the main characters or use them in a subversive manner to critique the text or the culture.

This chapter has not discussed translation per se, but the mechanisms that operate in the translational shifts between source and adaptation are very much present in both the film and television rewritings of Sherlock Holmes and in the fan fiction rewritings of those rewritings. In addition, both levels of adaptation can be classified as intersemiotic translation, as the film and television adaptations translate written word to image and sound, whereas fan fiction translates image and sound back to written word. Therefore, looking at these translations from a systems perspective aligns the case of Sherlock Holmes with both the literary system of fan fiction and the literary systems of canonical literature that make up the remainder of this dissertation. Each adaptation of Sherlock Holmes is localized, both in time and place. Guy Ritchie's films are characteristic of the Hollywood system that produced them, even as they express the British origins of their director. Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss chose specifically to bring Sherlock Holmes into the twenty-first century, foregrounding the changes to his method that a digital native Holmes must make. Elementary has qualities that are typical of a police procedural that airs on CBS, while also subverting expectations when it comes to matters of gender,
sexuality, and race. Fans further adapt and explore the possibilities when translating Sherlock Holmes for their own distinct audiences. Each of the subsequent rewritings participate in a history of reception of the great detective while adding to it. All of the rewritings, in the end, contribute to the afterlife of Sherlock Holmes.
CHAPTER 4
FOLKLORE AND FAIRY TALES

A. Introduction

We see very clearly the tendency to rewrite texts in the case of fairy tales and folklore, in which the traditional nature of the tales mean that they were revised and retold innumerable times before they were ever written down. Stith Thompson defines the term “folktale” as follows.

[Although the term ‘folktale’ is often used in English to refer to the “household tale” or “fairy tale” (the German Märchen), such as “Cinderella” or “Snow White,” it is also legitimately employed in a much broader sense to include all forms of prose narrative, written or oral, which have come to be handed down through the years. In this usage the important fact is that traditional nature of the material. In contrast to the modern story writer’s striving after originality of plot and treatment, the teller of the folktale is proud of his ability to hand on that which he has received. (Thompson 1946, 4)]

For Thompson, the significant difference between the folktale and other narrative is its nature as a repeated story. It is in the very nature of the folktale to be both a retelling and a rewriting. Like Lefevere, Thompson has questions for the scholars that come after him as the field opens up to more comparative work: “Why do some peoples borrow tales and some lend? How does the tale serve the needs of the social group?” (Thompson 1946, 6). Compare these to Lefevere's questions: “who rewrites, why, under what circumstances, for which audience?” (Lefevere 1992, 7). The study of folktales and their transmission is appropriately undertaken from a systems perspective and fits well into the larger project of this dissertation. In this chapter, I am specifically interested in exploring the
development of the genre of the literary fairy tale beginning with Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's collection and rewriting of traditional European folklore, and continuing to the present day as the Grimms' tales continue to be rewritten over and over again.

Folklore and literary fairy tales serve as a bridge between the literature of the pre-modern world and that of the modern and postmodern, as well as an argument for the richness of folklore rewriting in its own right. In addition to discussing folklore and fairy tale as a kind of fandom, I discuss the structural and cultural similarities between the myths of ancient Greece and the märchen of early nineteenth-century Germany—not in an absolute sense, but in the minds of men like Wilhelm Grimm, who by the end of his career definitely had in mind a sort of ur-tale that included the classical myths in its progeny. One of the major arguments of this dissertation is that authors frequently had social and political agendas that were served by their rewritings. We will see that the Grimms also had an agenda that was cultural and political, and they made choices about their rewritings based on that agenda. Further, the rewritings of the Grimm tales that followed demonstrate the same kinds of telltale changes that betray a certain thematic, social, and ideological intent.

From a narratological perspective, there is a richness in the rewriting of folklore and fairy tales that is almost unparalleled in any other narrative genre. Events, actors, sequence, focalization, and levels of narration are all possible variables when rewriting a
folktales, and change often in the retellings. The fluidity and flexibility of folktales resemble those of fan fiction—but also, looking backward, to those of Homer. This exploration of folklore and fairy tales serves as a strong example of the continual and persistent nature of rewriting.

**B. The Brothers Grimm and the Pan-Germanic system**

Jack Zipes’s biography and analysis, *The Brothers Grimm: From Enchanted Forests to the Modern World* (2002) works to challenge both the popular notion of the Grimm brothers’ lives as fairy tales and their scholarly intent to discover the "pure" version of each tale they collected, as if there were such a thing. The reception of the Grimms’ biographies has included some rewriting—especially in the form of fictionalization—in order to entertain, but also, in post-World War II contexts, to either conflate or separate the Grimms’ brand of German nationalism with that of the Nazis. The Grimms’ politics were a combination of a quest for national unity in a time when Germany consisted of a loose band of principalities, and a desire for that unity to be democratic. Their intent in collecting the tales was to gather examples of truly authentic German culture that could demonstrate to their audience the commonality in terms of language, culture, and values of the German people. As educated linguists and literary historians of the nineteenth century, they considered oral literature to be "natural" whereas modern literary forms were "artificial."54 They saw it as their job to preserve the

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54 According to Christa Kamenetsky, both brothers had done scholarly work on the difference between *Naturpoesie* (nature or folk poetry) and *Kunstpoesie* (poetry as art form)—Jacob in 1808 argued that the former “represented a powerful organic unity that had arisen with 'one voice' from the national epic,” while Wilhelm in 1819 wrote on the natural conditions in which *Naturpoesie* is created, “like a flower
traditional folk material in order to save these "natural" forms and also to "reveal the debt or connection of literate culture to the oral tradition" (Zipes 2002, 11).

The brothers began collecting the tales largely from middle- and upper-class women who were relating to them the tales they had heard their servants telling. Early in the process Jacob composed a letter for the direction of colleagues who were to assist in the gathering process. Although it was never sent, it reveals a great deal both about the brothers' intent and about their assumptions.

It is extremely important that these items are to be recorded faithfully and truly, without embellishment and additions, whenever possible from the mouth of the tellers in and with their very own words in the most exact and detailed way . . . all the derivations, repetitions, and copies of the same tale can be individually important. Here we advise that you not be misled by the deceptive opinion that something has already been collected and recorded, and therefore that you discard a story. Many things that appear to be modern have only been modernized and have their undamaged source beneath. As soon as one has a great familiarity with the contents of this folk literature (Volkspoesie), one will gradually be able to evaluate the alleged simplistic, crude, and even repulsive aspects more discreetly. (Zipes 2002, 27)

Their method was to have the storytellers come to their house. They were generally middle-class or aristocratic women repeating tales they had heard from their servants. Some were Huguenot and thus some of the tales were French in origin. This did not deter the brothers, who believed that they were getting at a "kernel" of "primeval myth," that if

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or a plant . . . without vain self-reflections or stylistic refinements.” (Kamenetsky 1992, 63).

55 For more on the specific stories of the women behind the Kinder- und Hausmärchen see Valerie Paradiž, Clever Maids: The Secret History of the Grimm Fairy Tales.
not Nordic in origin, was certainly Nordic in its best form.

Therefore, not unlike Alexander Pope, who stated on the one hand that ancient literature was most valuable unaltered in translation yet on the other altered Homer most dynamically in his actual translation practice, the Grimm brothers took it upon themselves to make drastic changes to the forms of the stories that they heard from the women in their drawing-room. Zipes states their rewriting practice as follows.

. . . the Grimms were not merely collectors of “pure” folk tales, they were creative “contaminators” and artists. In fact, their major accomplishment in publishing their two volumes of 156 tales all together in 1812 and 1815 was to create an ideal type for the literary fairy tale, one that sought to be as close to the oral tradition as possible, while incorporating stylistic, formal, and substantial thematic changes to appeal to a growing middle-class audience. (Zipes 2002, 31)

This was not contradictory or problematic for the Grimms. In his chapter from Donald Haase's *The Reception of Grimms’ Fairy Tales* (1993), “The Brothers Grimm as Collectors and Editors of German Folktales,” Siegfried Neumann explains that “. . . the Grimms saw all their informants as well as themselves as links in a chain of storytellers, each having a certain right to retell the tales in his or her own way" (Neumann 1993, 31-32). In the preface to the second edition of the tales, the Grimms make explicit their own intent: "The aim of our collection was not just to serve the cause of the history of poetry: it was also our intention that the poetry living in it be effective" (Neumann 1993, 32). In
reading through the scholarship surrounding the Grimms and their methodology, biography, and purpose, it becomes clear that they began the project as an almost singularly scholarly pursuit, but quickly shifted gears to make the tales more acceptable to the target culture. They were motivated to do so because their ultimate aim was the unification of the German people through common culture, and this would never happen if the tales were not palatable and transferable enough to be read by all. This meant that the Grimms rewrote all the folktales they collected.

The Grimms were simultaneously looking for the "pure" kernel of German folk values in the märchen, and also rewrote them to assure that they would be well-received by the German bourgeoisie. Zipes highlights this methodology as follows.

They eliminated erotic and sexual elements that might be offensive to middle-class morality, added numerous Christian expressions and references, emphasized specific role models for male and female protagonists according to the dominant patriarchal code of that time, and endowed many of the tales with a 'homey' or biedermeier flavor by the use of diminutives, quaint expressions, and cute descriptions. (Zipes 2002, 46)

Though the Kinder- und Hausmärchen were not originally written for children as the primary audience, with each new edition the brothers Grimm made their texts more and more acceptable to their growing readership of children—or, perhaps more specifically, acceptable to the values of their parents and teachers. By the 1870s the Kinder- und Hausmärchen had been absorbed into the teaching curriculum throughout the German
principalities, and the stories were being translated and adapted into primers and anthologies for children throughout the "western world." Zipes notes that “[b]y the beginning of the twentieth century, the Children's and Household Tales was second only to the Bible as a best-seller in Germany, and it has continued to hold this position" (Zipes 2002, 48). The popularity of the Grimm brothers' collection continues into the twenty-first century as evidenced by Jack Zipes's own new translation of the first edition of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* in 2014.

Zipes is particularly interested in arguing for the Grimms' purpose as being very class-based, taking the traditional tales of peasants and modifying them into a new "bourgeois genre." In order to do this, Zipes must define "bourgeois" in a German context. The German word that expresses a similar concept is *burgerlich*. The Grimms themselves were "eminent representatives of the German Bildungsburgertum," though not ideal ones, as they had lost some of their middle-class status after the death of their father.⁵⁶ However, they worked their way back into the middle-class status via education and hard work—a major value of the *burgerlich*.

They were devout Christians; industrious, moral, dedicated to their family, methodological, highly disciplined, and law-abiding; believed in the principles of the Enlightenment; cultivated their manners, speech and dress, which made them acceptable among other members of the bourgeois class as well as the aristocracy; and cared a great deal about

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⁵⁶ *Burgerlich*, an adjective, is the term closest to *bourgeois* in German language and culture. *Bildungsburghertum* was the term for the specific kind of educated upper middle class that emerged in Germany in the mid 18th century.
maintaining the good name of the Grimm family. Time and again, in their
letters and their scholarly writings, one comes across the terms *Fleiß*
(industriousness) and *Sitte* (norm or custom) as values to be cherished
both within the family and society. (Zipes 2002, 55)

Both of these values are easy to recognize in the Grimms' *Tales*, but Zipes argues that
they are not the values that are naturally present in the older oral folk tradition. According
to Zipes this does not mean the Grimms' tales are stripped of their folk value—this
relationship between the oral tales and the written ones is a dialogue. This dialogue has
been going on since Chaucer and Boccaccio, and earlier. The literary tales are often
reworked over again by non-literate storytellers (or literate but not professional ones)
who retold them with another emphasis (Zipes 2002, 57). Zipes also argues convincingly
that although the tales were tailored for a bourgeois audience, they retained a great deal
of emphasis on class struggle and an anti-authoritarian perspective that came from their
origins with the folk and thus transcended class divisions in an attempt to create a
national unity.

I highlight these shifts in the texts in terms of the systems theory that provides
one framework for this dissertation. Recognizing both the value of the oral folktale
tradition to their desire to unite Germany culturally, if not politically, the Grimms
modified the tales that they had collected to make them more accessible to the bourgeois
readership they were targeting. In a kind of ironic domesticating move, they changed the

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stories they considered “natural” and “pure” Germanic myth in order to bring German culture to the middle class. Zipes puts it thus, "[a]s oral folk tale, the narrative forms and themes had been too coarse and rough aesthetically and ideologically to gain acceptance by the bourgeoisie, a bourgeoisie that was seeking extremely didactic stories for children" (Zipes 2002, 58). Ultimately this strategy served the Grimms well. By rewriting their sources, they succeeded in establishing a new written literary genre in German, they succeeded in disseminating their tales throughout Germany and to a pan-Germanic audience, and they succeeded in making the motifs and values of their tales emblematic of German culture as a whole.

C. Rewritings in and of the Grimms' Rewritings

The Grimms were also scholars and were working toward finding the ur-tales they saw as the origin of not just their Germanic folktales, but of Indo-European folktales in general. According to Zipes, Wilhelm Grimm gave a lecture in 1857 entitled "Die Sage von Polyphem" in which he argues that the encounter of Odysseus with Polyphemus is but one version of a "primeval myth," an ur-mythos that "dealt with the origins of the world and the struggle between good and evil forces personified by a 'good' dwarf or little man and an 'evil' giant, whose one eye is a mark of his divine origins that he has betrayed" (Zipes 2002, 103). Further, Grimm felt this meaning was "articulated most clearly in the Nordic tradition." The affiliation of the Grimms' tales with the *Odyssey*
depends upon a particular reading of the *Odyssey* as a story that upholds certain bourgeois values: that of self-preservation and autonomy in the face of irrational forces. Zipes cites Adorno's and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment: philosophical fragments* (2002), which argues that Odysseus is the "prototype of the bourgeois individual." It is, of course, a rewriting of Homer that results in Horkheimer's narrative—the Greekness is stripped from the epic in order to focus on the values that echo bourgeois values—but this is part of the reception of Homer in the Grimms' context.

Zipes also suggests that the Grimms' tales were designed to put an end to magic, and to argue for the use of reason and cunning as more meaningful and appropriate in the context of the nineteenth century. As in the Greek context, the Grimms' tales demonstrate a definition of clever wisdom that can distinguish between a dextrous (both physically and mentally) thief and a murderous brigand. Zipes argues that in the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, "Thievery is an art form . . . Practically all the protagonists in the Grimms' tales must learn something about the art of thievery, especially when they are confronted by ogres, giants, tyrannical kings, or witches" (Zipes 2002, 102). Whether Wilhelm Grimm was right or not about the origin of the clever traveler motif is less important than the fact that he believed it. He used the structure of his reading of Odysseus as part of his rewriting of German folklore that featured the clever traveler.

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57 Zipes is less interested in the ways in which the Grimms' tales fit into the Aarne-Thompson index than the ways in which they are culturally significant in their German context—though Zipes himself does not hesitate to use a reduced, structural reading of Homer while stripping it of its Greekness.
In their *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* the Grimms helped to establish the genre of the literary fairy tale—one that took the oral tradition as its starting point, but adjusted the traditional tales to the middle-class values of its audience while simultaneously injecting linguistic markers of authenticity, if not true authenticity. In *Grimm Language: Grammar, Gender and Genuineness in the Fairy Tales* (2010) Orrin Robinson argues that the Grimms were less interested in true authenticity than they were in the *feeling* of authenticity in their tales. Robinson is a linguist rather than a literary critic; he methodically surveys the changes of dialect, gender, and the addition of artificial archaisms across different editions of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. His findings are particularly interesting from the perspective of translation studies. Some of the major changes that Robinson notes as he compares the first edition (1812) with the seventh (1857) include the following: the beginning of each tale becomes more and more formulaic, with empty elements commencing the narrative; more detail is added to each tale, largely with regards to setting and character; indirect speech becomes direct speech, adding dialogue and monologue to the tales; and archaizing language is added to further authenticate the genuineness of the *märchen.*

To summarize, the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* were not entirely oral and not

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58 This list is a summary of the shifts that Robinson surveys in chapter 2, in which he takes a close look at one tale: “The Six Swans.” Further explication of these and other kinds of shifts are detailed in subsequent chapters.
entirely German. The Grimms did a great deal to mold and expand the tales, according to
their intentions and agendas. Specifically, they used their training as linguists and
folklorists to give their tales the distinctly German flavor they desired. Further, they gave
them specifically regional flavor. According to Robinson, about 10% of the tales (21 out
of 211) were written in a distinctly regional dialect—not enough to confuse the reception
of the tales, but enough, especially scattered as they were throughout the text, to lend an
authentic feel to the collection (Robinson 2010, 24). In analyzing these 21 regional tales,
Robinson finds that 11 are Westphalian, two are Low Saxon, two are Pomeranian, one is
Mecklenburger, two are Bavarian, and three are High Alemannic. He appears to be
confused over the perceived randomness and arbitrariness, but in view of the fact that the
methods of collection were arbitrary, it seems we can disregard the percentages as
significant and focus on the inclusion of dialect per se as a signifier of the Grimms'
purpose in uniting the principalities under these cultural banners. The Grimms also
occasionally insert poems and chunks of narrative written in dialect into larger tales told
in Standard German. Frequently the Grimms edit the dialect for comprehensibility but at
the same time retain markers—such as i for ich or scht for st. Robinson concludes that
"[o]verall, it seems clear that the Grimms try to capture the dialect flavor of the dialogue
without worrying much about detailed linguistic accuracy" (Robinson 2010, 29). In
composing and editing the tales, the Grimms were frequently faced with the kind of
balancing acts that translators regularly are: namely the difficult choice between flavor,
comprehensibility, and "purity." Occasionally they even used footnotes, especially in
early editions, to gloss dialect that was strange to readers of Standard German, such as \textit{Frosch} for \textit{Fretsche} in "The Frog King or Iron Henry" (Robinson 2010, 31).

\textbf{D. Danish Rewritings of the \textit{Kinder- und Hausmärchen}}

Questions concerning the Grimms' relationship with translation, both during their careers and afterward, in the reception of the \textit{Kinder- und Hausmärchen}, are taken up by Cay Dollerup in his 1999 work for the Benjamins Translation Library, \textit{Tales and Translation: The Grimm Tales from Pan-Germanic Narratives to Shared International Fairytales}. According to Dollerup, the close relationship between the Grimms and Denmark can be traced from the early years of the brothers' lives, when their aunt was established as one of the ladies-in-waiting for the Danish princess who had married the Prince of Hesse, where the brothers spent their childhood. This was the aunt that supported the Grimm family after their father died and Jacob and Wilhelm were still too young to support their mother and siblings on their own (Dollerup 1999, 13). Both Jacob and Wilhelm knew Danish: according to Dollerup Jacob's Danish is attested by 1812, and Wilhelm published a translation of Danish ballads in 1811 (Dollerup 1999, 13-14). Dollerup also suggests that when Jacob Grimm was working as the personal librarian to the King that Napoleon had established in Westphalia—Napoleon's brother Jérôme—Jacob was also acting as interpreter (Dollerup 1999, 9). Westphalia was a bilingual principality, but Jérôme knew only French. Jacob was present at the meetings of the
King's Council in his role as “auditeur,” and likely translated as well as researched for the king's purposes.

Dollerup is most interested in the relationship between the Grimms and Denmark in order to frame their work together with the work of Hans Christian Andersen as discursive and genre-defining. He traces the connections between the brothers and Danish scholars of folklore such as Rasmus Nyerup, professor of literary history at the University of Copenhagen, who was impressed by Wilhelm Grimm's early work on the Old Norse eddas and later found himself convinced of the literary merit of “nursery tales” after receiving a copy of the first edition of the Kinder- und Hausmärchen in 1815 (Dollerup 1999, 21-22).

For my purposes one of the most interesting points that Dollerup makes is that the first translations of the Grimm's Kinder- und Hausmärchen were into Danish, and began before the Grimms had finished revising and re-editing them—a task that never ended as long as both brothers were alive.\(^9\) The first translations of some of the Grimms' tales

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\(^9\) The first volume of the first edition of the German Kinder- und Hausmärchen was published in 1812. The second edition came out in 1815. The second edition was published in 1819 in two volumes. The third volume of the second edition, containing the annotations, was published in 1822. New editions appeared in 1837, 1840, 1843, 1850, and 1857. Furthermore, a "small edition" of fifty unannotated tales appeared in 1825, 1833, 1836, 1839, 1841, 1844, 1847, 1850, 1853, and 1858. This small edition was the work of Wilhelm singly and was inspired by an English translation of a smaller group of tales, which saw much success in that form. It included illustrations and omitted some of the tales that were considered "less suitable for children," according to the preface to the 1837 Complete Edition. The existence of these two different tracks of editions have led to much confusion in the reception of the tales, historically. Because of all the different versions of each individual tale over the publication history, it can be argued that there is no

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appeared in a Danish anthology in 1816, and the first translation of a collection of the
Grimms' tales was in 1821—namely of the first volume of the 1819 edition. The
translation is attributed to Johan Frederik Lindencrone, but this attribution is suspect, as
he had died in 1817. Dollerup believes that the majority of the translation was completed
by his daughter, Louise Hegermann-Lindencrone. His evidence is that in 1837 Christian
Molbech refers to "Hegermann" as the translator of the 1821 translation in a letter to
Jacob Grimm, and Wilhelm Grimm later repeats this attribution. Hegermann-Lindencrone
was a poet and a writer, but modest about her own work. At the very least, she probably
edited her father's translations. Dollerup lists publication data for all the editions and
translations of any of the Grimms' tales into Danish, over the period from 1816 to 1986,
and the over 400 entries fill 75 pages of his book.

I do not include a close reading of the shifts from German to Danish, as I do not
read either language. Dollerup's discussion of some of the shifts in the Danish
translations should suffice for supplementary evidence for my framing of these kinds of
rewritings using systems theory. One of the important questions is which stories are
selected for translation. Most often, there are editions of one illustrated tale or an
anthology of chosen tales rather than a complete edition (as is also true of English
translations). "Hansel and Gretel" and "Little Red Riding Hood" are the most popular
folktales included in these sorts of anthologies, followed by "Cinderella," "Sleeping
definite, canonical version of any given Grimm tale. According to Dollerup this means there may be as
many as seventeen different versions of some of the tales, all edited and authorized by Wilhelm Grimm
himself (Dollerup 1999, 26).
Beauty,” and “Snow White” (Dollerup 1999, 239). Less popular tales for translation include those with language-based humor (puns, for example), and the more explicitly religious ones. According to Dollerup the Danish people are less interested in “such down-to-earth approaches to religion. It is interesting that the same feature seems to apply to English translations of the Tales” (Dollerup 1999, 240).

According to Dollerup's argument, German and Danish Romanticism rose concurrently, and there was both a relationship between Copenhagen and Kassel in general and between Wilhelm Grimm and Rasmus Nyerup in particular to act as a bridge for this work across the two cultures. War with Germany did not slow Danish love for the tales—not during the Slesvig-Holsten rebellions nor the Second World War, although translations of British books for children were completely halted during the Napoleonic wars. In reader response research with adolescent Danish students, Dollerup found that a number of them believed the Grimms to be Danish. "Excepting the Bible, this must, surely, represent one of the most successful assimilations of translation into another culture in the history of literature," Dollerup concludes. (Dollerup 1999, 153)

Dollerup discusses the particular reception of the Tales among Danish authors and translators. In the foreword to his 1816 collection of the “best stories from sundry sources,” Adam Oehlenschläger, whom Dollerup describes as the “most prominent Danish poet of the Romantic age,” underscores the “fantastic nature and innate beauty” of
fairy tales. Emphasizing “that the tales were so intense because they were connected with the Nordic past,” he argued that they had a value of their own (Dollerup 1999, 149-50). Oehlenschläger "did not believe they were particularly old; in his annotation of the tales he was willing to accept only that they might be examples of medieval folk poetry" (Dollerup 1999, 150). Christian Molbech, another of the early Danish translators, emphasized that folktales (det egentlige Folke-Eventyr) may be national or may have been transferred from one nation to another, then molded by that nation's “character” (Dollerup 1999, 151). Another Danish translation, published in 1870 by Jakob Davidsen, added unattributed non-Grimm tales unapologetically. In the eyes of the Davidsen, it made no difference: "it is a well-known fact that, no matter whether they are from the oral tradition or are written by poets, they are the creations of the imagination whose real worth is found in their content and form" (Dollerup 1999, 151). Whether this means that Davidsen believed that tales were universal property—as Dollerup argues—or that his own translation and editing work are what Davidsen considered most valuable, this pattern of reception shows a framework in which translation and other forms of rewriting are seen as legitimate literary activity.

E. Women rewriting the Grimms in the Nineteenth century

group of young women who met in Berlin between 1843 and 1848 to read, write, and discuss their own compositions of literary fairy tales. Founded by the daughters of Bettine and Achim von Arnim—both friends and contemporaries of the Grimms—the Kaffeterkreis was established specifically in answer to the (almost) all-male literary salon Maikäferbund, which met weekly and published its own private journal. The young women of the Kaffeterkreis took on male pseudonyms and submitted their work to one another anonymously for publication in their own Kaffeterzeitung, the protocols of their meetings (Jarvis 1993, 103).

Only very few manuscripts of the protocols remain, but one of the stories which Jarvis believes to be the work of Gisela von Arnim was translated by Jarvis into English and published in the journal Marvels & Tales in 1997. “The Rose Cloud” is not a straight retelling of a Grimms' tale, but it uses many of the motifs and structures of a typical tale. Jarvis argues that von Arnim's “The Rose Cloud” gives us a unique perspective on the historical and psychological representation of women in the Grimms' tales, as well as the women's point of view regarding it. Many, if not most, of the Grimms' tales concern a coming-of-age scenario and “The Rose Cloud” is also the story of a young girl, Catharine, who must make her way in the world, but who is distracted by daydreams and the fantasy of a rose-colored cloud that sings to her. Catharine's mother Sylvia

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60 Bettine's brother Clemens was the first to receive a manuscript of the Kinder- und Hausmärchen and he and Achim von Arnim had together published a collection of German folk songs in 1805. Founded in Bonn in 1840, the Maikäferbund was made up of men, “academics and students, theologians, cultural and art historians, poets, and even a chemist” (Jarvis 1993, 103). Jarvis considers them “a Biedermeier contribution to the literary salon tradition,” and suggests that the young women of the Kaffeterkreis emulated them because of a desire for intellectual parity.
admonishes her for her fantasy life, and takes her to Aunt Colette's home up in the mountains, where Catharine has the opportunity to learn how to spin with greater skill. Her mother is shocked at Aunt Colette's success, especially as she is unmarried. As Jarvis points out:

If we trace Catharine's rites of passage in the fourteen chapters of “The Rose Cloud,” we see the deconstruction of Grimmian paradigms and the creation of a new prototype. The gender-specific clichés that gloss a female's rite of passage in the Grimms' tales—passivity, obedience, self-sacrifice, hard work, patience, and silence—are all problematized in ways that reject the Grimm world and create a different community. The author of “The Rose Cloud” dis-orders the canonical fairy-tale text. In an exclusively female world, the mother, Sylvia, represents the old social and moral order of the Grimms, Catharine the new prototype, and Aunt Colette the mediating mentor. (Jarvis 1993, 109)

The fairy-tale ending for Catharine is one in which she has learned a valuable skill, and is economically independent, with not even a mention of marriage.

Catharine is treated well in her apprenticeship—not only fairly but generously. This contrasts with many of the apprenticeships seen in typical Grimms tales. Catharine has plenty of free time apart from her spinning practice. It is only in a dream sequence in which she insists that her aunt's spinning skill must have a magical origin that we are treated to a scene that could easily come right out of the Grimm's tales. Aunt Colette calls Catharine a “good-for-nothing” for falling asleep and forces her to sweep up the clouds with a broom so that she can spin them into fine thread. When Catharine wakes, however, her Aunt embraces her and explains:

The rose cloud was my whim, my imagination playing tricks on me, my
evil destiny. I put her on my loyal distaff, and the work, the beautiful work, spun my enemy such a fine thread that I couldn't even feel it between my fingers. You will do as I did. You won't be able to prevent the clouds from passing by you. But you've gathered a reserve of strength. You will take hold of them, will card them, and spin them so well, they will no longer be able to conjure up a storm around and inside of you. (Jarvis 1997, 159)

At first glance it might seem as if a happy ending in which a woman still has to work and spin is not such an effective feminist subversion. Jarvis points out, however, “Catharine becomes socially and financially independent, a true fantasy for most women in the nineteenth century” (Jarvis 1993, 118). Spinning is a potent symbol in the context of folktales. It is both the means by which young women can find comfort and wealth, and the symbol of domestic drudgery. It is also significant that spinning and weaving as well as spinster status are metaphors for tale-telling itself. The rose cloud that Colette and Catharine spin in order to focus on lucrative work is their fancy and fantasy. Like them, the women of the Kaffeterkreis spun their tales into something solid, and for some of them—Gisela von Arnim among them—actual publication of literary fairy tales followed.61

It is no accident that the Kaffeterkreis resembles modern fandom so strongly, with its small community of women using pseudonyms and sharing stories in which they play

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61 Her first published work in 1840, The Life of High Countess Gritta Von Ratsinourhouse, was co-written with her mother Bettine von Arnim and only translated into English in 1999. Like “The Rose Cloud” it tells the story of a young girl who is labeled “wild” and unable to spin. Like Catharine of “The Rose Cloud,” Gritta is able to find her happily ever after despite her transgressive personality.
with well-known original sources and motifs. We have seen those women in the early
days of convention-based fandom, and the internet-based fandom of today. Much of the
historical rewriting of women based on literature is not extant. The protocols of the
*Kaffeterkreis* have almost all been lost in the wars that have torn through Berlin since the
nineteenth century. I do not think that it is beyond the realm of possibility that wherever
one finds a system of active literary culture dominated by men, one will also find women
rewriting that literary culture to suit their own tastes and vision.

**F. Once Upon a Time: Disney rewrites itself**

The Grimms themselves were rewriting the folklore of their own system, and the
versions they established have pervaded literature and culture since. When we think of
rewritten fairy tales, however, we're likely to move directly from the Grimms to Disney,
as Zipes does himself in a breathless rant against the domestication of female fairy-tale
protagonists by a mid-century American system.

*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was made during the Depression of the
1930s, and *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella* were created during the Cold
War period. In celebrating the moral innocence of the white Anglo-Saxon
male, made in America, Disney projected his ideological vision of an
orderly society that could only sustain itself if irrational and passionate
forces are held in check, just as his amusement parks today demonstrate.
Instead of associating evil with the oppressive rule of capitalist or fascist
governments or with inegalitarian socioeconomic conditions, it is equated
with the conniving, jealous female, with black magic and dirty play, with
unpredictable forces of turbulence that must be cleaned and controlled . . .
In this sense the utopian nature of the original Grimms' tales in their times
became perverted in ours, for the corpus of the Grimms' tales contains
clear indications of class injustice and familiar problems that enable
readers to focus on both historical and psychological causes of repression
with hope for change. (Zipes 2002, 61)

There has been a great deal of scholarship on the sexism imbedded in both the original 
*Tales* and the Disney versions, but for the purposes of this survey of historical rewriting I 
am more interested in Disney's own postmodern attempts to rewrite its own versions of 
the *Tales*.

In fall 2011 two new television shows with a fairy-tale premise debuted, 
demonstrating two very different ways to rewrite the familiar stories for a postmodern 
audience. *Grimm*, showing on the NBC network, is a police procedural in which a 
descendant of the Brothers Grimm faces a different fairy-tale villain in a real-life context. 
It is dark and broody in tone and narrative, and focuses more on episodic monster tales 
than on world-building and a mythic arc. *Once Upon a Time* by contrast airs on ABC and 
was also produced by ABC—the network owned by Disney. It posits a premise where the 
land of fairy tales and our world are separate, but that, as a result of Snow White's 
happiness in marrying her Prince Charming, the Evil Queen has cursed the entire 
Enchanted Forest, moving all of its inhabitants to a small town in Maine—Storybrooke— 
where the Evil Queen is the mayor and the only person left to know the truth about the 
town's fairy-tale origins. Both shows are interesting retellings in a long line of retellings 
of classic fairy tales. For my purpose here I focus on the case of Disney rewriting its own 
rewritings in *Once Upon a Time*. 

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It is clear from the start that *Once Upon a Time* is relying on the Disney versions of fairy tales as a base (both Jiminy Cricket and “Doc” are introduced in the pilot—names that only Disney uses for the cricket from Pinocchio and for one of the seven Dwarfs). Moreover the twists that it introduces in the familiar versions—both from the Grimms and from classic Disney films—interrogate traditional gender roles and to a lesser extent racial stereotypes. The pilot episode begins with few lines in white on a black screen: “Once upon a time...There was an enchanted forest filled with all the classic characters we know. Or think we know,” and thrusts us *in media res* of the narrative of Snow White, in which Snow is dead in the glass coffin, mourned by the dwarfs, and her Prince wakes her with True Love's kiss. We then shift immediately to their wedding, which the Evil Queen interrupts. So far, everything is familiar. But when the Queen approaches the couple at the altar, Snow White draws the sword out of the Prince's scabbard, and points it at her stepmother. Thus we first realize that this narrative is not as familiar as we may have originally thought. Neither the Grimms' nor Disney's Snow White (1937) would never even touch a sword, much less wield it as if she knew how to use it.

We are introduced to Henry Mills and Emma Swan in our world in Boston. Emma is a bail bondsperson. She is tough and independent, but the viewers' first look at her is a misdirection, because she is in the middle of snaring a bail jumper by means of a date and a slinky hot pink dress. It's the first and last time we'll see her dressed this way. Her prey
finds out that she's not what she looks like at the same time the audience does. Through the course of the episode we discover that it is Emma's twenty-eighth birthday, that Henry is the son she gave up for adoption when she was eighteen, and that she is the long-lost daughter of Snow White and Prince Charming, saved from the Evil Queen's curse by means of an enchanted wardrobe that brought her to our world. She's been raised by various foster parents and knows nothing of her family or heritage, and when Henry appears to take her back to Storybrooke with him, claiming that the book of fairy tales he holds is true, and that she is the only one who can save the exiled town of fairy-tale denizens, she follows him only to make sure that he is safely returned to his adoptive mother. His adoptive mother, however, is both the Evil Queen from the fairy-tale flashbacks and Regina Mills, evil mayor of Storybrooke. With the literal storybook in his hands, Henry begs Emma to stay and free the town, as Rumpelstiltskin has already prophesied that she will do. Emma stays but more to make sure that Henry is happy and safe than because she believes his story.

Near the end of the episode, when Emma Swan meets Snow White's analog in Storybrooke, she asks how the book is supposed to help. Snow White in Storybrooke is Mary Margaret Blanchard—a schoolteacher who wears all white and a cross. She had given Henry the book of fairy tales because of how smart, creative, and lonely he is. When Emma asks her how the storybook is supposed to help, she replies:
What do you think stories are for? These stories? The classics? There's a reason we all know them. They're a way for us to deal with our world, a world that doesn't always make sense. (*OUAT*, pilot)

She continues by saying that she gave Henry the book to give him hope, and hope is, as the showrunners have said a number of times in external interviews, one of the main themes of the show as a whole.62 The showrunners are Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz, who also both worked on ABC's hit *Lost* and cite that show's showrunner Damon Lindelhof as a major influence. *Once Upon a Time* has a structure that is very reminiscent of that of *Lost*, in which a group of people are living in a post-disaster present, and each episode introduces the audience to one particular character's backstory in the other world. The show also includes cast and crew from both *Lost* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*—another show that is informed by folklore, fairytale, and myth but that also subverts traditional narratives, especially with regard to the roles of women.

*Once Upon a Time* has a female hero, a female villain, and several female folktale characters who are fleshed out with much more complexity, although the show still maintains enough of the original structure of their stories to be familiar. In addition many of the details involved in each story are specifically ones that were added by Disney: the

62 In a tvguide.com interview (January 4, 2012) Kitsis and Horowitz state, “We are trying to write about the power of hope in a time of uncertainty,” and in an interview posted on goldderby.com concerning the 2012 Emmy race, “in uncertain times, there's something great about a fairytale; for us it's kind of like why you buy a lottery ticket ... in the hope that something magical will happen and change your life. And that's kind of what fairytales are like. People like being transported somewhere and they like the message of hope."
names of the dwarfs and Jiminy Cricket, but also Maleficent, the evil witch from Sleeping Beauty, is clearly from Disney's rewriting. In the final episode of the first season of *Once Upon a Time*, Maleficent must be confronted in her dragon form by both Prince Charming and his daughter Emma in their respective worlds. Kitsis and Horowitz have also explicitly stated that the stories that they use are influenced by what rights are available; thus using Disney's stories makes the obtaining of rights much simpler because ABC is owned by Disney.

In a 2012 interview with *Entertainment Weekly*'s James Hibberd, Kitsis and Horowitz state that Robin Hood, Tarzan, the Little Mermaid, and Mary Poppins are all potential sources for further storytelling—and all of these stories have also been rewritten by Disney. The inclusion of these stories, as well as the stories of Mulan, Peter Pan, and Alice in Wonderland—all of which were added to the cast in the second season—also indicate a willingness to go beyond the traditional genre boundaries of “fairy tale.” Disney, of course, did this first. All of the above stories have been Disneyfied and added to the canon of “Disney Fairy Tales,” even if they're not generally characterized as such according to literary categories. Some can claim origins from folklore, some are literary fairy tales constructed by a single author, and some are historical legend. All are recognized by Lefevere's “non-professional” readership as “fairy tales,” however, and all are fair game for remix and (to borrow a term from fandom) crossover. For what is additionally new about *Once Upon a Time*’s rewriting of Disney's rewritings is the way
they are all combined into one cohesive narrative.

In this narrative the Evil Queen from Snow White's story takes the curse from Maleficent that she used to stop time for Sleeping Beauty, but she requires one more piece of information to make it work, and that she gets from Rumpelstiltskin. Rumpelstiltskin becomes the most consistent crossover character: he is given a human backstory in which he chooses to become a darkly powerful sorcerer in order to keep his son from being taken from him—but loses him anyway when the son is frightened by what his father has become. Rumpelstiltskin also assumes the role of the Beast in Belle's tale and of the crocodile that torments Captain Hook. Rumplestiltskin and Regina are both humanized throughout the telling of the tales—another twist on the traditional narrative as well as Disney's first telling. The Grimms would never give their audience reason to sympathize with their villains, but Kitsis and Horowitz have made it a requirement, or to be more precise, the more complex expectations of a contemporary audience have made it a requirement.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of watching Once Upon a Time—according to comments on news posts and blogs—is discovering how the show will present the well-known stories in a new way. In addition to the deepening of character—both of protagonists and antagonists—the stories are rewritten on two fronts: both in their
traditional manifestations in the fairyland Enchanted Forest and in their modern versions in the town of Storybrook, Maine. Cinderella is a single, pregnant, nineteen-year-old housekeeper in Storybrooke, and a young woman who relies too much on magic to rescue her in the Enchanted Forest, thus making deals with Rumpelstiltskin in order to save herself from her life of drudgery. Snow White is recognizably young and naïve in early flashbacks, before she understands her stepmother's nature, but once she is left in the forest and before she moves in with the dwarfs, she lives as a bandit setting up traps for royal travelers and robbing their jewels. She saves Prince Charming from a group of trolls before he saves her from the curse, and in fact they save each other continuously throughout the series.

Red Riding Hood is oppressed by her Grandmother in both worlds: forced to stay inside and wear the red hood to ward off wolves in the Enchanted Forest and shamed for her skimpy red clothing and flirty ways in Storybrooke. But the narrative never treats Red/Ruby as a harlot, as many times as her Grandmother calls her one. In the episode that focuses on her backstory, Ruby quits her job working in Granny's diner in order to see the world, but instead moves in with Emma and Mary Margaret in a demonstration of female friendship and solidarity. Ruby joins Emma as her deputy, whereas the Red Riding Hood of the Enchanted Forest sets out to kill the wolf that's been terrorizing her village and giving her Grandmother an excuse to keep her locked up inside the house. Ruby tracks the wolf, training Snow White in outdoor survival at the same time (in the time before
Snow becomes a bandit, and finds hidden skills in tracking she never knew she had before in Storybrooke. The narrative gradually reveals that Red and her Grandmother are werewolves, and thus they are both the heroes and antagonists of their own story. The episode ends with Red and her grandmother coming to an understanding in both worlds that Granny was wrong to hold Red back and that Red has hidden reserves of strength.

Red Riding Hood doesn't have her own Disney feature film in the way that Cinderella and Snow White do, but she was featured in two early shorts. *Little Red Riding Hood* (1922), the first of the fairy-tale shorts for Laugh-O-Gram, was animated by Walt Disney himself. This short rewrites the Wolf as a stereotypically villainous human man harassing Red as she brings doughnuts to her Grandmother. In this version she is saved by a another man who flies an airplane to the rescue, picking up the house in which the man is somehow doing violence to Red (it is unclear, but it appears that he is kissing her when the house is lifted, and until the house is lifted it is bouncing and the word “help!” is floating out). In the second short, a “Silly Symphony” short from 1934, Red meets the Three Little Pigs and is warned off the shortcut through the wood by the brick-building pig and led to the shortcut by the two lazy pigs. In this version the wolf retains the marks of villainy that the earlier “wolf” had (the black hat, largely), and dresses up as “Goldilocks, the Fairy Queen” to distract Red and the two pigs. When this doesn't work, he breaks into Grandmother's house and events largely follow the traditional narrative except that Grandmother is hiding in the closet rather than in the wolf's belly and that her
male rescuer in this case is the brick-building pig rather than an aviator or a huntsman.

Kitsis and Horowitz aren't literally Walt Disney, but they work for the conglomerate and all of the choices they make on how to rewrite the stories that they borrow from the culture at large and from Disney in particular must be approved by the company. It is not surprising that ABC/Disney has approved these new subversive retellings because Disney itself is moving toward more challenging versions of traditional stories in its own feature films, such as The Frog Prince set in New Orleans and featuring Disney's first African-American princess, Pixar's Brave, in which the dominant narrative is a princess resisting an arranged marriage at the same time that she rebuilds her relationship with her mother, and Frozen's tale of the bond of love between sisters. In these cases, the happy endings for these princesses are self-actualization rather than marriage. Although Tiana marries her prince, the soul food restaurant was her true dream. Merida solves the problem of tribal unity with her brains rather than by giving her hand in marriage. Moreover, Frozen's Elsa becomes an unmarried queen and the prince who pursued her sister Anna was found to be trying to steal the kingdom. Like “The Rose Cloud” before it, these new fairy tales reflect more realistic fantasies from the points of view of contemporary girls and young women.
G. Contemporary Speculative Fiction, Folktales, and Fan Fiction

The science fiction and fantasy genres have always owed much of their structure and collection of tropes to traditional folktales and literary fairy tales. The boundaries between modern science fiction, fantasy, and contemporary rewritten fairy tales often intersect. As an example Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling have edited “The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror” collections as well as several collections of retold fairy tales (including *Snow White, Blood Red* (1993); *Black Thorn, White Rose* (1994); *Ruby Slippers, Golden Tears* (1995); and *Black Swan, White Raven* (1997)) that feature such science fiction and fantasy notables as Roger Zelazny, Nancy Kress, Jane Yolen, Nalo Hopkinson, and Neil Gaiman. Tanith Lee wrote a collection of retold fairy tales, *Red as Blood (or, Tales from the Sisters Grimmer)* (1983), as well as a novel-length retelling of Snow White in which her true nature is vampiric (*White as Snow*, 2000). Even more recently, the sub-genre of urban fantasy is growing and frequently features rewritings of fairy tales and folklore from increasingly diverse cultural origins. One particular author in this subgenre, Seanan McGuire, exemplifies this development and serves as a bridge figure between professional fantasy writing and rewriting, on the one hand, and fan fiction on the other.

As she puts it, Seanan McGuire “came out of the fanfic mines,” having honed her writing skills writing fan fiction since she was a small child.
I remember writing and illustrating My Little Pony "novels" (about five pages each) when I was eight, so it started pretty early. I got really serious about my fanfic when I reached high school and joined an ElfQuest fanclub, or "Holt," that had a bi-monthly fanzine. It was half-fanfic, half-interactive roleplay, and I loved it passionately. I was also writing original fiction the whole time, and would frequently take techniques I had learned in one set of stories and apply them to the next, without really paying attention to whether or not the stories were set in my original worlds. (McGuire, personal communication)

McGuire's LiveJournal dates back to 2001, and she still posts both on her fan-pseudonym journal and the LiveJournal that she started with her legal name in 2008. In 2010 she won the John. W. Campbell award for best new writer, awarded along with the Hugos at the World Science Fiction Convention. She was nominated for the Best Novel Hugo in 2011, 2012, and 2013 for her horror/thriller trilogy written under the pseudonym Mira Grant, and in 2012 she was the first woman nominated for four Hugo awards: best novel, best novella, best related work (for her filk album, “Wicked Girls”) and best fancast. In 2013 McGuire beat that record by receiving five nominations—with two separate ones in the novella category—and by creating a new record for most Hugo nominations by any one person. The SF Squeecast won best fancast in both 2012 and 2013, so McGuire has two Hugos to go with her Campbell as of this writing. In short she's a rising star in speculative fiction, and she's also a fan.

63 A term that dates back to 1955 (Coppa 2006, 43), “filk” is a genre of singing and songwriting unique to science fiction and fantasy fandom. It was traditionally a convention-centered activity but some fans such as McGuire also record and sell their original songs and performances to fans of their work. “Best fancast” is a relatively new Hugo category. According to the official Hugo awards website, it is defined as “any non-professional audio- or video-casting with at least four (4) episodes that had at least one (1) episode released in the previous calendar year.” The award has only existed since 2012, and the SF Squeecast won in both 2012 and 2013. After the second win, the team behind the podcast removed themselves from consideration in order to encourage future growth in this category (http://www.thehugoawards.org/hugo-history/2013-hugo-awards/)
McGuire writes her horror/medical thriller novels under a pseudonym, but under her own name her work is largely best categorized as urban fantasy and fairytale. Her first series, the October Daye novels, posits a world in which faeries are present but hiding, and the title character is a changeling who has grown into a private investigator as well as a Faerie Knight. Her second urban fantasy series is reminiscent of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, in which a family of cryptozoologists fight to maintain the ecology of various monsters and other non-human humanoids and in which McGuire references a variety of legends from different cultures. Finally, McGuire contracted with the new “Kindle Serials” program in which a story is told one chapter at a time, delivered automatically to the reader's Kindle once the reader has bought a subscription. Her serial novel is Indexing, and although both of the traditional urban fantasy series are clearly influenced by folklore and fairytales, it is this last work that indicates McGuire's deep knowledge and adept interpretation of traditional tales.

The premise of Indexing is that fairy tales are both real and constantly trying to exert narrative force on the real world. These exertions are referred to as "memetic incursions" within the text of the novel, and it is the so-called ATI Management Bureau's job to stop them.

Our motto is "in aeternum felicitas vindactio." Translated roughly, that
means "defending happily ever after." We're not out to guarantee that all
the good little fairy tale boys and girls get to ride off in their pumpkin
coaches and on their silver steeds. They've been doing that just fine since
the dawn of mankind. They don't need any help from a government-
funded agency so obscure that most people don't even suspect that we
exist. No, our job is harder than that. Fairy tales want to have happy
endings, and that's fine—for fairy tales—but they do a lot of damage to
the people around them in the process, the ones whose only crime was
standing in the path of an onrushing story. (McGuire 51)

The "ATI" that the bureau manages is the Aarne-Thompson index, the collection of
organized folklore tale-types that categorizes and numbers the different patterns in
traditional stories. McGuire utilizes the structure of the Aarne-Thompson index by using
the AT numbers to identify so-called “memetic incursions” which are the incidents in
which fairy tales are exerting pressure over the real world. When a memetic incursion is
in progress within the narrative of Indexing, readers are informed by means of a line in
italics reading, for example, "Memetic incursion in progress: estimated tale type 709
('Snow White') Status: ACTIVE" (McGuire, 27). In short Indexing is a kind of police
procedural where the police radio code is replaced with tale-type numbers from the
Aarne-Thompson index. McGuire's is a story about the structure of stories and all the
different ways that they can be manifest.

Indexing is told from the point of view of Henrietta Marchen, a Snow White
whose narrative is currently inactive—at least at beginning of the novel and who
McGuire has obviously named for the German term for folktale. Most of the people who
work for the ATI Management Bureau interact with the narrative on some level; it makes
them both more sensitive to it when it manifests and more empowered to affect it.
Marchen's team is made up of herself, a recovering Wicked Stepsister, a shoemaker elf,
and a man with no relation to the narrative who serves as their "public relations point
man." In the first episode her team is attempting to avert a 709 incursion—at least, they
think it's a 709 until the young woman who appears to fit the profile of a Snow White
enters a local hospital and everyone inside falls asleep. It's not a 709; it's a 410—Sleeping
Beauty. She had come down with a new strain of sleeping sickness mixed with the H1N1
flu, and the team has to figure out a way to stop the virus. Marchen does this by asking
her team to find a 280—a Pied Piper—to collect the local vermin, play the virus into the
rats, and send them into the sewers to drown. It works but in the process they more fully
awaken the narrative of the Pied Piper—a young music student with the uncanny ability
to attract animals with her flute-playing.

Besides being a story about the structure of stories, Indexing is a narrative about
how to control narrative. In various ways Agent Marchen's solutions to “memetic
incursions” are to manipulate the narrative. In the penultimate episode, in which the team
is trapped with a ticking time bomb inside the home of Mother Goose (who has been
deliberately setting off memetic incursions from within the ATI and has convinced the
team's Piper to join her), Marchen averts the narrative by biting into an apple for the first
time in her life and embracing her own narrative deeply enough to take control of the

horde of animals that the Piper was using to keep the team penned in the house. It was an act that went against the rules she had followed her entire life as an agent of the ATI Management Bureau,

But it was the narrative that had changed things. If it was going to target us actively, I was going to fight back. And if you’re supposed to fight fire with fire, then it made sense to fight narrative with narrative. (McGuire 3249)

McGuire's background in fan fiction can be clearly seen in this episode. When Henrietta Marchen finally tastes the apple and goes active, she enters a frozen forest where the spaces between each black tree trunk is a doorway into a different manifestation of the AT 709 tale type.

And now that I was looking properly, those doors were full—each and every one of them—occupied by girls with skin white as snow, lips as red as blood, and hair as black as (black as coal, as tar, as obsidian, as the bottom of a well, as black, as black as a raven’s wing) the space between the stars that glittered overhead. (McGuire 3274)

But the Snows—all the Snows—were all different, each completely unique.

They should have seemed identical, those white-red-black girls, but they weren't anything alike, not now that I was really looking at them. They came from every ethnicity on the planet, skin bleached into alien pallor by the story that had shaped them, but remaining as unique and individual as fingerprints. Some wore their glossy black hair at shoulder length; others wore it long, or in cascades of curls, or buzzed so close to their skulls that it seemed more like gray ash than anything else. They had blue eyes, brown eyes, green eyes—even red eyes, in the few cases where the narrative had used the genes for a kind of albinism to reach its desired effect. (McGuire 3276)
The Snows she sees are all dead, all victims of the narrative. They ask her to put an end to the story in a way that only she can, because she has lived her life knowing her narrative but not letting it control her.

"I've been trying to stop this story for my entire life," I said. The woman from Nova Scotia shook her head. "You've been standing outside of it and fighting against it. You've been wasting energy fighting yourself. Now you can finally start using what you are to win this war." (McGuire 3314)

The moral of this story—of Indexing, to be clear—is that you control the narrative, whether you are writer or reader. In either case you are participant and you have the power to change the story. As Agent Marchen says to Demi Santos, the Pied Piper that she had awakened, "Now you get to learn how to control the narrative, rather than letting the narrative control you" (McGuire 733).

There is cultural overlap in the fans of science fiction and fantasy and writers and readers of fan fiction. The “culture of empowerment” that emphasizes control over the future is a healthy breeding ground for fans who rewrite stories to their own desires. The field of speculative fiction has been slowly coming to accept not only the power of fan fiction, but the similarities between the work of professionals and fans. When asked her opinion about the literary value of fan fiction, McGuire answered:

Fanfiction is one of the oldest forms of human expression, and it's only in the last hundred years or so that we've started acting like it was somehow a bad thing. Storytellers have always used familiar characters and situations to frame new concepts. It's what we do. All the fairy tales, the
Jack stories, the Greek myths, they all use people and archetypes we know to make us comfortable, and then go from there into the unknown. Without fanfic, human creativity would wither and die. Whether we write it ourselves or not, we all benefit from fanfiction. (McGuire, personal communication)

Folklore, like fan fiction, requires no gatekeepers. Stories are told and retold in their specific communities, shared and re-shared, and begun anew every day.

H. Conclusion

Folklore is almost by definition a kind of rewriting. Traditional oral literature characteristically changes every time it is retold, highlighting different aspects of setting, plot, and character based on its audience's desires and its storyteller's message and cultural context. The movement from orally recounted folktales to literary fairy tale, by means of the Brothers Grimm and other, largely European authors, demonstrates yet another case in which specific systems require specific kinds of rewriting. The Grimms' tales illustrate both the rising political movement of nationalism and the class divides that defined their times. The rewritings of the Kaffeterkreis demonstrate the desires of female authors of fairy tales within the context of nineteenth-century Berlin. The longevity of fairy tales and their constant adaptations are underlined by their ubiquitous presence in popular culture—especially in the form of Disney movies in the current cultural context. The fact that Disney now allows its subsidiary company ABC to produce a television show that regularly rewrites and subverts not just fairy tales but identifiably Disney
versions of fairy tales demonstrates how mainstream the postmodern practice of the self-aware rewriting has become.

The contemporary popular literary genres of science fiction and fantasy share a great deal with folklore and fairy tale. Many science fiction and fantasy writers acknowledge this implicitly in their work rewriting fairy tales, often with specific genre markers such as a future setting or a consistent system of magic use. Seanan McGuire is one such author, who, as both a professional writer and a member of fandom, recognizes the ways in which writing one's own stories and writing fan fiction are similar and also dissimilar. Fan fiction can exist without a plot or a point—it can exist just to be character study or “to fill in the cracks between the pavement—” but some fan fiction can also exist to create entire alternative novel-length versions of the source. Seanan McGuire argues that, “[i]n some ways, fanfic is more flexible, because it doesn't need to attract a large enough audience to be profitable” (McGuire, personal communication). Like folklore, fan fiction requires no gatekeepers. Stories are told and retold in their specific communities, shared and re-shared, and begun anew every day.
CHAPTER 5

REWITING IN THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

A. Introduction

“Elizabethan authors did not share the post-Romantic obsession with 'originality,'” states Paul Salzman in his introduction to An Anthology of Elizabethan Prose Fiction. The very nature of the Renaissance was one of rewriting. I have written above on the dynamics at work in terms of systems theory, but it would not be inappropriate to reiterate some of them here in terms of this particular era. The writers of the English Renaissance saw deficiencies in their own system that rewriting—especially rewriting Classical narratives—could fill. In the wake of the Protestant Reformation, however, even more was at stake. The rejection of the supremacy of Rome marked England as sovereign and separate, and that independence from the Continent was marked by attempts to argue that England was, more than any other European nation, the heir to Classical culture. As Gavin Alexander argues in his introduction to Sidney's “The Defense of Poesy” and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism (2004), English was at the time “a minor language, spoken only on a small island at the edge of the world” (Alexander xxii). The achievement of the English Renaissance was that the language became what we still refer to as “the language of Shakespeare,” and this was done in no small part by not only rewriting Classical narratives and reforming Classical forms, but
by using them to ultimately argue that the nascent English Empire was one that surpassed the empires of Greece and Rome.

This chapter is therefore also written through the lens of Itamar Even-Zohar's systems theory (1978, 1990, 2005-6) and on André Lefevere's assertion in *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992) that translation is one of many different types of rewriting that keep alive the narratives that we mark as “canonical.” The English Renaissance, occurring as it did later than the renaissances of continental Europe, included translations of many texts, from many languages, including contemporary work from the literary systems of Spain, France, and Italy in order to borrow the prestige of those works and their systems. In order to mark a straight line from this chapter to those that follow on Vergil and Homer, I focus on the translation and reference to Classical cultures beginning with the earliest translations of Greek and Latin literature into English. In addition I discuss especially the significant cultural and literary milestone that was the development of the King James Bible, but also other forms of rewriting. In order to continue the argument that the narratological moves of fan fiction have existed throughout literary history, I focus more specifically on William Shakespeare and John Milton. Shakespeare is repeatedly held up within fandom as an example of classic literary fan fiction; his appropriation of multiple source plots and characters is well-established. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is easily, if reductively, described as “Bible fan fiction.” This chapter concludes with a look at Milton's use of rabbinic
midrashic texts as well as the parallels between his rewriting of Genesis and fans' rewriting of source texts.

B. Shakespeare and Classical Rewriting

William Shakespeare's work reflects Classical influence both at the level of the word and at the level of the text. Works that reflect classical influence include *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Pericles, Antony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, Timon of Athens, Titus Andronicus*, and *Troilus and Cressida*. Of these works, a clear distinction can be made between those that are influenced by Classical literature—*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Troilus and Cressida*—and those that are influenced by Classical history—the remaining five plays. For this reason, this section focuses on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Troilus and Cressida*.  

Of the two that are influenced by Classical literature, *Troilus and Cressida* is the more direct instance of transformative rewriting, a rewriting of Homer's *Iliad*. It is a problematic play from many perspectives. A rewriting of the *Iliad*, it also rewrites the heroes of the epic, with the possible exception of Hector, as almost entirely corrupt and foolish. Events largely follow the *Iliad*, from Achilles' retreat to his tents to the death of

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64 Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that Shakespeare's politics as demonstrated in his plays appear to have more to do with examining the roles, virtues, and natures of leaders, rather than arguing for a particular kind of government. For a much more detailed examination of Shakespeare's politics as demonstrated in his work, see Robin Headlam Wells's book *Shakespeare's Politics: A Contextual Introduction*.  

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Hector, but with some major differences. The reason for Achilles' retreat—Agamemnon's dishonor of him—is missing, and Achilles's honor is diminished by Shakespeare himself by having Hector fall to his pack of Myrmidons instead of Achilles's own hand in single combat. Shakespeare's argument appears to be the folly of the war as a whole, especially as the center of the play turns on the decision by the Trojans to retain Helen rather than end the slaughter.

Shakespeare's influences are eclectic, and he was clearly also influenced by Chaucer's *Troilus and Creysede*, but it is the Aristotelian influences on Shakespeare's version of the play and the way he uses them to rewrite Homer that interest me most. Questions of voluntary and involuntary actions, of the relationship between choice and virtue, fill the text. According to W.R. Elton's article “Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*” (1997), the play was heavily influenced by the ethical philosophy of Aristotle. Shakespeare was surely familiar with Aristotle's argument that a virtuous action be voluntary, not least because he has Hector mention him anachronistically in the play itself:

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Paris and Troilus, you have both said well;
And on the cause and question now in hand
Have gloz'd, but superficially; not much
Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought
Unfit to hear moral philosophy. (II.ii.163-167)
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The context of those lines are the disagreement between Hector on the one hand and Troilus and Paris on the other about whether to send Helen back to the Greeks and end the war. Hector goes on to accuse their “reasoning” to

\[
\text{. . . do more conduce} \\
\text{To the hot passion of distemper'd blood} \\
\text{Than to make up a free determination} \\
\text{'Twixt right and wrong; for pleasure and revenge} \\
\text{Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice} \\
\text{Of any true decision” (II.ii.168-173).}
\]

After invoking him by name, Hector's words echo Aristotle and his assertion that moral virtue is by nature deliberative and voluntary. Troilus and Paris, by preferring to retain their loves and their passions, demonstrate that they are not deliberative, though Troilus argues that his love is voluntary. The added point Hector makes about how they argue as if they are, as Aristotle claims, too young to appropriately understand moral virtue, underscores their folly. Elton's article explicitly demonstrates how Shakespeare inverts Aristotle in the speech of Troilus and Nestor, again underscoring the folly of both:

In sum, observes Aristotle, “choice is either desiderative thought or intellectual desire, and such an origin of action is a man” (1139 b 4-5; italics added). In his upside-down summary, doting Nestor garblingly inverts this: choice, he echoes Aristotle, is an “act of soul” and of virtue which “makes merit her election” (Liii.349). Yet in Aristotle choice's action is in origin a man, whereas Nestor speaks of its result as a man. (Elton 1997, 334)

It may be interesting to note here that Aristotle continues to state parenthetically that “nothing that is past is an object of choice, e.g. no one chooses to have sacked Troy; for
no one deliberates about the past, but about what is future and capable of being otherwise, while what is past is not capable of not having taken place” (1139 b 5-8).65

This reference, for anyone in the audience familiar with Aristotle's Ethics, throws into stark relief the folly before them as they view Troilus and Cressida, whether on the stage or on the page. By stripping the Homeric heroes of their honor, ridiculing their choices, and ending the play in tragedy but with no character development from anyone, Shakespeare appears using Aristotle to make a textual argument for the folly of Homeric virtue in general. I would argue that this play is an example of the movement by Elizabethan poets away from a systemic model of using Greek and Roman references simply for the prestige they bring, and toward a critical look at the cultural values and literary norms those references represent. That Shakespeare does this by using Aristotle, another Classical reference, is not contradictory. He chooses to affiliate with the reason of Aristotle, instead of the passion of Homer.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is generally held to be heavily influenced by Ovid's Metamorphoses, and the translation of Ovid that Shakespeare clearly used was that of Arthur Golding, discussed below. As Madeleine Forey claims in “‘Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee! Thou Art Translated!’: Ovid, Golding, and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' (1998), Golding's translation is not only alluded to in Shakespeare's narrative and word choices, but Shakespeare also “seems to be as interested in Golding's critical

65 In Sir David Ross's translation.
understanding of his task as translator as in his stylistic achievements” (Forey 1998, 324). Shakespeare's “mechanicals,” the men who are tasked with the production of “Pyramus and Thisbe” within *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, are as anxious about the morality of the play they are presenting as Golding was about his translation of Ovid, Forey argues.

Golding's propitiatory and somewhat ingenuous tone has found its way into the characterization of the mechanicals; his defensive plea “Let no man marvell at the same” (Epistle, 1. 310) shares very much the tone of the mechanicals' prologue: “At the which let no man wonder” (v.i.133). Both fear, though for different reasons, that their work may be wrongly taken at face value. (Forey 1998, 326)

Forey cites as well Golding's use of the words “tedious” and “brief,” and his plea that he means not to offend. Shakespeare's use of Golding's preface in this way functions as parody. Forey argues that Golding's dedicatee and intended audience—Robert, Earl of Leicester,

. . . being an influential patron of the arts and an important figure in a highly cultured Puritan aristocratic circle that would later include Philip Sidney, could have been relied upon not to give the credulous reading of the text that Golding appeared to anticipate, in the same way that Theseus, being familiar with masques, music, and dramatic devices, could have been assumed to understand literary conventions. (Forey 1998, 328)

Thus Forey concludes that Shakespeare's echoing of Golding's preface in the speech of the mechanicals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is parody, and not only parody but “also presents in its characters the different attitudes to writing and reading out of which the possibility for such parody arises” (Forey 328). In her view, Shakespeare is playing with
the different levels of audience within and without his production: the onstage audience, the “real” audience, and the more literary of that “real” audience. Despite all the caution that Golding warned, his translation of the *Metamorphoses* is yet transformed and translated yet again, and with much of the irreverence of the original put back where he had removed it. Thus is Ovid rewritten once more.

C. Shakespeare and genderswap

William Shakespeare is an exemplar of the creative artist who appropriates characters, plots, and settings from other artists and also says something new. His work is not merely appropriation but intertextual in nature. Stephen J. Lynch says that “[w]e can reconsider the source texts not merely as raw material for plot and character, but as dynamic and often inconsistent texts involving layers of implicit and subtextual suggestions” (Lynch 1998, 1). According to Lynch, at the time of his writing, the only studies done on Shakespeare's sources as a whole were largely lists and summaries rather than analyses.\(^{66}\) His own study focuses on sources that were the primary basis of a given play, for example John Lodge's novella *Rosalynde* as the source text for *As You Like It* or the Anonymous source text for *King Lear: The True Chronicle Historie of King Leir*. I am particularly interested in Lynch's reading of the intertextual relationship between

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\(^{66}\) Such as Kenneth Muir's *Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (1977) and Geoffrey Bullough's *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (8 volumes, 1957-75). Lynch excepts from this generalization the various studies of Shakespeare's use of one particular source, such as Holinshed, Plutarch, or Chaucer. He is less interested in the relationship between Shakespeare and a specific source text, and more interested in Shakespeare's discursive relationships with his many source texts.
Rosalynde and As You Like It because of his focus on the different ways that those texts deal with a plot element that is also regular featured in fan fiction: the genderswap.

William Shakespeare was not the first English Renaissance author to introduce a narrative element of gender swapping, but according to Stephen J. Lynch his use of gender subversion was some of the most intertextual and subversive of his time. Lynch does a close reading of John Lodge's Rosalynde, the source text for Shakespeare's As You Like It, and concludes that “Shakespeare rewrites not only Lodge's inscriptions of Petrarchan love and pastoral idealism (as has often been recognized), but Shakespeare also rewrites and re-presents Lodge's inscriptions of gender” (Lynch 1998, 5). Lodge's conception of gender difference is rather traditional although his heroine spends much of the novella dressed and perceived as a man. Shakespeare's treatment of gender difference is decidedly more complex.

In Lodge's Rosalynde, the title character and her cousin are exiled from their home court, just as in Shakespeare's play. In fact, the plots of the two texts are essentially identical. The interesting differences are primarily the ways that each explores the impact of Rosalynde/Rosalind's decision to disguise herself as a man while in exile. Lodge's character decides upon it with little commentary, as a simple solution to the problem of two young noble women traveling alone.

“Tush,” quoth Rosalynde, “art thou a woman, and hast not a sudden shift to prevent a misfortune? I, thou seest, am of a tall stature, and would very
well become the person and apparel of a page; thou shalt be my mistress, and I will play the man so properly, that, trust me, in what company soever I come I will not be discovered. I will buy me a suit, and have my rapier very handsomely at my side, and if any knave offer wrong, your page will show him the point of his weapon. (Lodge 1970, 34)

Rosalynde suggests that making a “shift to prevent a misfortune” is by nature a feminine move, but also that becoming a man is a simple shift consisting only of a change in costume. Shakespeare's rewriting of that same moment is thus:

ROSALIND: Were it not better,  
Because that I am more than common tall,  
That I did suit me all points like a man,  
A gallant curtal-axe upon my thigh,  
A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart,  
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,  
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,  
As many other mannish cowards have,  
That do outface it with their semblances.  

(1.3.113-121)

The emphasis in this version is also on the shift in appearance but no little attention is paid to what will remain in Rosalind's heart. According to Lynch, the shift from rapier to curtal-axe and boar-spear marks Rosalind as unenlightened about the appropriate gender performance for a modern man in a way that is “playfully ironic.” Although there is some traditional assumption of gender roles in Rosalind's ladylike ignorance, there is also a marking of such gender performativity as archaic in the way that these weapons are. Lynch argues that with this speech Shakespeare simultaneously skewers “both women who think they can be men, and men who think they can be men—or, at least, heroic men like the legendary (and thus largely fictional) Roland” (Lynch 1998, 14). This is
underlined by Rosalind's claim that there is not that much difference between her, a
woman, dressing as heroic man and a “mannish coward” doing the same. In either case,
the gender is performance, but the inner self can be full of fear, whether male or female.

Lynch argues that this theme pervades *As You Like It*.

Throughout the play, Shakespeare parodies and exposes conventionality in
virtually all human identities—not merely in masculinity and femininity,
but in the conventions of courtiers, fools, lovers, philosophers, shepherds,
and melancholics (all seven types). This persistent theme of identity as
artifice may have been even more prominent for an Elizabethan audience
for whom expressions of identity, especially class and gender identity,
could be exceedingly artificial—not merely in the elaborate gestures and
ceremonies of the Elizabethan court, but even on the streets of London.
(Lynch 1998, 14)

One cannot ignore the setting and reception of Shakespeare in contrast to Lodge. *As You
Like It* was performed in public, to an audience of mixed gender and class whereas the
audience of Lodge's novella was limited to those were both literate enough to read and
wealthy enough to buy books. In addition, of course, Shakespeare's plays had no female
actors in their original performances. Therefore the representation of gender roles are
complicated not only by the text, but by the performance of the text. Rosalind would have
been played by a young man acting as a young woman acting as a young man. According
to Lynch, this is but one layer in the slippery instability that is Rosalind's gender identity.

. . . Shakespeare compounds the role-play of his heroine into
multidimensional layers: a boy who plays a girl who plays a boy who
plays a girl, who pushes the envelope even further by enacting a variety of
conventional feminine roles—disdainful lady, clamorous shrew, insatiable
wanton—as well as a variety of conventional masculine roles—“saucy
lackey,” “knave,” and lover “falser than vows made in wine” (3.2.291-93, 3.5.72-73). Shifting with ease among a dizzying variety of fleeting identities, the stage Rosalind exposes traditional gender types as pure artifice—sets of behavioral codes that can be improvised, altered, and discarded. (Lynch 1998, 17)

Lynch makes it clear that both texts are not consistent about their stance regarding gender norms. Lodge's Rosader (Shakespeare's Orlando) unwittingly calls Rosalynde-as-Ganymede plain-looking in the same breath that he declaims Rosalynde's beauty as perfect, and so there is a moment in which the text questions the essential nature of beauty. It is not followed up, however. Further, in the moment in which Rosalynde reveals herself as herself by merely changing her dress, all becomes immediately right in the world of gender norms without question. Phoebe, who had been pining for Ganymede, immediately exchanges him for Montanus when he finds that Ganymede is actually the female Rosalynde. The text is explicit about this. Rosalynde asks Phoebe “if she had shown sufficient reason to suppress the force of her loves. 'Yea,' quoth Phoebe, “and so great a persuasive, that if it please you, madame, and Aliena to give us leave, Montanus and I will make this day the third couple in marriage”’ (Lodge 1970, 159.) There is, of course, no remaining question of Phoebe's attraction to a female body, though clothed as a man.

In contrast, Shakespeare's rewriting sets up a scenario in which Rosalind-as-Ganymede persuades Orlando to address her as Rosalind and attempt to woo her as a means to rid him of this love that torments him, as his beloved has been exiled. In
Lodge's text Rosader merely reads his poetry aloud to Ganymede to purge his love, but Shakespeare engages in this gender play which results in the aforementioned additional layer of boy-playing-girl-playing-boy-playing-girl. Thus there is a simultaneous explicit homoeroticism that is undermined by the eventual heteronormativity of the play's conclusion.

It is not difficult to see the parallels that exist between Shakespeare's exploration of normative gender through rewriting and that of fan fiction. The significant difference is that in Shakespeare the transformation is always only on the level of clothing and comportment, whereas fan fiction frequently goes a step further and re-embodies the characters of the source text. In both cases however, gender norms are explored, subverted, and even discarded. In modern times as binary gender becomes more visibly deconstructed, fan fiction interrogates transgender identity beyond the surface of performativity. Bodies are changed, and characters who thought they knew who they were (and readers who thought they knew their beloved characters) are faced with the question of whether gender is essential.

I cannot end the discussion of Shakespeare without noting that he is invoked regularly as a writer of fan fiction by modern scholars and fans alike. Every Shakespearean play, the argument goes, is based on an already-existing story. The characters, and often the plot, are not original. This is absolutely true, and goes back to
the point I argue above—that the Renaissance was deeply uninterested in originality. However, I cannot agree that what Shakespeare was writing is identical to fan fiction because it is not merely the reuse of characters and elements of plot that make fan fiction, but also the affective community of fans from which fan fiction springs. Shakespeare's literary system was unique, and the cultural details of his rewriting were specific to his system. At the same time, the overall methods and the fact that he rewrote at all makes him part of the literary continuum of transformative rewriting that this dissertation explicates.

D. Translations of Classical Greek and Roman texts

When borrowing prestige from another literary system, the easiest and most common method is to translate the high, canonized texts from the more prestigious system. The English Renaissance is almost a textbook example of this phenomenon that Even-Zohar (1978) describes. In fact, translation and imitation of Classical models was one of the pedagogical methods of the Renaissance education. It should be no surprise then that in the earliest years of the English Renaissance translations of Classical texts were published in great numbers.

In the teaching of Classical languages to students in the Renaissance, Latin came first. Latin was the lingua franca of the romanized lands of the western Roman Empire, which included England. According to Federica Ciccolella (2005), the study of Greek in
Western Europe disappeared after the Roman Empire and did not return until the end of the fourteenth century (Ciccollella 2005, 1). A tradition of teaching Latin remained through the stable institution of the Catholic Church. By contrast Greek was not as commonly used and was not as effectively taught as Latin. In fact, one of the Greek grammars in Western Europe in the Renaissance the “Greek Donatus, or Pylê” was little more than direct translations of a Latin grammar—which made understanding the syntactical differences between the two languages almost impossible.67

On this less-than-firm footing, English Renaissance writers were translating not only Latin but Greek works into the vernacular, and it is no surprise that they often relied on the Latin translations of Greek texts when translating them. This was probably the case with Lady Jane Lumley's translation of Iphigeneia at Aulis around 1553. Lady Lumley (1537-1578) was the eldest child of Henry FitzAlan, 19th Earl of Arundel. She made the first translation of Euripides into English, and the first drama written in English by a woman. Lady Lumley's Iphigeneia follows Erasmus's translation of the play into Latin very closely, according to Frank Crane (1944). Crane also disparages Lady Lumley's abilities and the abilities of fourteen-year-old girls in general in his article.

. . . at a time when there were no commentaries, when Greek grammars and dictionaries were few and crude, and the ambitious translator had little to work with but the bare and barely readable Aldine text. It is very difficult to believe, therefore, that a few years [after Erasmus] an English girl of fourteen was able to

67 See Federica Ciccollella's article “The Greek Donatus and the Study of Greek in the Renaissance” (2005). Translation of the Latin grammar Ianua into Greek was word-for-word and as a result gave Greek an ablative case and lost the dual and middle voice.
translate the *Iphigeneia*, directly from the Greek, in any manner whatsoever.  
(Crane 1944, 224)

Marta Straznicky (2004) acknowledges that Lumley's translation was categorized as an “exercise” in her family's library, but suggests the dates are inaccurate and would make Lady Lumley's translation the work of her late rather than her early teens, which would make her no younger than Alexander Neville when he translated the *Oedipus*, as discussed below—and disparaging remarks about Neville's age are strangely absent in the scholarship about him. Straznicky discusses the reception of Lady Lumley's translation, which wasn't published until much later with the rest of her father's papers, and was only grudgingly referred to as the “first English translation of Greek tragedy,” yet at the same time repeatedly referred to as the “youthful exercises” of a young, though well-educated, girl.

Straznicky argues that Lady Lumley had access to both the Greek texts and the knowledge of the Greek language necessary to attempt a translation from the Greek. Although most female students of the era did not move past reading in Latin, Lady Lumley's family appears to have been an exception. In letters to her father and dedications of their translations to him, both Jane and her sister Mary demonstrate their education in Greek. Straznicky argues however, Lady Lumley did not attempt the *Iphigeneia* as a linguistic exercise. In her translation, the choruses are all but eliminated, lengthy speeches are cut, dialogue is conflated, and verse form is not even attempted
(Straznicky 2004, 33-34). “Rather than belonging to a body of work we might call academic 'exercises,' then, Lumley's Iphigeneia should be considered with other dramatic translations that in one way or another modified the standard of exactness,” Straznicky argues (Straznicky 2004, 34). She concludes that Lumley's intent was not philological but ethical: “The overall effect of her revisions is to generalize the tragic story of Iphigeneia's sacrifice, to minimize its historical and political specificity and concentrate instead on the conflict between private and public duty, particularly as it affects the family of Agamemnon” (Straznicky 2004, 35). In other words, we could argue that Lady Lumley was writing a transformative rewrite of the Iphigeneia. It is particularly interesting that Lumley's perspective on the play enters the English-language system first. As a young girl herself, of a noble family and with similar requirements and conflicts to Iphigeneia, Lady Lumley would have had not only a passionate but unique perspective on this piece of classical Greek literature. It is doubly interesting when the case of Lady Lumley is compared to the critical rewriting of young female teens within modern fandom.

Alexander Neville (1544-1614) was about sixteen years old when he translated Seneca's Oedipus and dedicated it to Henry Wotton. He was educated at the University of Cambridge and later became a Member of the House of Commons. It is easier to distinguish the particular interpretation of the translator in the translations that are less literal, so Frederick Kiefer (1978) looks specifically at those translations he deems “most free,” one of which is Neville's Oedipus (1563). Kiefer argues that although the
Elizabethan translators (predictably) made changes to form, meter, and rhyme, what is more interesting and less studied are the ways in which the Elizabethan translators “intensify and broaden two major themes—the mutability of Fortune and the severity of retributive justice” (Kiefer 1978, 372).

Kiefer's incisive analysis demonstrates the difference in emphasis between Seneca's play and Neville's translation. Seneca's Stoic philosophy involved in his rendering of the tragedy of Oedipus—itself a rewriting—in which the events that doom Oedipus are completely out of his control and yet can be gentled by his reaction to them. Neville's translation, in contrast, emphasizes the lack of control human beings have over their fate, with no hope of amelioration. Here is one example Kiefer uses in his article, from the philosophizing of the Chorus:

Fata si liceat mihi
fingère arbitrio meo,
temperem zephyro levi
vela, ne pressae gravi
spiritu antennae tremant.
lenis et modice fluens
aura nec vergens latus
ducat intrepidam ratem;
tuta me media vehat
vita decurrens via. (ll. 882-91)

[Were it mine to shape fate at my will, I would trim my sails to gentle winds, lest my yards tremble, bent 'neath a heavy blast. May soft breezes, gently blowing, unvarying, carry my untroubled barqu along; may life bear me on safely, running in middle course]68

Neville's translation retains the sea-wind metaphor, but that is almost the only similarity

68 All of the quotations of Seneca, the Latin and the English translations, come from Kiefer (1978).
to Seneca's text his translation retains.\textsuperscript{69}

Fortune the guide of humaine lyfe doth al things chaunge at will.
And stirring stil, with restles thoughts our wretched minds doth fill.
In vayn men strive their stars to kepe when hideous tempests rise:
And blustering windes of daungers deepe sets death before their eyes.
Who saith he doth her fauning feele? And chaungeth not his minde,
When fickle fight of Fortunes wheele doth turn by course of kinde.
(Kiefer 1978, 376)

As Kiefer notes, the emphasis in Neville's translation is on the lack of control human
beings have over their own fate, with no recourse. Neville stresses winds “and dangers
depth, set Death before their eyes,” although Seneca's chorus advises the audience to set
their sails to chart a middle course, so that the buffets of harsh winds do the least damage
possible.

Neville appears in large part concerned about the fate of princes. In the chorus of the
third act, Neville veers completely away from the source to give the following warning:

See, see, the myserable State of Prynces carefull lyfe.

endlesse stryfe

Do they endure? (O God) what plages? what grief do they sustayne?
A Princely lyfe: No. No. (No doubt) an ever duringe payne.
A state ene fit for men on whom Fortune woulde wreke her will.
(Kiefer 1978, 376)

A Princely life is an ever-enduring pain, according to Neville, who probably knew less of
this topic as a young man of sixteen than Lady Lumley did of hers. According to his
dedication to “the ryght Honorable Maister Doctor Wotton: One of the Quenes Majesties

\textsuperscript{69} Kiefer uses the reprint from the 1581 collection Seneca His Tenne Tragedies Translated into English. All of the quotations from Neville's translation come from this source.
priuye Counsayle,” he wrote it specifically for the following reason.

. . . to admonish all men of theyr fickle Estates, To declare the vnconstant Head of wauering Fortune, her sodaine interchau~ged and soone altered face, And lyvely to expresse the iust reuenge, & fear|ful punishme~ts of horrible Crimes, wherwith the wretched worlde in these our myserable daies pyteously swarmeth. (Neville 1992, a.iii)

It is significant that Neville chose this play and the particular emphasis he used in the decade following the death of Henry VIII and the ascension of Elizabeth I to the throne. England's fate was unknown and unstable in these years, as a result of the Reformation, Henry's profligacy, Elizabeth I's perceived weakness, and Spain's strength. Neville's translation demonstrates again the effect of the particulars of a receiving literary and cultural system on rewriting in general and a translator's individual choices in particular.

Another significant translation of a Roman work was Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Golding (1536-1606) was born the second son of an auditor of the Exchequer and his second wife. His father died when he was eleven, and Golding matriculated at Jesus College, Cambridge as a fellow commoner in 1552. He was never very wealthy, and spent some time in debtor's prison before his death. He is best known for his translation of the *Metamorphoses* because of its influence on Shakespeare. Published in part in 1565 and in full in 1567, Golding's translation became the definitive Ovid of the Elizabethan age. For this reason, Golding's particular interpretive choices in making his translation had immense staying power within the Anglophone system.
The *Metamorphoses* is one of the clearest examples of the challenge Renaissance writers had with Classical material: highly regarded by dint of its being Classical material a priori, nevertheless often shocking and prurient from a Christian perspective. Concerned that readers would be endangered by misreading such texts, translations of Ovid in this era “are invariably accompanied by the sixteenth-century equivalent of government health warnings,” as R.W. Maslen (2000) states. A devout Puritan, Golding's most obvious changes to the text derive from moral objections to its content. One need look no further than the first words of Golding's “Preface too [sic] the Reader” for an explicit example.

I would not wish the simple sort offended for too bee,
When in this booke the heathen names of feynèd Godds they see.
The trewe and everliving God the Paynims did not knowe:
Which causèd them the name of Godds on creatures too bestowe.
For nature beeing once corrupt and knowledge blynded quyght
By *Adams* fall, those little seedes and sparkes of heavenly lyght
That did as yit remayne in man, endevering foorth to burst
And wanting grace and powre too growe too that they were at furst,
Too superstition did decline: and drave the fearefull mynd,
Straunge woorshippes of the living God in creatures for too fynd.
(Golding 1965, 1-9)

Golding goes on to express concern that “Some naughtie persone seeing vyce shewed lyvley in his hew,/Dooth take occasion by and by like vices too ensew” (Golding 1965, 143-44).

Golding's translation was doubly necessary—not just to furnish a version for English readers with no Latin, but to serve as censor and shepherd, and lead the reader's
ship to safe harbor, “For as there bee most wholesome hestes and precepts too bee
found./So are theyr rockes and shallowe shelves too ronne the ship a ground” (Golding
141-42). Reading Ovid in the sixteenth century was dangerous, and required guidance.
For the sixteenth-century pedagogues, Ovid was esteemed very highly “as a fabulist—a
composer of fictional narratives incorporating lessons in moral philosophy” and thus
worth reading and referencing in literature—just not without a filter (Maslen 2000, 17).

Criticism of Ovid as bawdy and irresponsible was hardly new. Heather James
(2003) points out that Seneca, Aemilius Scarus, and Quintilian all accused Ovid of such
immorality even in his “earliest reviews” (James 2003, 343). James is more interested in
the implications of Ovid's political imagination than his bawdiness. Generally, the
Elizabethan commentators on the poem recognize the presence of the political history of
Rome within it, “but they do not single out any one form of government for praise. They
instead applaud all political models that emerge from the tales: republic, monarchy, and
empire are all deemed good, with the single provision that they stand opposed to tyranny”
(James 2003, 350-51). As a work that is focused on the mutability of human bodies and
nature, Ovid's Metamorphoses is easily read as an argument against absolutism of any
kind, and is explicitly read as such by George Sandys in his 1626 translation. James
claims that “Sandys calculates his treatment of Jove's 'Parliament of the Gods' to flatter
the monarch but critique the theory of monarchical absolutism” (James 2003, 353).

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Further, Sandys adds Seneca's counsel to the young Nero to his commentary; James argues that this addition is significant for the time.

By splicing Seneca's counsel onto Ovid's text, Sandys offers a specifically English and early seventeenth-century piece of advice to Charles I, England's willful monarch. From Seneca he takes the resounding praise of counsel, and from Ovid he derives the precise form in which counsel should come: parliament. (James 2003, 353)

By using the prestige of Classical authors such as Ovid and Seneca, Sandys can, through translation, argue for norms that are particular to his cultural system.

E. Bible translation and rewriting

Before we delve into the complex intertextuality of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and its relationship to the processes of modern fan fiction, some background on the state of Bible translation during the English Renaissance is essential. It is during this time period that the most influential and enduring translation of the Bible into English was made. The King James Version (or KJV) however, was not the first English translation of the Bible. The story of how the English Bible developed from a heretical document that doomed its translator to excommunication and execution in the fourteenth century to a translation considered by many to be more original than the original is a classic case of translation in systems.

The first complete Bible in English is credited to John Wycliffe in 1383. Wycliffe (c. 1320-1384) was a seminary professor at Oxford and an influential critic of the
privileged status of the clergy. Before his translation, according to Olga S. Opfell in *The King James Bible Translators* (1982), there had been English renderings of key passages which were largely “mere paraphrases” and “interlinear translations for the use of the priests” (Opfell 1982, 11). His writings express distinctly positions that resonate with later Protestant thought: that a man was responsible to God before the Church, and that he had the right to read God's law in the form of the Bible in as accessible a means as he could.

Like many translators after him Wycliffe relied on the Latin Vulgate as his source. Written as it was before the invention of the printing press, the translation that bears his name circulated in manuscript form.70 Wycliffe had many followers, including his own order of “poor preachers” or Lollards. According to J.C. Carrick (1908), they were “chiefly Oxford graduates trained by Wycliffe himself and sent by him all over the land to preach a plain and simple Christian faith” (Carrick 1908, 132). Wycliffe was frequently in conflict with both the Church and political authority, though he was apparently largely shielded from the worst retaliation by the duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt (Opfell 1982, 12). His teachings were not officially pronounced heretical until the last few months of his life.

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70 Much of what we think of as the Wycliffe Bible was the product of a collective endeavor rather than the work of a single translator. See Campbell, 2011.
According to Gordon Campbell (2011), there is little evidence that Wycliffe did the actual translating rather than his followers. Campbell therefore considers William Tyndale the first translator of the English Bible. William Tyndale (ca. 1494-1536) was a clergyman educated at Oxford and a gifted linguist who had some early Tyndale translated Erasmus' edition of the Greek New Testament into English and wandered continental Europe looking for a place to print it without persecution. In 1525 he began to print his translation in Cologne, but although he was welcome in the Lutheran circles in Germany, Cologne was still a Catholic city and Tyndale was expelled (Campbell 2011, 10). Tyndale succeeded in printing his translation in Worms in 1526, and the resulting pocket-sized New Testament began being smuggled back into England. By October 1526 the translation had been banned and publicly burned at St. Paul's Cathedral where Cuthbert Tunstal, Bishop of London, “claimed to have found 2,000 errors in the translation” (Campbell 2011, 11). Campbell is not a translation scholar and he inadvertently marks himself so, making a distinction between a “literal translation” and an “interpretive” one for example, instead of recognizing that all translations are interpretive, whether literal or otherwise. However he is not wrong in that Tunstal's “errors” were likely not linguistic but rather unauthorized deviations from the interpretation in the Latin Vulgate, which was the official Bible of the Church at the time.

Sir Thomas More and William Tyndale had an extended argument via letters in 1529 over Tyndale's particular translation choices. Tyndale chose to translate *ekklesia* as
“congregation” instead of church—an interpretive move that is explicitly reformist. According to Campbell, “[o]ne of the pillars of More’s denunciation of Tyndale as a heretic was that he had used ‘congregation’ instead of ‘church’, ‘senior’ instead of ‘priest’, ‘love’ (the noun) instead of ‘charity’, and ‘repent’ instead of ‘do penance’ (Campbell 2011, 14). This argument becomes even more fascinating when one notes that ultimately both men were executed by Henry VIII only a year apart.

It is particularly interesting that William Tyndale's struggle to fill the need for an English Bible, a deficiency in the English system, took place during the reign of King Henry VIII. Tyndale's translation of the text into English is a reformist act, but he also wrote a treatise in 1530 entitled The Practyse of Prelates that opposed Henry VIII's divorcing Catherine of Aragon because it violated Scripture. In that very year, according to Opfell, Henry issued a proclamation condemning Tyndale's translation; “[a]t the same time, however, he announced his intention of providing for an authorized version in good time (Opfell 1982, 15). Henry's movement away from the Catholic Church was obviously less philosophical and doctrinal than opportunistic. Tyndale was executed for heresy in 1536 by the forces of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V as he continued his war of letters with Sir Thomas More. It took several generations before the Bible in English was considered universally acceptable, despite the reformist position of the nation-state of England, a position we now refer to as “Protestant.”
Despite his official designation as a heretic, it was Tyndale's Bible that had the
greatest influence on every other English translation of the Bible in the Renaissance.
Campbell estimates that about 83 percent of the King James Version published in 1611
derives from Tyndale, “either directly or indirectly through other Bibles” (Campbell
2011, 15). In 1535 Miles Coverdale was actually the first to publish a translation of the
entire Bible into English, as Tyndale had not finished the Old Testament when he was
executed. It is translated from German and Latin—Luther’s Bible and the Vulgate, as
well as a translation done by Sante Pagnini in 1528. He follows Tyndale in many of his
translation choices, including the ecclesiastical terms (Campbell 2011, 16). In 1537 John
Rogers published what according to Campbell (2011, 16) was “the first authorized
English Bible” but did so under a pseudonym, Thomas Matthew. This translation is
therefore known as the Matthew Bible.

The Pentateuch and the New Testament were Tyndale’s, and Rogers also
used Tyndale’s unpublished translations of the Old Testament books from
Joshua to 2 Chronicles. The rest of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha
were taken from Coverdale’s versions. Tyndale was a heretic, so he could
not be named, but the ornamental initials “WT” appear at the end of
Malachi, immediately before the Apocrypha; similarly, Rogers is
acknowledged only through initials. (Campbell 2011, 18)

Times were definitely changing, and the Archbishop of Canterbury approved of this
translation. The actual physical presence of the book however was insufficient for an
official version of the Church of England. Therefore a new edition was commissioned
which would be known as “The Great Bible” due to its “dignified” size. Coverdale was
commissioned to make the larger Bibles in 1538, which he did with not his own version
but the Matthew Bible. The Inquisition seized most of the finished bound copies, “and unbound pages had been sold to a haberdasher for use in the making of hats” (Campbell 2011, 22).

During the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary from 1553 to 1558 English Bibles were once more disallowed. John Rogers, the publisher of Matthew Bible, was executed. The next English translation was produced by William Whittingham, one of the exiles who fled Bloody Mary. Whittingham became a senior of the English church in Geneva, where according to Campbell, “[h]e was the powerhouse of the Geneva Bible, translating the New Testament himself (published 1557) and helping to coordinate the translation of the Psalms (1559) and the Old Testament (published with the Apocrypha and the New Testament in 1560); the complete Bible was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth” (Campbell 2011, 25). The Old Testament of the Geneva Bible refers back to the Great Bible and Matthew’s Bible, but also relies on scholarly study of the Hebrew source and of translations into Greek and Latin. According to Campbell, the Great Bible is also a large part of the Geneva Bible's New Testament, “. . . but Tyndale’s phrasing is sometimes adopted, and attention is paid to the Latin translation by Theodore Beza, Calvin’s successor in Geneva” (Campbell 2011, 25).

The Geneva Bible was made specifically as a scholarly text, and intended for private study. According to Campbell, the thorough use of paratextual material such as
chapter headings, maps, tables, and notes were useful, but some of the interpretations supplied by these notes were deemed “anti-monarchical,” and the decision to ban notes in the King James Version was a direct reaction to the presence of notes in the Geneva Bible (Campbell 2011, 26). The Geneva Bible was very popular and remained in print until 1640. It was the preferred text of the Puritans and most definitely was one of the versions of the Bible kept by John Milton.

By the beginning of the reign of King James I in 1603, the acceptance of Scripture in English translation was relatively well-established. The form of the Anglican church and its practices were still in transition, however, and the Puritan party that had been held at bay by Queen Elizabeth made an attempt to influence the new king with a petition that asked for further removal from “popish” practices, including further grounding of doctrine in Scripture rather than the authority of the clergy. In response King James called a conference of bishops and moderate Puritans in 1604 at Hampton Court Palace. One concession to the Puritan arguments was a request for a new authorized translation of the Bible. The version in authorized use in the churches was the Bishop's Bible, which Campbell describes as a revised version of the Great Bible “more notable for its dignity and aspirations to majesty than its clarity,” he writes (Campbell 2011, 30).

The plain English of Tyndale and Coverdale, elevated slightly to reflect the standing of the Bible as a holy book, has been edged aside in favour of Latinate rotundity. Its scholarship is, alas, as lax as its prose is inflated. It was clearly the work of senior churchmen who had more pressing duties on their minds. (Campbell 2011, 30)
The idea of a translation of the Bible that had the Geneva's authoritative scholarship but without the perceived anti-monarchic notes appealed to King James, and at the same time a new translation gave the Puritan faction something that it wanted at little cost to him. “Whereas previous translations had been the work of a small number of individuals or a group of slapdash bishops, the KJV was a carefully mediated enterprise in which panels of translators worked collaboratively. Nothing comparable had been attempted since antiquity, when the elders of Israel gathered in Alexandria to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek, and created a Greek text (the Septuagint) with consistent principles and a remarkably even style,” Campbell maintains (Campbell 2011, 39-40).

A full rendering of the translation and reception of the King James Bible goes far beyond the scope of this dissertation. Suffice it to say that the King James Version was both a product of its times and of the lineage of the English Bibles that came before it. Unlike modern translation theory which prioritizes the source text when it comes to interpretation of meaning, the King James Version translators considered each translation to be equally the word of God. Each of the translations “enabled scholars to come ever closer to the original text (Campbell 2011, 66-67). This attitude also throws into relief the way in which John Milton consulted many different versions of the story of the fall of man in his writing of Paradise Lost without acknowledging the non-Christian origin of

71 The translators, organized in six different companies and numbering over 50 individuals, consulted not only the extant English Bibles but also Bibles in Aramaic, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, and German, largely for interpretive clarification. They were less interested in textual analysis per se and more in determining which of the existing translation was the most “inspired” one. See Campbell 2011, 66 ff.
many of them. It is also worth nothing that scholars have never been able to determine if there was one preferred translation that Milton used when writing his epic. His family Bible was a King James Version, and by the time of his writing it was largely held to be the definitive English Bible. It is not unlikely, however, that he also made use of the Geneva Bible.

**F. Milton and midrash**

It is, perhaps, almost too obvious to mention *Paradise Lost* as a form of “Bible fan fiction,” though like Shakespeare, it is an example that is regularly used in when fans engage in debates concerning fan fiction's legitimacy. *Paradise Lost* enlarges the story of the 24 verses in the third book of *Genesis* into twelve books of almost 1000 lines each. Milton deepens and expands the characterization of every character from the Bible verses (Adams, Eve, and the serpent) and adds new ones. Milton interprets those verses in terms of the system in which it is being written and argues for its own place in the literary canon. “Sing Heav’nly Muse,” Milton pleads in line 6, and then claims that his epic, “. . . with no middle flight intends to soar/Above th’ Aonian Mount, while it pursues/Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhyme” (*Paradise Lost* I. 14-16). Milton, as well as his contemporaries, achieved much that was lasting, and as Lefevere would put it, they achieved “literary fame” through the particular creativity of their rewritings. Their writing fit into their literary system in ways that filled the requirements of a growing
nation that during Milton's time was beginning to settle into its new status of Empire and a leading force in Europe. Like Vergil before him (which I will explore more deeply in the following chapter), Milton contributed to this shift by borrowing prestige from and rewriting an already prestigious text.

In his discussion of Milton and the scriptural tradition, Leland Ryken argues that Milton was simultaneously using the form and style of the classical epic poems of Homer and Vergil and subverting them into a kind of anti-epic in three specific ways.

(1) He replaced the heroic (military) values of epic tradition with pastoral and domestic values; (2) he changed the traditional epic theme of human greatness to an emphasis on divine greatness and human smallness; (3) he spiritualized epic motifs (such as warfare, kingship, heroism) that in the earlier tradition had been physical and earthly. (Ryken 1984, 45)

Ryken argues that Renaissance writers were accustomed to see epic constructions in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, and that Exodus in particular held much that was familiar to a humanist versed in the *Odyssey* or the *Aeneid*. He overstates his claim that “Milton elevates the common and domestic to a status that they never have in classical epic” (Ryken 1984, 51): Odysseus's homecoming scenes with his dog, son, and wife (in that ascending order) serve as examples of elevated domesticity. However, the sheer quantity of narrative time Milton spends on the domestic life of Adam and Eve is greater than any in classical epic, so Ryken's central point is well taken.
Ryken does not spend much time on the demonic scenes of *Paradise Lost*. Their military nature and the focus on Lucifer's quest for glory muddy his main argument. It is clear that the text as a whole marks this quest for glory as evil and therefore still fits in with a view of *Paradise Lost* as an anti-epic. In fact, Ryken argues that there exist within the Old and New Testaments smaller epics that can been seen to have influenced Milton's writing. He delineates Genesis as a domestic epic, Exodus as an anti-epic in general, and Revelation as a spiritual epic (Ryken 1984, 79). What he fails to notice and what Milton scholarship failed to notice for a large swath of its Christian-centric history is the influence on *Paradise Lost* of exclusively Jewish interpretations of scripture.

The influence of Greek and Roman literature can be easily seen in the style and form of Milton's work, especially in *Paradise Lost*. The content that he was explicitly rewriting, however, came directly from both the Christian Bible and from the Jewish tradition of *midrash*. Midrash (plural *midrashim*) are exegetical texts in the Jewish tradition that expand, interrogate, or explain inconsistencies in scripture. Most often they take the form of retellings or rewritings that closely resemble the narratives of fan fiction.

In her article “‘Transformative Work: Midrash and Fanfiction’” (2011), Rabbi Rachel Barenblat explicitly links the midrashic tradition with that of fan fiction.

Through midrash we reveal Torah's meanings. Midrash allows us to posit answers to our questions, to explore hidden motivations for mysterious moments in Torah, to offer explanation. Sometimes through midrash we temper Torah, rendering it more comprehensible to a contemporary
audience or more in-time with contemporary values. Midrash allows us to celebrate the loopholes and inconsistencies in Torah. They are not (only) accidents or signs of where the text was stitched together from disparate elements, but rather the hooks placed there by God precisely for the purpose of giving us something to work with. (Barenblat 2011, 172)

Barenblat continues by emphasizing that fan fiction is the fandom community's primary form of commentary. “In media fandom, as in Judaism, community is created and strengthened through creative engagement with story” (Barenblat 2011, 173). Rewriting is the mode of that engagement in both midrash and fandom.

Golda Werman argues in *Milton and Midrash* (1995) that *Paradise Lost* not only resembles midrash in that it is an expansion and explanation of a relatively short section of Torah, but that Milton was explicitly reading and referencing midrashim in his poem. By the later Middle Ages, Werman states, Christians were studying Jewish sources not merely for the purpose of disproving them and proving Christianity's superiority but because the Protestant movement was in need of an exegetical tradition that was separate from Catholicism (Werman 1995, 25). Werman's specific contribution to the field of Miltonic sources is the discovery that there was a trend of Latin translation of Hebraic material in the seventeenth century. Several earlier Miltonists had discovered similarities between certain midrashim and Milton's epic poem. None of them, however, could prove that Milton had a sufficient combination of reading knowledge of Hebrew and rabbinic exegetical methodology. Werman argues, quite rightly, that it is not necessary to assume that Milton was a rabbinic scholar in order to believe that he made use of midrash in his
creation of *Paradise Lost*.

One particular midrash, *Piirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer*, translated into Latin by Willem Vorstius in 1644, appears to have had a great deal of influence on *Paradise Lost*, especially in its description and organization of the angels. According to Werman, “virtually every important idea connected with Milton's depiction of Satan and the fallen angels can be found in *Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer*” (Werman 1995, 49). This is particularly significant because the bulk of our cultural understanding of Satan is not Biblical at all. The reading of Genesis 3 that posits Satan in the place of the serpent is exegetical rather than textual. The cultural endurance of Milton's version of the Fall of Lucifer resembles to that of the iconic Sherlock Holmes wearing a deerstalker hat and smoking a deeply curved pipe. Neither of these details are canonical, but they are persistent common knowledge. *Paradise Lost*'s impact on the cultural narrative of Satan goes still deeper, however, because it does not begin with Milton's narrative but the Jewish tradition.

Werman goes into deep textual detail arguing the parallels between *Paradise Lost* and *Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer*, but I am less interested in proving a relationship than in analyzing the significance of the relationship. Milton was a Puritan, and like the Puritan faction that called on King James to authorize a new translation, he argued for the

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72 This view is now well accepted. D.C. Allen wrote of this relationship in 1948 and even references the Latin translation by Vorstius. Though Allen does not consider the midrash as much a source as a “symptom,” the fact that the relationship between Milton and midrash had already been shown but not widely acknowledged suggests traditional assumptions and prejudices.
authority of Scripture alone. At the same time, he clearly engaged in both his own authoritative interpretation and engaged sources that go beyond Scripture. In order to do so, he adapts sources that have their own authentic authority—the authority of scholarly rabbis whose exegesis is as inspired by God as the translators of the King James Version. During a time when English Protestants were still struggling to find an interpretation of Scripture that was unique to them, rabbinic midrash offered a prestigious way to fill that deficiency, to use Itamar Even-Zohar's terms.73

Milton engages in practices that are so similar to the practices of fan fiction that fans and scholars alike have referred to it as such.74 He takes a story that is already very well-known by his target audience and reframes it, explains it, and fills in its gaps in such a compelling way that it is considered “canonical” in its own right. His particular depiction of the fall of Satan and the expulsion from the garden of Eden have become such cultural currency in the Anglophone tradition that the online Biblical ministry gotquestions.org addresses “Is 'Paradise Lost' [sic] by John Milton biblical?”75 as one of their “miscellaneous Bible questions.” The fact that Genesis 3 does not even include the word “Satan” is not common knowledge, and the fact that quotes such as “better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven” (Paradise Lost I, 263) are cited without reference demonstrate the fluidity with which Milton's magnum opus has entered into general

73 See Chapter 1, page 15 of this dissertation.
74 These include Brian Attebery (2014), Stanton Wortham (2011), and Natasha Simonova (2015). Simonova complicates the relationship of fan fiction and historical literary rewriting in much the same way that I do in this study.
75 The answer, in short, is no and can be read at http://www.gotquestions.org/Paradise-Lost.html.
background knowledge in Anglophone culture and beyond.

**G. Conclusion**

Rewritings in Renaissance English after the first spate of translations serve in several ways to supplement the developing cultural power of English literature. Rewritings filled cultural deficiencies in the literary system, used Classical and Biblical referents to make cultural and political points within the system, and worked to claim an even higher prestige than that of the borrowed system(s). English Renaissance writers were translating both Latin and Greek works into the vernacular, and it is no surprise that they often relied on the Latin translations of Greek texts when translating them. Lady Jane Lumley's translation of *Iphigeneia at Aulis* does so, while also reinterpreting the play in a way that was specifically relevant to her as a young woman still living under her father's authority. Alexander Neville's translation of Seneca's *Oedipus* likewise demonstrates his particular interpretive take on the power of fate and of princes in the decade following the death of Henry VIII. Both these young translators used existing texts as the means by which to express their personal views about issues of societal importance, not unlike many young people do today with fan fiction. Arthur Golding, by contrast, translated Ovid's *Metamophoses* in a censorious way, protecting vulnerable readers from possible moral corruption. This, too, is a system-specific example of the power of rewriting.
William Shakespeare's rewriting of Classical Greek and Roman literature and history is so extensive that it can only be touched on in a dissertation of this scope. For the purposes of this chapter I limited my discussion of his classical rewriting to *Troilus and Cressida* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In the former, Shakespeare strips the Homeric heroes of their honor, ridiculing their choices and ending the play in tragedy but with no character development, making a textual argument for the folly of Homeric virtue in general. I suggest that this play is an example of the movement by Elizabethan poets away from a systemic model of using Greek and Roman references primarily for the prestige they bring, and instead toward a critical look at the cultural values and literary norms those references introduce. In the case of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which Shakespeare's reading of Golding's Ovid is quite obvious, Shakespeare is playing with the different levels of audience within and without his production: the onstage audience, the attending audience, and the reading audience. For all the caution that Golding advised, his translation of the *Metamorphoses* is transformed and translated yet again, and much of the irreverence of the source put back where he had removed it. Thus is Ovid rewritten once more. Shakespeare's use of gender swapping, though it is different from the use fan writers generally engage in today, had a similar purpose. *As You Like It* comments upon its source text in a way that destabilizes traditional gender roles, which is one of multiple ways that fan writers utilize the practice.
Finally, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* enlarges the story of 24 verses from the third book of *Genesis* into 12 books of almost 1000 lines each. It deepens and expands the characterization of every character (Adam, Eve, and the serpent) and adds new ones. It interprets expulsion from the Garden based on the system in which it is being written and argues for its own place in the literary canon. At the same time *Paradise Lost* continues the enlarging of Biblical exegesis begun with the earliest translations of Scripture into English and does so by introducing the exegesis of another system: that of rabbinic midrashim. Milton borrows prestige from the classical heroic epics and explanation from Jewish scholarship and still manages to create a text that becomes more original than original in popular Anglophone thought, replacing the Genesis story of the Fall of Man with a richer, more romantic retelling.

The English Renaissance was a golden era of translating and rewriting, meeting the demands of the political and cultural system. Like rewriters before and after them, the artists who created the literature of the period were active readers, engaging with texts and reforming them to express their own understanding of both the words and the world.
CHAPTER 6
THE AENEID AS TRANSFORMATIVE WORK

A. Introduction

The Aeneid is one of the pieces of canonical literature held by fandom to be most like modern fan fiction. Fanlore's entry on “fan fiction” names it as the earliest example of fan fiction's origins in “prehistory” though it is generally agreed that modern fan fiction begins with the advent of copyright and the distinction between professional and amateur writing.76 This distinction is admittedly more economic and cultural than narrative. Vergil elevates a minor character from Homer's Iliad to the level of protagonist in his own epic, and then puts him through all the trials of Odysseus only to have him breeze through them in less than half the time. In fandom terms Aeneas resembles a “Mary Sue”: a self-inserted character who outdoes the protagonist of the source text, and with more style and grace.77 This chapter begins by discussing the context in which Vergil composed his masterwork, and by detailing its narrative and cultural impact from a systems perspective. It then examines some of the rewritings of the Aeneid in a medieval context to examine the purpose and the impact of this type of interpretive active reading and its similarity to the conventions and forms of fan fiction.

In order to fully comprehend the dynamic at the intersection of Greek and Roman

76 The entry can be found at http://fanlore.org/wiki/Fanfiction .
77 For more on “Mary Sue” see http://fanlore.org/wiki/Mary_Sue. Mary Sue characters are largely thought of as female as a reflection of the demographics of fandom. Nevertheless, the narrative-shaping power of Aeneas and Vergil's need for him to surpass both Achilles and Odysseus is otherwise parallel.
culture in the centuries between Rome's physical conquest of Greece and the colonization of Greek literature by the Roman perspective, a systems view is crucial. The Roman system was “deficient,” to use Even-Zohar’s terminology, in a “high,” or “canonized” system of literature and needed the prestige that filling that gap would bring. Roman writers constructed a high-prestige literary system by appropriating the literature and culture of the Greeks, who by the Hellenistic era, as Tim Whitmarsh explains: “presented themselves as educators, but now as ‘the educators of all the world, of both Greeks and barbarians’” (Whitmarsh 2001, 8). This was in the same century as the construction of the library at Alexandria, “containing ‘all the books in the world’ . . . an attempt to construct prestigious cultural links back to the old Greek world . . . It was in Hellenistic Egypt that paideia [Greek education] first began to assume the task of creating cultural continuity (especially in situations where that continuity could not be taken for granted) that we see so visibly marked in Roman Greece” (Whitmarsh 2001, 8-9).

Even-Zohar himself uses the example of Greece and Rome when talking about prestige: “The reasons for prestige are various, as for instance, when a Slt [source text] is old and there is no established local literature to begin with. This was the position of Greek vs. Roman culture, and of both vs. all European literatures” (Even-Zohar 1978, 49). The second half of that sentence is revealing, for in moving from Greek versus Roman to both versus all European literatures, Even-Zohar recognizes the product of the Roman colonization of Greek literature: a polysystem that includes both systems. Further,
moreover, it is my contention that the Roman system worked such that “. . . procedures from the inventory of certain polysystems are ‘transplanted’ into another one, where they can become ‘weapons’ in the struggle for the canonized position” (Lefevere 1979, 72). This struggle eventually left Greek literature with little identity but one that was yoked to the Roman Empire. In later encounters, as Even-Zohar puts it, of “both vs. all European literatures,” Greek narratives would be told in Roman frameworks, with every Greek god given a Roman name and the Roman values centralized.

We can observe that the Roman literary system struggled with the Greek for the canonized position in the attitude of several Roman writers, all writing within a few years of the beginning of Augustus’ reign in 27 B.C.E. In his _De re publica_, itself a response to Plato’s _Politeia_, Cicero has his interlocutors express the following opinion about the Greeks in a discussion about the rule of kings and the early (pre-Republic) Romans.

_Scipio:_ ergo his annis quadringentis Romae rex erat?
_Laelius:_ et superbus quidem.
_Scipio:_ quid supra?
_Laelius:_ iustissimus, et deinceps retro usque ad Romulum, qui ab hoc tempore anno sescentesimo rex erat.
_Scipio:_ ergo ne iste quidem pervetus?
_Laelius:_ minime, ac prope senescente iam Graecia.
_Scipio:_ cedo, num, barbarorum Romulus rex fuit?
_Laelius:_ si ut Graeci dicunt omnis aut Graios esse aut barbaros, vereor ne barbarorum rex fuerit; sin id nomen moribus dandum est, non linguis, non Graecos minus barbaros quam Romanos puto.
_Scipio:_ atqui ad hoc de quo agitur non quae rimus gentem, ingenia quae rimus. si enim et prudentes homines et non veteres reges habere voluerunt, utor neque perantiquis neque inhumanis ac feris testibus.

[Scipio: You say truly, and yet not four centuries have elapsed since there was a

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king in Rome.
*Laelius*: And he was a proud king.
*Scipio*: But who was his predecessor?
*Laelius*: He was an admirably just one; and, indeed, we must bestow the same praise on all his predecessors, as far back as Romulus, who reigned about six centuries ago.
*Scipio*: Even he, then, is not very ancient.
*Laelius*: No, he reigned when Greece was already becoming old.
*Scipio*: Agreed. Was Romulus, then, think you, king of a barbarous people?
*Laelius*: Why, as to that, if we are to follow the example of the Greeks, who say that all people are either Greeks or barbarians, I am afraid that we must confess that he was a king of barbarians; but if this name belong rather to manners than to languages, then I believe the Greeks were just as barbarous as the Romans.
*Scipio*: But with respect to the present question, we do not so much need to inquire into the nation as into the disposition. For if intelligent men, at a period so little remote, desired the governing of kings, you will confess that I am producing authorities that are neither antiquated, rude, nor insignificant.] *De Republica* I.58, trans. Thatcher.)

This episode is interesting for two reasons. First, Cicero wants to establish the fact that the ancient Greeks were no less primitive than the ancient Romans were: “If this name belong rather to manners than to languages, then I believe the Greeks were just as barbarous . . .” Second, like Vergil after him, Cicero has used a Greek framework within which to make this claim: his response to Plato’s *Politeia*, a text that among other things suggests that the ideal form of government is that of enlightened monarchs. Despite Cicero’s (sometimes inconsistent) support of the Roman Republic, the choice to use Plato's format while making this argument is interesting, for it supports the narrative that the early Romans were good, wise, and simple men (“neither antiquated, rude, nor insignificant”) while attempting to raise them to the level of their Greek contemporaries in prestige. He claims that the early Roman kings were all just, “as far back as Romulus, who reigned about six centuries ago,” and because Greece was already ancient at that
Cicero also attempts to bring Roman thought to the prestigious level of the Greek in his *Tusculan Disputations*, choosing the Latin language for his philosophizing and arguing for the superiority of Roman ethics and warfare. In fact, he uses the language of conquest in reference to Greek writings, as Tim Whitmarsh explains.

Cicero is clear . . . that Greek culture is useful and acceptable only when it is dominated by Roman power, not vice versa: hence the necessity of a lengthy preamble that celebrates the superiority of Roman achievements, prior to any statement of allegiance to Hellenic values. Between Romans, Greek *paideia* must always appear the object of socio-economic exploitation, not (solely) of veneration: it only has value (in both the mercantile and the aesthetic senses) when it is taken over from its native context and resited in Rome’s agonistic market of elite *ambitio*.

(Whitmarsh 2001, 13-14)

Cicero himself is one of the first and strongest of those who introduced and resited Greek *paideia* in the Roman context. His *De re publica* and *De legibus* were explicit responses to and conversations with Plato's *Politeia* and *Nomoi*. Much of his work and thought was devoted to applying Plato's ideas to a Roman reality.

Another Roman writer in this era who discusses the Greek question is Horace. In a letter written to Augustus himself at the same time that Vergil was composing the *Aeneid* (circa 20 B.C.E.), Horace expounds on the merit of Roman poetry and warns against preferring Greek poetry simply because it is older:

*Interdum uolgus rectum uidet, est ubi peccat.*
*Si ueteres ita miratur laudatque poetas*
ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet, errat;
si quaedam nimis antique, si pleraque dure
dicere credit eos, ignaue multa fatetur;
et sapit et mecum facit et Ioue iudicat aequo.

Sometimes the populace see right; sometimes they are wrong. If they admire and extol the ancient poets so as to prefer nothing before, to compare nothing with them, they err; if they think and allow that they express some things in an obsolete, most in a stiff, many in a careless manner; they both think sensibly, and agree with me, and determine with the assent of Jove himself. (Horace Epistulae II, 63-68 trans. Smart)

At this time, there were many Roman notables whose love for Greek literature bordered on what conservative Roman nobles would consider traitorous. Horace is clearly invested in bringing Greek literature down from its pedestal while at the same time admitting its value. One of the ways in which he does this is to remind his readers that the Greeks had been conquered by Rome.

\[\textit{Graecia capta ferum uictorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio; sic horridus ille defluxit numerus Saturnius, et graue uirus munditiae pepulere; sed in longum tamen aevum manserunt hodieque manent uestigia ruris. Serus enim Graecis admouit acumina chartis et post Punica bella quietus quaerere coepit, quid Sophocles et Thespis et Aeschylus utile ferrent. Temptauit quoque rem si digne uertere posset, et placuit sibi, natura sublimis et acer; nam spirat tragicum satis et feliciter audet, sed turpem putat inscite metuitque lituram.}\]

Captive Greece took captive her fierce conqueror, and introduced her arts into rude Latium. Thus flowed off the rough Saturnian numbers, and delicacy expelled the rank venom: but for a long time there remained, and at this day remain traces of rusticity. For late [the Roman writer] applied his genius to the Grecian pages; and enjoying rest after the Punic wars, began to search what useful matter Sophocles, and Thespis, and Aeschylus afforded: he tried, too, if he could with dignity translate their works; and
succeeded in pleasing himself, being by nature [of a genius] sublime and strong; for he breathes a spirit tragic enough, and dares successfully; but fears a blot, and thinks it disgraceful in his writings. (Horace Epistulae II, 156-167, trans. Smart)

In the first line, Graecia capta ferum uictorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio, the usual object of inferre is not artes, but signa (military standards) or arma (military arms). What is to be understood is that Greek arts threaten the feral nature of the Romans (Whitmarsh 2001, 15). In addition Horace engages with a narrative of the simple, “rustic” Roman, who can enjoy Sophocles, Thespis, and Aeschylus, and even translate, for he has a “sublime and strong” nature, and a “spirit tragic enough,” and “dares successfully,” and yet retains an inferiority complex about such writing. He “but fears a blot, and thinks it disgraceful in his writings.” Horace’s goal here is to abolish that feeling of inferiority in Roman writers. It is clear from Horace’s letter that Greek literature had reached the point that Lefevere describes: “When the image of the original is no longer uniformly positive in the target culture, more liberties are likely to be taken in translation, precisely because the original is no longer considered a “quasi-sacred” text” (Lefevere 1992, 91). These liberties are taken not only in translation, but in other forms of transformative rewriting.

Another century after Vergil’s Aeneid, the attitude that Greek literature would corrupt Rome from within could still be found among Roman writers. Juvenal, a writer of brutal, hyperbolic satire in the first century C.E., spends the vast majority of his Satire III maligning the Greeks:

quae nunc diuitibus gens acceptissima nostris
et quos praecipue fugiam, properabo fateri,
nequit obstant. non possum ferre, Quirites,
Graecam urbem. quamuis quota portio faecis Achaei?
iam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes
et linguam et mores et cum tibicine chordas
obliquas nec non gentilia tympana secum
uexit et ad circum iussas prostare puellas.
ite, quibus grata est picta lupa barbara mitra.

And now let me speak at once of the race which is most dear to our rich men, and
which I avoid above all others; no shyness shall stand in my way. I cannot abide,
Quirites, a Rome of Greeks; and yet what fraction of our dregs comes from
Greece? The Syrian Orontes has long since poured into the Tiber, bringing with it
its lingo and its manners, its flutes and its slanting harp-strings; bringing too the
timbrels of the breed, and the trulls who are bidden ply their trade at the Circus.
Out upon you, all ye that delight in foreign strumpets with painted headdresses!
(Juvenal *Saturae*, III, 58-66, trans. Ramsay)

Note here the similarities between this view of the (Eastern) Greek peoples as lazy, over-
luxuriant, and past their prime, and the stereotypical European view of the East that
Edward Said describes in *Orientalism* (1979). In fact, the idea that the ancient Greeks had
a system worth appropriating whereas the modern Greeks are merely shells of their race’s
former greatness is also a common theme of Orientalists. Although Said situated Greece
on the Western side of the East-West cultural divide, this dynamic can actually be seen as
an enduring effect of the Roman absorption of the Greek system; clearly to the Romans
the Greeks were part of the exotic, effete, and corrupt East.

Greek *paideia* became a weapon with which Roman system could (and did
successfully) supplant the Greek cultural system as the canonized position. Moreover, the
Romans succeeded in constructing an identity for themselves that elevated their system to
that of the Greeks while substituting their interpretations of Greek literature for the original as their Empire grew and more of their citizens were unable to read Greek. Whenever we see the term Greco-Roman used or observe the Roman gods’ names used interchangeably for Greek gods’ names, we see the effect of the Roman absorption of the Greek system. One can also see this effect in Western European views of Greek literature and translation choices, which I have discussed elsewhere. The legacy of the Roman colonization of Greek literature is that each successive Western power has continued to claim that legacy, disregarding the effect it has on actually understanding Greek texts in a Greek context.

B. Vergil rewriting Odysseus

It was during the struggle between Roman military strength and Greek cultural strength in the first century B.C.E. that Vergil set himself the task of writing the nation-building epic poem that the Aeneid both was and was always intended to be. Poetry written during the late Republic “seemed hopelessly fragmented” (Griffin 1986, 3). Catullus and his circle had no interest in serious thought on the state of government or society and Lucretius was more interested in separating individuals from the state. Jasper Griffin (1986, 3) sees Vergil as a figure who is “responding to a crisis both in politics and in poetry,” and this reading of Vergil is in agreement with my reading of the system in

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78 I have argued this point in my Master's thesis, for example: Euripides' Bakkhai and the Colonization of Sophrosune (2008), from which some of this research comes. Lefevere (1979) similarly observes that by the eighteenth century there was a competition between French and British translators—translators from the then-primary imperial powers—to determine which civilization was the more “true successor” to the “glory that was Greece.”
which he is writing and his role in the system itself. Griffin also spends some time
discussing the ways that Vergil was influenced by the pastoral poems of Theocritus when
writing his *Eclogues*, as well as by Hesiod when writing the *Georgics*. By the time Vergil
began the *Aeneid*, he was much practiced in borrowing both content and meter from the
Greeks. The significance of borrowing from the Greeks is noted by Griffin.

The Romans, a tough and hard-headed people, conquered the world but
found themselves confronted by the enormous and undeniable cultural
superiority of Greece. In 250 BC [sic] the Romans possessed no literature
at all, except for a few things like simple songs, formulae, and
incantations, and a code of law. They found themselves facing the
overwhelming splendours of Greek art, philosophy, literature . . . . On
most of the peoples with whom the Greeks came into contact the effect of
[their] formal perfection was deeply demoralizing . . . . For all the peoples
who did not already have literary works of their own, the seductions of
Greek form, and the possibility which it opened up of an international
audience, were too strong. (Griffin 1986, 7)

Griffin is writing within a framework in which Vergil is a heroic figure and the task of
creating a Latin literature is seen as an almost impossible one in the face of Greek literary
excellence. It is important to remember, however, that at this point in time Greece had
been literally conquered and made subject to the Roman Empire. Roman literature may
not have been able to challenge the prestige of Greek literature (though, as it turned out, it
did not take very long to do so), but the challenge was made much easier by the level of
institutional power that the Roman republic and soon the Roman Empire held.

Vergil's first intent had been to write an epic explicitly in praise of Augustus
(Griffin 1986, 14), and if he had lived to finish the *Aeneid*, it is entirely possible that there
would have been more explicit connection to the nascent empire than there is. What Vergil did instead was to adapt the most venerable and glorious poems known to antiquity to his new project of establishing a Roman literature. The traditional reading of the *Aeneid* is that, although it totals only half the books of one Homeric epic, it contains both the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, in that order. More recent scholarship has complicated that reading, however. Although the larger structure of the *Aeneid* can be mapped onto the larger structures of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—a sea journey toward home; a war with heroic asides—the *Aeneid* cannot be so neatly divided in half. Francis Cairns argues that the *Aeneid* is more thoroughly an *Odyssey* from start to finish, with occasional “iliadic” moments. The overall story is of a homecoming—to a new home, to be sure—but just as Odysseus must fight for his home once he arrives, so too must Aeneas. Cairn's argument seems to be based largely on the esteem he believes antiquity had for the *Odyssey* in general—it had been the first Greek work translated into Latin verse for Roman pedagogy (Cairns 1989, 182) and overall treats with values dear to Roman hearts: home, hearth, and concord. Cairns tries to argue that Vergil holds Odysseus high as a moral character and exemplum for his Aeneas, but his evidence is thin. It is true that the Homeric tradition considered Odysseus's dishonesty less of a fault than many modern readers do, but I would suggest that Vergil, by way of Aeneas's retelling of the Trojan horse episode, demonstrates a great deal of contempt for Odysseus as a moral character. Instead Vergil uses him as a foil against which to define an Aeneas *more* moral, as well as more successful, within the framework of his own tale. Further, it is a characteristically
Roman value system that prefers “pious Aeneas” to “wily Odysseus.” Hellenic values cannot be conflated with Roman ones and labeled as one category, namely “antiquity.”

The poem begins with the arrival of Aeneas at Dido's Carthage, where—much like Odysseus and Alkinoos—the wanderer tells the host monarch his story. In order to take a closer look at Vergil's reception of Odysseus and the values in to his version of the character, I have highlighted below the nine times Odysseus is mentioned by name (that is, by “Ulixes,” which is what Vergil calls him) in the Aeneid. The first is in book II, as Aeneas is recounting the Fall of Troy to Dido and her court. Odysseus appears a great deal this story, as both the device of the horse and the man who was left behind to trick the Trojans into accepting it beyond the gate belonged to Odysseus.

O miseri, quae tanta insania, cives?
Creditis avectos hostis? Aut ulla putatis
dona carere dolis Danaum? Sic notus Ulixes?
aut hoc inclusi ligno occultantur Achivi,
aut haec in nostros fabricata est machina muros
inspectura domos venturaque desuper urbi,
aut aliquis latet error; equo ne credite, Teucri.
Quicquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentis. (Aeneid II, 44-49, emphasis added)

O wretched ones, why so much folly, citizens?
You believe the enemy has been taken off? Or you consider the gift to be free of Greek deceit? Is thus Ulixes known?
Either Acheans are hidden within this wood,
Or it was built as an engine against our walls
Looking into our homes and coming to the city from above,
Or some other snare awaits. Don't believe the horse, Trojans.
Whatever it is, I fear the Greeks even bearing gifts.79

79 The translations of the Aeneid into English are my own.
“Sic notus Ulixes” is a bit idiomatic; literally it means, “thus Ulixes is known?” and translated more freely becomes something like, “does that sound like Ulixes to you?” There is emphasis on the dolus of the Greeks: a deceit that is a device, artifice, or contrivance. This is what Odysseus is known for; but it is the dolus of all Odysseus' people, not just of Odysseus. Odysseus' characteristic trickery becomes the Greeks' characteristic trickery. In this, we can see the structural orientalism of the Roman cultural system as discussed above. The Greeks are not to be trusted. This has become an aphorism: Beware Greeks bearing gifts. (found literally, in the last line above, “I fear the Greeks, and/even bearing gifts.”)

The next appearance of Ulixes's name emphasizes this theme:

\textit{Invidia postquam pellacis Ulixi—}
haud ignota loquor—superis concessit ab oris, adflictus vitam in tenebris luctuque trahebam, et casum insontis mecum indignabar amici.
Nec tacui demens, et me, fors si qua tulisset, si patrios umquam remessem victor ad Argos, promisi ultorem, et verbis odia aspera movi. Hinc mihi prima mali labes, \textbf{hinc semper Ulixes criminibus terrere novis}, hinc spargere voces in volgum ambigus, et quaerere conscius arma. \textit{(Aeneid II, 90-99, emphasis added)}

\textit{Because of the ill will of deceitful Ulixes—}
I say nothing not well known here—he passed away, I dragged my life on under a sorrowful shadow, and resented the fall of my innocent friend. Nor could I hold my peace, out of my mind, I predicted that if I had the chance and returned ever victor to native Argos, I'd be his avenger. And I stirred up hopeless hate with my words. From then began my fall, \textbf{from then always Ulixes}
terrorized me with accusations, sprinkling rumors among the uncertain men, and knowingly seeking weapons.

This excerpt continues the story told by Sinon; “because of the ill will of deceitful Ulixes . . .” is how he came to be left behind on the shore. The pellacis, from pellax, is related to ποικιλομήτης (poikilometis), according to Lewis and Short. Ποικιλομήτης is one of Odysseus's many Homeric epithets that derive from μῆτις (metis): Odysseus's defining virtue. In a Greek context, metis is “cleverness, tricky wisdom.” Metis is the mother of Athena: the goddess Zeus consumed before giving birth to Athena from his forehead. Metis is the word for the wiliness of all these: the god-king Zeus who disguises himself to take lovers and discover the unpious; Athena the goddess of wisdom and diplomacy; and Odysseus the hero who survives through the strength of his wits. It is the defining virtue of all three. But in a Latin context it means “seductive, deceitful.” These words are in the mouth of Sinon, who maligns his general in order to convince the Trojans to trust him: haud ignota loquor: “I say nothing not well known here,” or, idiomatically, “as everyone knows . . .” Everyone knows that Odysseus is both grudging and deceitful—at least, all Trojans and Roman audiences appear to know this. But neither of those adjectives accurately describe the Odysseus of the Odyssey. They are Vergil's Ulixes, not Homer's Odysseus. Vergil's Ulixes is full of malice; Sinon tells of being harrassed by him in the second half of this excerpt. Moreover, though Sinon is lying about his being Ulixes's enemy and outcast of the Greek camp, the reason he is so believable is that the Trojans and the Roman audience both recognize the Ulixes he describes as the truth as they know it.
The next occurrence of Ulixes's name is spoken by Sinon again, describing the (fabricated) reason the Greeks have for losing their confidence, namely the theft of the Palladium by Ulixes and Diomedes.

“All the hope of the Greeks and faith in their war always rested in the assistance of Pallas (Athena). From the moment that impious son of Tydeus (Diomedes) and wicked contriver Ulixes had snatched away the fateful Palladium from the sacred temple, all the sentries of the fortress cut down, they seized the sacred effigy, they dared to touch the spotless chaplets of a goddess with bloody hands; from then hope for the Greeks slowly trickled away, they were broken men, the mind of the goddess against them. Nor did Tritonia (Athena) give signs of dubious portent.

“All the hope of the Greeks and faith in their war always rested in the assistance of Pallas (Athena).” The word that follows, which describes how Ulixes and Diomedes are to blame for this loss of hope and faith is “impius,” the word that is the literal opposite of Aeneas's defining virtue. It describes Diomedes simply, but Ulixes's modifier goes further: “scelerumque inventor:” the “wicked contriver.” The story of the theft of the
Palladium is not in Homer, though it does exist in Greek tradition—it is told in the Little Iliad of the Epic Cycle, and it is depicted in vase paintings. The impiety of the act is up for debate; although the Palladium was an artifact sacred to Athena, it also provided protection for the city of Troy, which could not be taken while the Palladium remained within the city walls. Athena's desire to see Troy fall could easily have outweighed her desire to see the Palladium remain unmolested, and in fact the Little Iliad has nothing to say about Athena's feelings on the matter. It is, however, a relatively easy move for Vergil to depict that act as wicked and impious, especially as a foil for Aeneas, who protects his household gods as he flees Troy and brings them with him to Italy.

The next two appearances of Ulixes's name both come with the same epithet, *dirus*, which Lewis and Short define as “fearful, awful.”

Illos patefactus ad auras  
reddit equus, laetique cavo se robore promunt  
Thessandrus Sthenelusque duces, et *dirus Ulixes*,  
demissum lapsi per funem, Acamasque, Thoasque,  
Pelidesque Neoptolemus, primusque Machaon,  
et *dirus* Ulixes, Acamasque, Thoasque,  
Pelidean Neoptolemus, and first Machaon, and Menelaus,  
et Epeos, the man who made that very device. 

80 The Little Iliad was part of the Epic Cycle, which is discussed further in chapter 6. It was comprised of four books, but only 30 lines survive. What we know about its contents largely derives from references in other surviving works, such as Aristotle's *Poetics*. 

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Et iam porticibus vacuis Iunonis asyro
custodes leciti Phoenix et dirus Ulixes
praedam adservabant. (Aeneid II 761-63, emphasis added)

And now in the empty doorway of Juno's sanctuary
the chosen guards Phoenix and dread Ulixes
were guarding the plunder.

Dirus also contains aspects of both “ill-omened,” and “dread.” It is the word Ovid uses to
describe Circe in Metamorphoses 14.278, that Horace uses to describe Hannibal in (C. 2,
12,2 al), and that Vergil himself uses to describe the Furies within the Aeneid itself. Its
Greek equivalent, δεινός (deinos), is used in Homer to describe Charybdis, but in that
case it also expresses the marvelous aspect of the dread and terrible; that is, they are
literal marvels. Mighty shields can be δεινός, as well as Odysseus's wisdom. In the Greek
context, the dangerous and fearful are not automatically also wicked, whereas in the
Roman context they are always to be avoided.

With the recounting of the fall of Troy over, Aeneas invokes Odysseus by name
two more times as he tells the story of how Aeneas came to Carthage. He names Ulixes
as he tells of the landing on the island of the Cyclopes, and one of Odysseus's men,
conveniently left behind in this version, tells Aeneas of what had happened there.

Sum patria ex Ithaca, comes infelicis Ulix,
nomine Achaemenides, Troiam genitore Adamasto
paupere—mansissetque utinam fortuna!--profectus. (Aeneid III 613-15,
emphasis added)

I am from the fatherland of Ithaca, comrade of unlucky Ulixes,
named Achaemenides, come to achieve in Troy because of the poverty
of my father Adamastus—if only that fortune had remained!

The contempt is missing from this companion's description, as he gives Ulixes the epithet “unlucky,” or “unhappy,” rather than dirus. However this designation still serves to distinguish him from Aeneas, who on account of this man's warning luckily manages to avoid dealing with the Cyclopes entirely.

Haud impune quidem; nec talia passus Ulixes, oblitusve sui est Ithacus discrimine tanto. (Aeneid III 628-29, emphasis added)

By no means with impunity; nor could Ulixis tolerate such a thing, having forgotten that he was of Ithaca after so much separation.

The scene on the Cyclopes' island is one of the most dramatic and demonstrative episodes of the entire Odyssey—the one that showcases the combination of Odysseus's respect for the gods, his metis, and his pride. Aeneas listens to the story and immediately runs away, goes around Scylla and Charybdis, and lands at Carthage without having to suffer any of what Odysseus suffered. It is in this way that he most resembles a fan fiction character designed specifically to outshine the original.

The last two references to Ulixes in the Aeneid take place in the latter half of the epic, as Aeneas battles with Turnus for the hand of Lavinia and the lordship over the Latins. The first serves to remind readers that this is not simply the Iliad set in Italy.

Non hic Atridae nec fandi factor Ulixes. (Aeneid IX 602, emphasis added)

There are no Atreides here, nor speech-sculptor Ulixes.
In other words, this is not Greece, and we are not Greek heroes. The second mention comes from a messenger relating the words of Diomedes himself, and again serves to remind us that the Trojan heroes are gone.

Militia ex illa diversum ad litus abacti
Atrides Protei Menelaus adusque columnas
exsulat, Aetnaeos vidit Cyclopes Ulixes. (Aeneid XI 261-13, emphasis added)

After that war, sent away to various shores
Menelaus son of Atreus lives in exile at the columns of Proteus,
Ulixes saw the Cyclops on Aetna.

At this point in the epic Turnus and the Latins have appealed to Diomedes for aid in fighting off Aeneas and the Trojans, and his answer is no: that war is over. “After that war, sent away to various shores/Menelaus son of Atreus lives in exile at the columns of Proteus, Ulixes saw the Cyclops on Aetna,” begins a larger catalogue of the trials and tribulations of the Greeks after Troy. “No, no,” Diomedes concludes in Fitzgerald's translation:

Invite me to no warfare such as this.
Troy fallen, I have had no quarrel with Trojans.
No delight in calling up evil days.
The gifts you bring me from your country, take
Instead to Aeneas. (Aeneas XI 278-81)

This episode is a clear sign that Vergil is putting his Aeneid forward as a replacement epic for a new time and a new empire. This is no longer the Greeks' time, and Diomedes himself argues it—preferring to retire quietly rather than fight Aeneas again. The kind of Greek that Ulixes exemplifies for a Roman audience is also dismissed.
at this point in the narrative. Although the war is still fresh in Aeneas's mind at the beginning of the epic, Ulixes is described with contempt and much disapproval. By the end of the *Aeneid*, he is but a footnote.

Vergil not only rewrote the *Odyssey*, he rewrote Odysseus. By painting Odysseus in as negative a light as possible and by making Aeneas that much more pious, respectful, and lucky—and therefore even more beloved of the gods—Vergil makes Rome all of these things as well, in contrast with Greece. The actual structural changes he makes to the Homeric epics in his rewritings—elevating a minor background character from the *Iliad* to the level of protagonist and reusing plots and settings from the source to demonstrate the superiority of his chosen protagonist—are not unheard of in fan fiction contexts. That said, some of the aspects of the fandom system that make it unique (the sense of community and the affective response especially) make it difficult to argue that the *Aeneid* is entirely equivalent to fan fiction. Vergil was writing within the constraints of his system with a specific intent: to elevate Roman culture to that of the Greeks while demonstrating Roman individual superiority. What the *Aeneid*'s relationship with Homer does make clear, however, is that it is not the invention of entirely original characters, plots, and settings that makes great literature.
C. The Aeneid and (re)writing national identity

In *Virgil's Gaze: Nation and Poetry in the Aeneid* (2007), JD Reed argues that the *Aeneid* defines Roman nationality explicitly through contrast with other nationalities. Reed focuses on the contrasts with the easternness of Carthage and Troy in the persons of Dido and Andromache rather than the easternness of Greece in the person of Ulixes, but his view dovetails well with my argument above and demonstrates as well the ways in which Vergil used nationality and culture as a foil to build up Aeneas and Rome. From the very beginning of the poem, Carthage is set up as a foil to Rome, with Dido personifying the East and femininity that are again symptomatic of the Orientalizing urge.

The historical struggle between Rome and Carthage for hegemony over the Mediterranean was well over by the time Vergil was writing and his audience was reading the *Aeneid*, but its significance was still very present. It was one of the defining narratives of the Roman cultural identity, and as such it is not surprising that Vergil included references to it within his project of redefining Roman national identity. Sprung from Troy, destined for Italy, and at cross-purposes with Carthage—all of these things make up the myth of Rome. Dido's story already existed apart from Aeneas's before Vergil wrote the *Aeneid*, and by including it he emphasized the inevitability of future struggle with Carthage, and at the same time elevated that struggle to the mythic.

81 Although Carthage is not technically “east” of Rome, Dido and her people had settled there from Tyre, which was a Phoenician city in what is now Lebanon.
The *Aeneid* begins at Carthage, as Aeneas and his men arrive after seven years at sea, paralleling the structure of the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus arrives at Phaiakia and tells the story of his travels up until that point. Vergil introduces his readers to Carthage as Juno's favorite city:

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Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrii tenuere coloni,
Italian contra Tiberinaque longe
ostia, dives opum studiisque asperrima belli;
quam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam
posthabita coluisse Samo.
```

There was an old city, the Tyrian settlers held,
Across from Italy and the long Tiber river mouth,
Wealthy in work and terrible in the study of war;
that Juno preferred to all other great lands,
even neglecting Samos . . . (*Aeneid* I, 12-16)

Juno intends Carthage to be a mighty kingdom but she has heard that a people sprung from the Trojans will overthrow her city (*Progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci/audierat, Tyrias olim quae verteret arces, Aeneid* I 19-20). This fear combined with her continuing enmity toward the Trojans means that Aeneas has an adversary in her. It is also clear, however, that Jupiter is on the side of Venus, Aeneas, and the Trojans/Romans, as he makes clear early in Book I as well. Venus will see the walls of Lavinium. Aeneas will fight a great war in Italy and establish his city, and his descendants will be the wolf-raised twin Romulus and Remus—another pre-existing story that Vergil grafts onto his own.

Jupiter names the glorious descendants the Romans in this bit of prophecy, a
people for whom he sets no limits:

His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono;
imperium sine fine dedi. Quin aspera Iuno,
quae mare nunc terrasque metu caelumque fatigat,
consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit
Romanos rerum dominos gentemque togatam:
sic placitum.

For these I fix no limit, in deed or time;
but give them power without end. Why, even
troublesome Juno who now harasses dread sea
and land and sky, will change her mind for the better
and join me in protection for the toga-wearing people,
the Roman lords of all: thus are we pleased. (*Aeneid* I, 278-83)

The Roman audience already knows the ending of this story. In the time of Augustus,

Roman glory and belief in their *imperium* was at an all-time high. Including Jupiter's

approval early in the narrative underlines the inevitablity of that future; the drama lies in

the way that Aeneas gets there, namely through Dido and her tragic death.

The tension between Dido and Aeneas is constructed of desire and fate, rather

than through straightforward nationalism and struggle for hegemony. Thus, the enmity

between the two city-states is explained and Vergil strengthens the connections between

the disparate narratives he is combining. Venus's role is clear in this tale: she ensures

Dido's desire, but also Aeneas's leavetaking. Vergil explains Venus's meddling thus:

At Cytherea novas artes, nova pectore versat
Consilia, ut faciem mutatus et ora Cupido
pro dulci Ascanio veniat, donisque furentem
incendat reginam, atque ossibus implicit ignem;
quippe domum timet ambiguum Tyriosque bilinguis;
urit atrox Iuno, et sub noctem cura recursat.

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But Cytherea considered new arts, new counsels in her breast, that the shape and face of Cupid should become that of sweet Ascanius, and that his gifts should kindle and madden the queen, and that fire should entangle her bones; Naturally she fears the uncertain house of bilingual Tyrians; cruel Juno annoys her, and her concerns persist all night. (Aeneid I, 657-62)

Naturally she fears the Tyrians, who are both *ambiguam* and *bilinguis*. This kind of uncertain loyalty to language and culture is anathema to Roman values. It is taken for granted within the text that the Carthaginians are to be feared in the same way that the Greeks are: for the ways in which they are not like Romans, for the ways in which they are Eastern. Dido herself is compared to the Bakkhai twice. The first is when she is maddened by Aeneas's preparations for leavetaking: *totamque incensa per urbem bacchatur, qualis commotis excita sacris Thyias, ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho orgia, nocturnusque vocat clamore Cithaeron.* [burning she raves like a Bacchante through the whole city, as if she summons the Bacchae shaking the sacred staves, when the commencement for the triennial Dionysia is heard, and Kithairon calls in the clamor of night] (Aeneid IV, 300-3). The second is when she is preparing to die. She is explicitly compared to Pentheus as he takes on the role of a Bacchante and madness pervades him: *Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus, et solem geminum et duplicis se ostendere Thebas* [just like insane Pentheus sees the driving Furies, and the twin suns and the appearance of a second Thebes...] (Aeneid IV, 469-70). Euripides's *Bakkhai* was interpreted in a Roman and Western European context as the story of the terrible, uncontrollable East (cf. Farley 2008). Its appearance here, then, draws a parallel in the
mind of a Roman audience between the loss of order and control associated with the East and the enemy Carthage that is embodied in Dido.

The Trojans themselves have also come from the East, however, and it is part of the project of the *Aeneid* to explain the process that Romanized them. According to Reed, “[f]undamentally, the *Aeneid* makes the Romans an originally Oriental people who have left that national identity behind in ruined Troy, and traces the early, incomplete stages of this divestment; it makes the Carthaginians—Phoenician colonists from Tyre—persistently Oriental” (Reed 2007, 73). In Carthage with Dido, Aeneas reverts to a softened Easterner, reclaiming the ease with which he once lived in opulence. This reflects stereotypical East-West distinctions derived from a Greek ethnological tradition that took shape after the Persian Wars, particularly in the influential Athenian literature (Reed 2007, 85). In the second half of the epic, the Italians will stigmatize Aeneas and his men as Orientals in similar feminizing terms. Remulus Numanus at IX 598-620, recalls Juvenal, above, as he addresses them:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vobis picta croco et fulgenti murice vestis,} \\
\text{desidae cordi, iuvat indulgere choreis,} \\
\text{et tunicae manicas et habent redimicule mitrae.} \\
\text{O vere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges, ite per alta} \\
\text{Dindyma, ubi assuetis biforem dat tibia cantum.} \\
\text{Tympana vos buxusque vocat Berecyntia Matris} \\
\text{Idaeae; sinite arma viris et cedite ferro.}
\end{align*}
\]

Your garments are decorated with saffron and brilliant purple-dye; there is sloth in our hearts, you like to lose yourself in dances; and your tunics have sleeves and your *mitrae* laces. O Phrygian women,
truly, not Phrygian men, betake yourselves over the
heights of Mount Dindymus, where the pipe bestows
two-tones music on the adepts. The timbrels and
Berecyntian boxwood flute of Mother of Ida call you;
leave warfare to the men and give up your sword.
(quoted and translated in Reed 2007, 86)

Turnus makes a similar characterization Aeneas at XII 97-100, praying that he might
“spread the body of the Phygian half-male [semiviri] and tear his corselet away and rend
it, and dirty in the dust his hair, crimped with the curling iron and dripping with myrrh.”

As Reed points out, this rhetoric is outright misogyny—evoking rape to detail his
planned violation of the Trojans in general and Aeneas in particular. This kind of rhetoric
marks the Italians as savages to be civilized, even as it complicates the origins of Aeneas
and his men with easternness.

The narrative will, of course, ultimately prove Remulus Numanus and Turnus
wrong: Aeneas and his men demonstrate their virility and the virility of their descendants
by defeating the Italians and taking their land, realigning these easterners with the
identity and values of the Roman west. In the structure of this transition, we can see the
embodiment of Vergil's borrowing of Greek prestige through Homer. Aeneas had to be
fully aligned with the Greeks and the East before he could prove his affiliation to Rome
and the future of Western civilization.

In several ways, the Aeneid is a textbook case of a transformative rewrite. Vergil
makes narrative choices that are typical of a modern work of fan fiction by elevating a
background character to the level of protagonist and reshaping the events of the plot so that Aeneas literally sails through all of the struggles of Odysseus. The \textit{Aeneid} is also a rewriting that engages very specifically with its literary and cultural system by making narrative choices that have political significance. Vergil's intent was to borrow Homer's prestige and then use it to supersede Greece's cultural hegemony. He, and the Roman cultural system at large, succeeded.

\textbf{D. The Romantic \textit{Aeneid}}

Christopher Baswell's excellent \textit{Virgil in Medieval England} (1995) sets the stage for a discussion of the reception of the \textit{Aeneid} in Britain by first discussing the deep ambivalence medieval Christianity had toward the epic. It was esteemed as Latin eloquence in its highest form, yet its paganism was deeply troubling. For this reason, the \textit{Aeneid} was a particularly fruitful text for rewriting in the medieval era. Baswell discusses adaptations, annotations, and commentaries as part of the rich intertextual life of the \textit{Aeneid} during the middle ages. Some rewritings dealt explicitly with the problem of Vergil's status as a pagan, and some simply erased or effaced it.

Medieval translators frequently included paratext and commentary in their translations of the text. Baswell explains the significance of the layers of interpretation that are added in each successive manuscript: “This absorption of framing materials into the translation—the insistent centripetal movement of the margins toward the center—
suggests the extent to which textuality in the Middle Ages has vague and fluid limits, only beginning with the auctor’s words, and not necessarily ending even with the book itself” (Baswell 1995, 6). Medieval textual norms included heavy annotation, even of schoolbooks. Later medieval and Renaissance readers started to literally erase these annotations, and many of them “respond with real anguish to the excess of multiple and at times conflicting senses that so intimately, even inextricably, accumulate around the auctores” (Baswell 1995, 7). Chaucer and Douglas claim to escaped these conflicting senses, offering a “naked text” (Baswell 1995, 7). Of course, this is impossible; but the attempts to do so and the systemic priorities that show through when a “naked text” is attempted can be interesting to trace.

There is no one medieval reading of the Aeneid. Baswell refers to “multiple medieval Virgilianisms,” and divides the various medieval visions of the Aeneid into “allegorical,” “romance,” and “pedagogical.” The allegorical interpretations domesticate the text, reworking it to medieval (Christian) ethics. Its priorities include the Aeneid as a literal allegory of the spiritual life and also of education in the liberal arts. The romance vision is usually written in the vernacular, and involves a shift of an antique plot into the time and place of the medieval redactor. This is not the kind of rewriting we get in the Renaissance; the medieval rewriters were not interested in the Classical worldview as much as they were interested in retelling stories that they saw as historical truth in a contemporary setting. Latin was still in common use, and the form and rhetoric of Latin
literature was still held to be the highest form. Thus, the pedagogical versions of the *Aeneid* highlight the language and the poetry, while effacing the paganness. These three kinds of medieval readings of Vergil intersect; there is no clean, categorical division. The allegorical and romantic versions, for example, “have in common a will to make Virgilian authority more immediately accessible and relevant to their contemporary world, be it spiritual or secular, moral or imperial” (Baswell 1995, 11). Baswell sees both approaches as a kind of domestication that “subvert[s] that very alterity, historical or linguistic, in which much of the *auctor*’s power resides, and in particular both traditions evade (by interpretation or suppression) those elements which, since patristic times, had seemed most threatening to a Christian readership—the gods and the miraculous” (Baswell 1995, 11). This motivation is not unlike that of a fandom that seeks to improve a source text by rewriting it to explain or change the problematic aspects. In fact, it is often the problematic source texts that attract the largest fandoms.\(^{82}\)

Medieval readers considered the *Aeneid* to be a historical text, and thus the outline of the plot was maintained as a kind of evidence of history, whereas the details concerning the gods or the supernatural were effaced as a kind of mistake made by a more ignorant time. As the texts were annotated, rewritten, effaced, and translated, the

\(^{82}\) To be sure, there is no such thing as an unproblematic source text. However, the top three fandoms in the Archive of Our Own, measured by total number of stories written as of 6/8/15, are the Marvel Cinematic Universe (129,707 stories) which includes all of the films featuring Marvel’s Avengers, the television show *Supernatural* (105,776 stories), and Sherlock Holmes and related fandoms (79,848 stories). The feminist and racial critiques of both Sherlock Holmes and *Supernatural* have been discussed above. The Marvel Cinematic Universe fandom has taken off in the years since this dissertation was begun and has engaged with very similar critiques.
core of what the medieval audience considered important was revealed. Although there were conflicting claims on the narrative, the historicity and elegance valued by the medieval audience remained.

For the purposes of this survey I am going to focus more directly on the romantic versions of the *Aeneid* in the medieval context for a number of reasons. First because what Baswell calls the vernacular redactions gives us some of the “liveliest” transformations, and second because there are significant qualities of the shift to romance that parallel the qualities of modern fan fiction: the focus on relationships and the more in-depth characterization of women. According to Baswell,

The romance *Aeneid*, far more than in its Latin source, is the story of Aeneas and his women, or even the story of Aeneas’s women to the exclusion of Aeneas . . . it can be seen as the untold Latin *Aeneid*: a completion, but also a subversion of Virgil’s narrative, tending to extend those very episodes, especially that of Dido, which for Virgil are the restraints keeping Aeneas from his fortune in Italy. (Baswell 1995, 11)

Some of the most lively challenges of the romantic versions is their relative secularization, historical domestication, and loss of the apparatus to teach Latin Christian eloquence. The presence of women as both readers and writers “suggests yet another claimant on ancient history as a model for contemporary power” (Baswell 1995, 13), which is something that must be controlled in the same text in which it emerges.

The *Roman d'Eneas* is the best known of what Baswell refers to as “romantic
versions.” Written in vernacular French circa 1160 by an unknown author, the Roman d'Eneas consists of over 10,000 lines of couplets. One of the earliest and more influential vernacular redactions of the Aeneid, it is completely uninterested in the story of Troy and Aeneas's wanderings, except for the curious addition of the story of the Judgment of Paris at around line 100. According to John Yunck, who translated the English edition of the Roman d'Eneas from which I am working, this episode was probably because it caught the author's fancy and because it is amusing. The way that the episode is recounted is revealing however, and reintroduces the kind of tricky wisdom that the Greeks valued and the Romans feared, which establishes very early that this is not the Roman Aeneid.

The goddesses “Juno, Pallas, and Venus” approach Paris with the apple of discord, which has been thrown amongst them rather than at a specific event: the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the parents of Achilles. The Greekness of the Iliad is so effaced in the Roman d'Eneas that the author must remind his audience that the word “for the fairest” was inscribed on the apple “in Greek.” The goddesses are so called, but their behavior is no more divine than mortal women, and it is in fact Paris who is credited with the idea that if he made them wait long enough, the goddesses would come to him with bribes.

This maneuver is named a “trick” in Yunck's English translation, a “grande ruse” in Martine Thiry-Stassin's translation of the old French into modern, and a “grant angin” in the original. Baswell spends a great deal of time discussing the motif of the angin
throughout the text, especially with reference to Dido. Vergil uses only one line to
describe the way in which Dido had acquired the land on which she built her city,
“taurino quantum possent circumdare tergo” that is, “how much they were able to circle
with the hide of a bull” (Aeneid I 368). The Roman d'Eneas in contrast expands this to a
mini narrative. In Yunck's translation:

She arrived in this land and went to the prince of the country. With great
cleverness she went to ask him if he would sell her as much of his land as
the hide of a bull would enclose, and she gave him gold and silver for it.
The prince, not suspecting a trick, granted it to her. Dido cut the hide into
very thin thongs; with these she took so much land that she founded there
a city. Then she conquered so much by her wealth, by her cleverness, and
by her prowess, that she possessed the whole country, and the barons
submitted to her. (Yunck 1974, 63)

As Baswell puts it, the redactor opens up space for Dido's story of opening up space for
herself in the domain of men (Baswell 1995, 191). Not only is it an expansion of Dido's
character, but it is once again a reflection of changing values. Dido's trickery is praised
and paired with wealth and prowess, whereas similar tricks played by Ulixes in the
Aeneid are characterized as devious and wicked.

Dido and Lavinia both are given more characterization in the Roman d'Eneas than
they are in the Aeneid, but this does not mean that the text does not display anxiety
concerning women. The Aeneid faults Dido for calling her relationship with Aeneas
“marriage:” “nec iam furtivum Dido meditatur amorem: coniugium vocat; hoc
praetexit nomine culpam,” [no longer does Dido consider the love secret: she calls it
marriage; by that name she covers her fault) (Aeneid IV 171-72), though the text makes it clear that Venus is responsible for Dido's love, and Juno is responsible for calling it marriage. In the Aeneid the neighboring King Iarbas is angered that Dido has taken up with Aeneas after refusing him, but the reception of the affair is much more involved in the Roman d'Eneas, which blames not only Dido, but all womankind.

When the barons hear it told—the dukes, the princes, and the counts whom before she would not take as her lord—they consider themselves much shamed, since she disdained them all for a man of less worth, who is neither count nor king. They say among themselves, and they are right, that he who believes a woman is very foolish: she does not hold true to her word, and thinks wise what is foolish. She used to say that she had promised her love to her lord, who was dead, and that she would not take it back during her lifetime; now another man has done his will with her, now she has belied her promise and broken the agreement she had pledged with her lord. He is a fool who trusts in woman. She has very quickly forgotten the dead—however well she may have loved him. She now puts all her delight in the living, and the dead she leaves in neglect. (Yunck 1974, 88)

The Roman d'Eneas is not an empowering subversion of the story by women for women that many examples of rewriting at present prove to be, including and especially fan fiction itself. Nonetheless, the move from the Aeneid to the Roman d'Eneas was a move from one set of gender roles and values to another, and that move can be traced within the shifts between the texts.

The poem contains feminine challenges to patriarchal power, but it also contains the means by which they are controlled. Dido is literally contained by the urn that holds her ashes, and although Lavine has a greater narrative role and an internal life in the Roman d'Eneas than Lavinia did in the Aeneid, she is still constrained by her father's
wishes for her. This balance between making space for women in the text and constraining the roles of those women reflects an attempt to balance the values of the system within which the redactor was writing with the values of his supposed audience.

Baswell suggests that the audience for the genre of vernacular romances in the twelfth century consisted largely of wealthy women who did not read Latin, “seeking access to texts that were central to the self-conception of male power” (Baswell 1995, 171), and that it is this “double power of dilation—both to make space for the feminine and erotic, and to contain their effects by making them into artifacts—that most deeply characterizes the romantic Aeneid (Baswell 1995, 173). One major way in which this kind of rewriting is decidedly unlike fan fiction however is that the audience and the rewriter are not of the same intimate community. That is, the Roman d'Eneas was not written in a closed community that included both authors and readers who addressed their own desires and perspectives for themselves and each other. It was written for both its audience of literate women and the new vernacular literary system as a whole.

E. Literary Transvaluation: Vergil and Dante

Barbara Bono's book Literary Transvaluation: From Vergilian Epic to Shakespearean Tragicomedy (1984) discusses the ways that the Aeneid was tailored to fit into other literary systems, although she does not use the word “system.” Bono's term “transvaluation,” is defined by her as “an artistic act of historical self-consciousness that at once acknowledges the perceived values of the antecedent text and transforms them to
serve the uses of the present” (Bono 1984, 1). Frequently, and especially with respect to
the appropriation of ancient material, that use is to acquire prestige for a literary system
on the rise. This is the case with two major texts that Bono uses to trace the *Aeneid*'s
movement from the ancient world through the medieval period: Augustine's *Confessiones*
and Dante's *Commedia*.

Vergil's *Aeneid*, according to Bono, is a fertile ground for transvaluation because
of Vergil's own struggles with the problem of change (Bono 1984, 2). I would add that as
a rewriting of a rewriting (the Homeric epics were composed on the foundations of earlier
oral literature), the *Aeneid* cannot help but leave room for new interpretations because
later readers approach it intertextually. Vergil's poem is dialectical, and offers binary
constructions of normative values that can be deconstructed and otherwise manipulated in
later contexts. As an early example, Ovid in the *Heroides* writes a letter to Aeneas from
Dido's perspective which underlines the hypocrisy of the son of Venus abandoning her
while they are in love. According to Bono, “Ovid's subversive reading, with its emphasis
on the sheer force of love and its sympathetic treatment of women, becomes an important
element in the medieval and early Renaissance merging of the ideals of courtly love and
the revived classical epic” (Bono 1984, 42). The *Aeneid* contains both sides of a debate
between “the virtues of immediacy and control, between emotion and rule, love and
empire. Finally, for those later authors who experience through the *Aeneid* Vergil’s
struggles with change, the poem becomes an index to their own distance from the past”

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In short, the *Aeneid* is an unstable source text that lends itself to multiple interpretations and therefore multiple transformative rewritings.

As discussed above, many medieval commentators on the *Aeneid* insisted on reading it allegorically in order to make it cohere with Christian values. For example, Petrarch “sees veiled in the poem a Fulgentian allegory of human life,” and Boccaccio declares that Vergil’s second purpose “was to show with what passions human frailty is infested, and the strength with which a steady man subdues them;” Christoforo Landino writes a Christian, neo-Platonic allegorical exegesis of the *Aeneid* in the second half of his *Disputationes Camaldulenses* and the Renaissance humanists Pier Candido Decembrio and Mapheus Vegius “write neo-Vergilian thirteenth books for the *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas’s marriage to Lavinia and the pious end of his life foreshadow the Christian marriage supper of the Lamb and eternal heavenly reward” (Bono 1984, 44). There were some commentators however who “grasped the re-creative depths of Vergil’s impelling tragic sensibility within the epic frame . . . Among those who did are some who used Vergil as he himself used Homer, as the authoritative spokesman of a tragically shadowed, outmoded, way of life” (Bono 1984, 45). For these commentators in particular, certain scenes of the *Aeneid* need to be rewritten to demonstrate the error of the source.

One of these such was Saint Augustine of Hippo, the early Christian philosopher
and Church Father. Writing in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, Augustine is remembered both for his foundational theology and for his personal conversion story. This conversion story is included in his autobiography, the *Confessiones*, one of the earliest examples of the genre. According to Nussbaum it is referenced when Augustine “repudiates the example of Dido and her consuming love for Aeneas” (Nussbaum 1999, 62).

I was forced to memorize the wanderings of some person called Aeneas, while I was unaware of my own wanderings, and to weep for the death of Dido, who killed herself for love, when meanwhile, in my most wretched condition, I endured with dry eyes the fact that I myself, in these matters, was dying from you, God, my life. For what is more wretched than a wretch who does not pity his own self, and weeps for the death of Dido, which was caused by love of Aeneas, but does not weep for his own death, which was caused by not loving you, God? (Nussbaum 62; incl. translation)

Augustine is here repudiating his own formation that followed the paradigm of the pagan Roman schoolboy. Nonetheless, the *Confessiones* is filled with an eroticism that recalls the *Aeneid* in the same way that later medieval writers repudiate the paganism of Vergil while exalting his eloquence.

Augustine clearly is unable to make an argument about the desirability of a close relationship with God outside of the erotic framework with which he is most familiar. In her title Nussbaum is invoking the Platonic ascent of love, and claims within it that both Augustine and Dante have “explicitly set themselves the task of rewriting and correcting
the pagan ascent of love” (Nussbaum 1999, 62-3, ital. mine). In Plato's *Symposium* the ascent begins at the love of one beautiful body and gradually climbs toward a more pure and philosophical love of beauty itself. This “ladder of love” ends at an apex of contemplative self-sufficiency, in which erotic love is no longer necessary. This goal proved ultimately unappealing to Augustine, as well as impossible to achieve, and even prideful. “If you are a human being, the sort of being who does not suffice for its own salvation, it is a deep sin to live and think as if you are sufficient” (Nussbaum 1999, 69). A good Christian never stops needing God. Augustine therefore affects a transvaluation of the passion between Dido and Aeneas, directing it instead from himself to God. In so doing, he borrows from the *Aeneid* to add to the growing power of a Christian paradigm in the Western world.

Centuries later, Dante Aligheri engaged in a similar transvaluation in the course of writing his *Comedia*. Dante was acutely aware of the need to establish Italian as a literary language in the early fourteenth century. The medieval tradition of *Aeneid* as Christian allegory gives Dante the opening to use Vergil as guide in his own allegorical exploration of the human soul, and the Dido episode establishes for Dante the perfect metaphor for his particular argument, as it did for Augustine.

Dante understood in a subtle and sympathetic way the Fulgentian commonplace reading of the Dido episode as an allegory of the temptation of youthful reason by passion or appetite. Already in the *Convivio* Dante resists an easy polarization of these two aspects of human nature, and he creates the possibility for a complex, constructive tension between them,
rather than a mutually exclusive choice. A good Aristotelian, he argues for temperance, not abstinence—although “this appetite must be ridden by reason,” the appetite or “natural impulse” is declared to be “of noble nature.” In leaving Dido, Aeneas is not so much fleeing evil as exercising “self-restraint” in turning from “so much pleasure” to follow an “upright, fruitful, and praiseworthy path.” (Bono 1984, 52)

This phenomenon is most visible in *Inferno V*, in which Dante observes the circle that contains those who sin like Dido— “subjecting reason to the rule of lust,” in Longfellow's translation.

It is at this point in the poem that Dido is specifically invoked, but only in order to introduce Francesca, who is, as Bono argues, Dante's Dido. As Nussbaum argues, Francesca and Paolo are thoroughly passive: “[s]eized rather than seizing, led rather than leading, they surrender their agency—not so much to one another as to a power that guides them” (Nussbaum 1999, 78). Dido was passive as well, but she did not choose her passivity; Venus forced it upon her by means of Cupid (*Aeneid* I, 658-59). The difference here is the belief in free will, which is a uniquely Christian addition to philosophical thought. In a Classical context Dido's loss of agency is a tragedy that befalls her because of her unluckiness (*infelix Dido*), and because of the gods' will (*Aeneid* VI, 456).

Francesca and Paolo, however, decide to be passive. They choose to read together the book containing the tale of Lancelot, and they choose the act which kills them. This is an important distinction, and the heart of the problem for Dante, who faints with pity.
over the lovers. For Nussbaum, this is the major task of the poem: “to show Dante that he can have the susceptibility of the gentle heart without its sinful passivity” (Nussbaum 1999, 78). It is his love for Beatrice which is the perfect combination of agency and receptivity, and the perfect metaphor for the ideal balance of Christian love. Beatrice loves every quality that makes Dante an individual: his virtues, his faults, as well as his idiosyncrasies. According to Nussbaum, this is what sets Dante's love apart from Augustine's.

For Dante, what is seen when the “fog” is dispelled is still essentially characterized by an embodied narrative history, the sort of history souls retain in paradise. For Augustine, so long as one lives in this imperfect world, individual history must be love's preoccupation—but if the “fog” should even be dispelled completely, love would be freed from its dependence upon narrative. (Nussbaum 1999, 82)

As Bono puts it, the feelings of Dante for Beatrice are the feelings of a purified Dido (Bono 1984, 60). This Dido stands in for all of the pagan tradition by way of Vergil and the *Aeneid*.

The rewriting that Augustine and Dante engage in is not the straightforward rewriting of the author of the *Roman d'Eneas* or of the translators of Homer. It can be subsumed in the kind of rewriting that Lefevere discusses, because it is the rewriting that changes the reception of the story of Dido and Aeneas. These rewritings gave medieval authors the room to continue to praise Latin epic while further Christianizing it as well as ensuring its afterlife.
F. Conclusion

The *Aeneid* is one of the most obvious examples of a canonical rewriting that has many of the characteristics of and prefigures modern fan fiction. Like the example of rosa_acicularis's “The Anatomist” in chapter 3, in which a minor character from the Sherlock BBC source text is elevated to the level of protagonist to rival the original, Vergil plucks Aeneas from the background of the *Iliad* and elevates him to out-fight Achilles and out-think Odysseus. The particular reasons that he does this have to do with the position of the Roman literary and cultural system in the early first century B.C.E. Vergil wrote his epic to replace Homer and to elevate Roman literature and culture just as he was elevating Aeneas.

The primary way in which Vergil elevates Aeneas is by lowering Odysseus. Each instance of Odysseus's Roman name in the epic indicates the contempt in which Vergil's new Roman heroes hold him. Vergil both rewrote the *Odyssey* and rewrote Odysseus. By painting Odysseus in as negative a light as possible and by making Aeneas that much more pious, respectful, and lucky—and therefore even more beloved of the gods—Vergil makes Rome all of these things as well, in contrast with Greece.

In addition, Vergil uses an existing series of myths about Dido, queen of Carthage, to define Roman nationality in contrast with Carthage in particular and “the East” in
general. In the context of a very real history of enmity between the two cities Vergil sets up a mythological Carthage as a foil to Rome, with Dido personifying the easternness and femininity that are thought of as symptomatic of the Orientalizing urge. As the epic progresses, Vergil also uses the native Italians to argue for the need for a civilizing force embodied by the Trojans. Aeneas and his men demonstrate their virility and the virility of their descendants by defeating these Italians and taking their land, realigning Aeneas' easterners with the identity and values of the Roman west. In the structure of this transition, we can see the embodiment of Vergil's borrowing of Greek prestige through Homer. Aeneas had to be fully aligned with the Greeks and the East before he could prove his affiliation to Rome and the future of Western civilization.

The reception of the *Aeneid* in the Middle Ages gives further examples of rewriting that have similarities with the rewritings of modern fan fiction. The rewriting of the *Aeneid* as a romance in the *Roman d'Eneas* especially demonstrates commonalities with fan fiction in their focus on relationships and deeper characterizations of female characters. The *Roman d'Eneas* is not the empowering subversion of a story by women for women that modern examples of rewriting prove to be, including and especially fan fiction itself. However, the move from the *Aeneid* to the *Roman d'Eneas* was a move from one set of gender roles and values into another, and that move can be traced within the shifts between the texts.
Finally, rewritings of the *Aeneid* exhibit what Barbara Bono calls “transvaluation” is evident in the reception of the *Aeneid* in late classical and late medieval references to the epic. Augustine in the *Confessiones* repudiates the *Aeneid* to distance himself from his pagan paradigm as he establishes his Christian credibility. Building upon the explicitly Christian rewritings of the *Aeneid*, Dante uses Vergil himself as a character to simultaneously act as guide and as token of the prestige of the Roman past, while rewriting it into the future.

Fan fiction writers frequently write their stories specifically to address aspects of the source text that they find problematic or incomplete. This chapter traces the history of the *Aeneid* first as a rewriting of Homer and then as a source text in its own right, showing that the strategies and the motivations of rewritings in this case study have much in common with those of fan fiction. At the same time, the cultural system of each example is unique and significant. Vergil and Dante were not writing fan fiction, but fan fiction writers are engaging in the same strategies that Vergil and Dante did.
CHAPTER 7
VERSIONS OF HOMER

A. Introduction

This chapter addresses ways in which Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are rewritings of already existing material and also works that are among the most rewritten in Western culture. For readers of Homer outside an ancient Greek context, access to the original Greek text has always been limited to those who had learned the language—a small percentage, even at the height of Classical education. The vast majority of readers of Homer are reading rewritings with varying transformative power.

The historical reception of Homer is one of the strongest examples validating systems theory and for that reason, I quickly reiterate the theoretical structure underpinning this entire dissertation in this final chapter. In discussing the rewriting and retelling of Homer, I continue to rely heavily on the first chapter of André Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992), in which he argues that non-professional readers (by which he means the bulk of readers—not students and professors of literature) generally do not “read literature as written by its writers, but as rewritten by its rewriters” (Lefevere 1992, 4). Lefevere's position is that rewritings “can be shown to have had a not negligible impact on the evolution of literatures in the past” (Lefevere 1992, 7), and Lefevere therefore calls for studies of rewritings: “Those engaged in that study will have to ask themselves who rewrites, why,
under what circumstances, for which audience” (Lefevere 1992, 7). This chapter answers that call to investigate several rewritings of Homer specifically. It is beyond the scope of this chapter (or any project short of a multi-volume set of books) to examine each and every instance of a rewriting of Homer; however I will attempt to explore examples not just of the origin of the poems, ancient adaptations, and traditional translations of Homer, but also retellings in different media.

Systems theory is particularly useful when tracing rewritings through different cultural systems in different time periods because it gives us the means to untangle the influences on the rewriters’ choices to a certain extent. To answer Lefevere’s questions (who is writing? under what circumstances? why? and to what audience?) we must be able to talk about the different parts of the system, and of the cultural conventions and norms that define the system’s constraints. According to Even-Zohar, the major opposition is assumed to be that of canonized versus non-canonized systems (Even-Zohar 1978, 7). This view is especially useful when discussing translations and other rewritings of Homer because of the high level of prestige the Homeric epics command with regard to all other Western literature systems. When Homer is translated, it generally enters the system at the “high,” “canonized” level, often filling a need or “deficiency” (to use Even-Zohar’s terminology) in a system that may include much in the way of “low” native literature, but little in the way of canonized texts. As I showed in the last chapter, this was the case for the Roman system when Vergil rewrote the Homeric epics into his distinctly
Roman *Aeneid*. Even-Zohar himself uses the example of Greece and Rome when talking about prestige: “The reasons for prestige are various, as for instance, when a [source language] is old and there is no established local literature to begin with. This was the position of Greek vs. Roman culture, and of both vs. all European literatures” (Even-Zohar 1978, 49). Even-Zohar overstates this last, but it is unmistakably true that the first English translations of Homer into the vernacular occurred as a result of deliberate attempts by Renaissance humanists to fill what they saw as a deficiency in their own local literatures, as I discussed in chapter 5.

Borges references the issue of prestige in his 1932 article “Some Versions of Homer,” at the same time that he acknowledges the importance of rewriting. “Our first reading of famous books is really the second, since we already know them,” he claims (Borges 1992, 1136). According to Borges's translator, Suzanne Jill Levine, the role of this article is, along with “Pierre Menard” and “The Translators of the 1001 Nights,” to “question translation’s marginal status and resituate the translator’s activity at the center of literary discussion” (Borges 1992, 1134). Borges's article is also an early expression of his model of translation as a form of reading as well as writing, and of both as an interpretive act. As a reader of the *Odyssey* who does not read Greek, Borges only has the language of the translations themselves by which to judge Homer, and after looking at a few lines in their translations by Chapman, Pope, Cowper, Butler, Buckley, and Butcher and Lang, Borges makes it clear that each has its pleasures for a non-Greek reader, and no
one translation is more “faithful” than any other. “Which of these translations is faithful? the reader may ask. I repeat: none or all of them” (Borges 1992, 1138). “Faithful” has become almost meaningless in the face of so many successful translations of one text.

Borges pinpoints the enduring argument between different styles of translating, which Borges represents as a binary question: “the literal retention of all verbal singularities,” which F. W. Newman supports; or the “literary, severe elimination of details that would distract or detain the reader” which Matthew Arnold represents (Borges 1992, 1137). I will discuss Arnold further below, but Borges's binary can be seen not only in Arnold and Newman, but can also be seen as a precursor to the more recent “foreignization” vs “domestication” distinction within translation studies initiated by Lawrence Venuti. The reality of translating in general and translating Homer in particular is of course more complex than this binary, but the question of whether to produce a literal, alien, dynamic, or readable one persists. Further, it is a question that more often than not depends on the conventions of the literary system in which the translator is writing.

**B. Homer and the Epic Cycle**

The Homeric poems are some of the most rewritten texts in the history of Western literature, and there is increasing evidence that they began as rewritings themselves. “The Epic Cycle” is the name given to a collection of poems that concerned the origins of the
Gods, the Theban War, and the Trojan War. The Trojan War poems are known as the Cypria, the Aethiopis, the Little Iliad, the Iliou Persis, the Nostri, and the Telegony. None of these poems is extant, and the only knowledge we have of them is in ancient summaries and commentaries. They have been largely thought of as post-Homeric, due in large part to the linguistic analyses of Wilamowitz (1884) and Wackernagel (1916) which determined that certain linguistic forms that exist in the Epic Cycle are definitively later than Homer.

According to Jonathan Burgess’ groundbreaking Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle (2001), the conclusion that Classical studies had come to regarding the relationship of Homer to the Epic Cycle was not only wrong, but colored by the “Homer-worship” that still pervades Classical scholarship and literary studies to this day. In contrast to Malcolm Davies’s claims in his notes on The Epic Greek Cycle (1989) that the existing fragments of the Cycle present “fairly conclusive proof that, in comparison with Homer, there are linguistic forms that are 'late' and post-Homeric,” (Davies 1989, 3), Burgess argues that linguistic dating methods have been largely discredited. Moreover, Burgess suggests that because Gregory Nagy’s work on the continuous recomposition of Homer raises questions about the ability to pinpoint one point in time for the composition of any of the epic material, there is no definitive argument for the Epic Cycle post-dating the Homeric epics.
In describing his impression of the poetic culture in the Archaic Age, Burgess states, “It is not unlikely that in the Archaic Age fluid yet coherent performance traditions were creating and re-creating individual poems about the Trojan War, including the Homeric and Cyclic poems” (Burgess 2001, 5). Burgess suggests that the performance traditions of the Homeric and Cyclic poems were concurrent, rather than “early” (Homer) and “late” (the Epic Cycle). The implication is that the material that told the story of the Trojan War and its aftermath was in flux in the Archaic Age, with many varied versions being created and re-created, told and re-told, before either the Homeric poems or the Epic Cycle was canonized. Burgess references Nagy's work establishing a tradition of variation in the performance of the rhapsodes during the Panathenaia and sees no reason why the Epic Cycle material would not have been included in this tradition. In Nagy's essay “Homer and Plato at the Panathenaia” (1999), he argues that “[n]ot just the text but even the language of Homeric poetry resists a purely synchronic approach” (Nagy 1999, 125). He points out that “each occurrence of a theme (on the level of content) or of a formula (on the level of form) in a given composition-in-performance refers not only to its immediate context but also to all other analogous contexts remembered by the performer or by any member of the audience” (Nagy 1999, 125). In other words, performance of the story of the Trojan War at the Panathenaia was marked by metonymy.

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83 The Panathenaia was Athens' most important festival and celebrated over a series of days. It included athletic contests, processions, feasts, and musical contests.
Metonymy, as Maria Tymoczko argues in *Translation in a Postcolonial Context* (1999), is an aspect of literary retellings that is particularly clear in both oral traditional literature and mythic literature, or both in the case of rhapsodic recitations of Homer. When one's audience already largely knows the story, references can frequently stand in for whole threads of story. We have very little concrete evidence of what the practice of the rhapsodes at the Panathenaia looked like, but Nagy's argument in “Homer and Plato at the Panathenaia,” Burgess's argument about the synchronic relationship of the Epic Cycle and the Homeric poems, and what we know about retellings and metonymy all point to a tradition of variation in the rhapsodes' performances—not an identical recitation of the same text every time. Nagy argues that the principal *tekhnê* of the rhapsode is his ability to enter into the competition as if into a relay and to engage his mnemonic expertise to join the story *in medias res*. In an explication of some of the linguistic markers of both the rhapsode's art and Plato's criticisms of it in the *Ion*, Nagy points out two concepts that can be easily applied to the structure of any rewriter's art: the *dianoia*, or Homer's “train of thought,” and the *hermêneus*, “interpreter.” Nagy says that the term *hermêneus* is “applied to the rhapsode as one who must know the *dianoia* of Homer . . . . This concept of an 'interpreter' or 'go-between' acknowledges the reality of a mental gap between Homer on one side and his audience in the here-and-now on the other side. That gap can be bridged by the rhapsode, whose mind can implicitly neutralize the distance that separates the two sides” (Nagy 1999, 143-44). That this description can also be used to describe a translator is no accident. Rewriters of all kinds recreate the texts that keep a
particular story alive and maintain its fame (cf Lefevere)—rhapsodes and translators are but two of these kinds of rewriters. Today the element of challenge and play that characterizes the rhapsodes' competitions can be recognized in the activities of fandom communities.

The implication of this timeline—that the Epic Cycle predates the Homeric poems—is that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are themselves rewritings: an amplification of certain episodes, interpretive synthesis, or even a kind of continuation of what was present before. Framed this way, the Homeric poems resemble the Grimm brothers' *Kinder und Hausmärchen*: a canonical collection and literary polishing of stories that had been told and retold for countless generations. This should not in any way detract from the value or prestige of Homer; on the contrary, it should raise the prestige of transformative rewriting as potentially great literature.

The oral traditional origins of Homer were established by Albert Lord and Milman Parry in the 1920s and 1930s when they began doing field research in Yugoslavia, recording and interviewing illiterate bards who still performed oral traditional epic. In articles published in 1930 and 1932, Parry argues that such a tradition could only have formed in performance “if the poet were unlettered and his poetry oral” (quoted in Foley 1986, 4). Lord went on to publish the comparative work *The Singer of Tales* in 1960, which applies this analysis to ancient poems. “Oral literature research
began in earnest with Lord's book; in less than twenty-five years more than twelve hundred books, monographs, and articles have hollowed, testifying in their number and variety to the seminal importance of Lord's and Parry's discoveries” (Foley 1986, 4-5).

John Foley builds on this development of our understanding of the orality of Homer and of many other pieces of literature from throughout time and across cultures—the kinds of literature that persist in rewritings and retellings.

. . . . the richness of the oral traditional legacy cannot be denied: in order to interpret oral and oral-derived works faithfully, we must confront just what it is about the antecedent oral tradition that affects and even determines how such texts “mean”. . . . conventional literary analysis may bring us part of the way toward a full, dynamic interpretation, [however] we cannot appreciate the truest meaning of such works such as the Gospels, Homer's epics, the Old English Beowulf, the medieval Spanish Poema de Mio Cid, the Serbo-Croatian epics, the Middle High German Nibelungenlied, and the Middle English Sir Gawain and the Green Knight without assessing the contribution of oral tradition. (Foley 1986, 6)

One of the most useful contributions Foley makes for my purposes are his three levels of morphology in oral epic. He uses as an example the levels of morphology of Lord and Parry's Serbian bards. The first level is the “pan-traditional,” in this case the larger Serbian tradition from which the epics come. The second level is the “dialectical,” that is the linguistic specificity of the particular village from which the bard comes. The third level is the “idiolectal,” the idiosyncratic language of the specific bard.

When one is discussing an oral tradition, one must be aware of these three different levels operating in the text. When scholars do comparative analysis of Homer or
any other text that comes from an oral tradition we work to determine at what level(s) the variation is engaged. Metonymy again becomes relevant as we attempt to determine what the poet could assume his audience knew, and what variation was added as the flourish of an individual rhapsode, bard, or poet.

This morphology also suggests a parallel between the structure of oral traditional literature and the structure of fan writing. The pan-traditional level is that of fandom-at-large, the great Internet community of media fans. The dialectal level is the sub-system of a particular fandom—for example *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or *Doctor Who*. The idiolectal is the individual fan writer influenced by both these contexts as well as her own personal interpretive choices. The additional “oral” qualities of fan fiction communities—their immediate sense of feedback and community ownership of texts—make the similarities between fan fiction and the larger tradition of literary rewritings of oral literature that much stronger.

**C. English translations of Homer in the Renaissance and Restoration Periods**

This section moves past a large swath of history after Classical Greece that is covered largely by the discussion of the *Aeneid* in the previous chapter. There is, of course much more to say about the reception of Homer before the Renaissance, but they are beyond the scope of this dissertation. For the purposes of connecting intralingual
rewritings, interlingual translations, and fan fiction, we move now to interlingual translation.

The first verse translation of the *Iliad* in French was made by Francis I. Hughes Salel, probably circa 1540.\textsuperscript{84} He did not complete the entire epic, but approximately the first thirteen books. Howard Kalwies discusses Salel in the context of Renaissance humanist conventions, a context in which translations of Greek and Latin texts into the vernacular were in great demand. Kalwies indicates that Salel’s translation was early enough that “the pioneering spirit was still strong among humanists and . . . literary tastes were not yet cloyed with aesthetic preoccupations” (Kalwies 1978, 598).

Salel’s practice of transmitting the essence of a work without concern for the original meter, epic formula, or the characteristic Homeric epithets, was not an isolated phenomenon. He followed an older humanistic tradition which gave translators the right to take considerable liberties with an original text . . . . By 1559, however, a new generation of humanist-translators demanded a greater fidelity in content as well as in style, at least theoretically. (Kalwies 1978, 600)

Kalwies argues nonetheless that both Salel and his younger colleague Amyot ultimately both dress their respective Greek authors “in Renaissance garb” which was the convention of the humanist Renaissance system.

Twenty years before George Chapman first translated the entirety of the *Iliad* into English from the Greek, Arthur Hall had translated Salel’s French translation into

\textsuperscript{84} I do not include *Le Roman de Troie* here among French translations, though it should be acknowledged as an earlier retelling of the *Iliad*, from circa 1150.
English. Elizabethans relied heavily on the French translations for their own translation into English.85 H. G. Wright notes that the English had adopted much in the way of French “manners, dress, and customs,” (Wright 1919, 130) and that the French professors in Latin and Greek as a whole embraced translation of the Classics into the vernacular, which led to the accessibility of a great many Classical authors in French. He goes on to argue that it is thus no surprise that Hall chose to translate Salel’s French text, though Hall was plagued by uncertainty about his own qualifications to do so. Later, Wright suggests that Hall’s Greek, what there was of it, must not have been up to the task of translating Homer, and that when sections were missing from Salel’s text, he referred to a Latin one (Wright 1919, 139). What interests me here is the relative prestige of the French and English systems at this moment in time. Elizabethan England was an England in transition, growing in influence both politically and culturally. France had been engaged in the renaissance of Classical culture for longer, having been under the influence of the Medicis and the Italian Renaissance, but was declining in political power in the late sixteenth century as the French monarchy struggled with the rise of the Huguenots and issues of succession.

Hall’s translation only exists in one edition, probably due to the fact that Chapman’s Homer superseded it 20 years later. As of Wright’s writing, there were only five extant copies of the translation. One of them has been scanned into the database at

85 In fact, indirect translation remained common for centuries to follow and is still a very common mode of translation, especially on the Internet.
Early English Books Online, however, and so it is available though difficult to read. Wright himself excerpts passages that are interesting for my purposes as well, and because of the quality of EEBO’s scan I largely rely on him.

In an early excerpt an interesting departure that Hall takes from Salel regards the power of Agamemnon, who in the source and the Greek cultural context was king of his own land, Mycenae, just as Menelaus, Odysseus, Achilles, and others were kings of their own. He was commander of the campaign against Troy not because of any established “high” kingship, but because he was the brother of the wronged husband of Helen and had more assertiveness than Menelaus. —as Achilles himself implies in Book I, lines 90-91: “οὐδ’ ἧν Ἀγαμέμνονα εἴπης, ὥς νῦν πολλὸν ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν εὔχεται εἶναι.” [Not even if you say it is Agamemnon, who now tells everyone he’s the best of the Achaians.]\(^\text{86}\) Achilles refers to Agamemnon’s claim of being “ἄριστος” [the best] with disdain, as do several other characters in the course of the epic. Later, when Agamemnon explicitly threatens to take away Achilles’ war-prize Briseis, Agamemnon does so with an explicit reference to their relative position.

\[\begin{align*}
\epsilonγω \ \delta \ \kappa\acute{\alpha}γω \ \mathrm{Βρισηίδα} \ \kappaαλλιπάρην \\
aυτός \ \ιόν \ \κλισίνυδε, \ \tauο \ \σον \ \gammaερας, \ \δρφ' \ \εύ \ \ειδης \\
\deltaσσον \ \φερτερος \ \ειμι \ \σεθεν, \ \στυγεη \ \δε \ \και \ \αλλος \\
\iotaσον \ \εμοι \ \φασθαι \ \και \ \ομοιωθημεναι \ \αντην.
\end{align*}\]  
(I 184-87)

[And I will lead he beautiful-cheeked Briseis]

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86 Unless stated otherwise, all Greek translations are my own.

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myself going into your tent, that war-prize of yours, so that you well know
how much better I am than you, and so that another would fear
to show himself equal to me and compare himself against me.]

Salel’s translation of the encounter between Agamemnon and Achilles follows.

I'iray querir Briseida la gente
Ta bien aymée: à fin qu'on puisse veoir
De combien est plus haultain mon pouoir
Que n'est ta force, & que doresnauant,
Nul tant hardy, ne se mette en auant,
De se vouloir à moy equiparer.

(I 334-39, quoted in Wright 1919, 141.)

Salel has Agamemnon claim that his “pouoir” is “plus haultain” than Achilles’s “force,”
which is more specific than the “φέρτερός” [better] of the source, but is not too far off.

Hall, however, takes a major turn away from the French (and the Greek) when he
translates.

To thy Pavilion wil I send tricke Brysida to bring
Thy best beloued, that al men know how pusanter a king
I am than thou, and that henceforth none be so hardie bolde
To put vp head to matche with me, by whom I be controlde.

(I 197-200, quoted in Wright 1919, 141.)

Even ignoring the fact that Hall appears confused about who’s bringing whom
from the “Pavilion,” he introduces the word “king” here where it did not previously
appear, in either the Greek or the French. To be sure, this excerpt can be read as
Agamemnon comparing his own kingship with Achilles’ kingship, except for the fact that
even the French from which Hall is translating does not refer to kingship; it is Hall’s
addition, and his interest in specifying comparison of kingship as opposed to power or

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force points to a cultural difference that Hall felt compelled to insert into the text for an English audience.

George Chapman’s complete translation of the *Iliad* from the Greek elevates Agamemnon’s role as well. He consistently translates “ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν” as “king of men” when it describes Agamemnon, which implies “king of all men,” because otherwise in English it feels redundant. By contrast the textual “ἄναξ” is a word that is used to refer to Achilles, Odysseus, or Menelaus just as often. “Leader of men,” would be closer to the sense of the Greek, but the English Renaissance translators either had a difficulty understanding a societal structure where there can be many kings that are equal in rank fighting on the same side in a war or had no interest in maintaining that structure for the purposes of an English audience. In the sixteenth line of the first book, Agamemnon and Menelaus together are referred to as “κοσμήτορε λαῶν” which is a direct reference to their responsibility in ordering the men (λαός) or just “the people.” They are the “marshallers of the troops,” or just the “orderers of the people,” but in Chapman’s hands they become the ones “who most rulde” (Chapman I, 15). Further, whereas “ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν” [leader of men] is one of Agamemnon’s common epithets, it is not used for him exclusively.\(^{87}\) Anchises, the father of Aeneas, is referred to as “ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν” in book V, as is Aeneas himself, and there are a few other instances of other Greek and Trojan generals referred to with that epithet. Some of Achilles’s common epithets include

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87 Most likely for metrical reasons. ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Αχαιόμενων has a meter of ς/- ζς ς/- ζς, which provides a full foot in the middle and an emphatic spondee on the end of Agamemnon's name.

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“δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς” [divine Achilles] or “θεοείκελος Ἀχιλλεύς” [god-like Achilles], which in an ancient Greek worldview makes one superior to a leader of mere mortals. In the cultural system of the English Renaissance, however, the divinity of Achilles was at best uninteresting and at worst blasphemous, so it was either unremarked or effaced.

The preeminent English translation of the *Iliad* in the eighteenth century is by Alexander Pope and is marked by its own era’s beliefs about leadership, order, and war. Pope makes it clear in “An Essay on Criticism” that great poetry must consist of deliberate and artful choices. Vergil, he claims, in his study of Homer had discovered that Nature and Homer were the same: “Convinc'd, amaz'd, he checks the bold Design,/And Rules as strict his labour'd Work confine,/As if the Stagyrite o'er looked each Line./Learn hence for Ancient Rules a just Esteem;/To copy Nature is to copy Them” (Pope 1970, 136-39). By “Nature” he means poetics that are “naturally” pleasing to the ear—both in terms of meter and the phonemes used: “True Ease in Writing comes from Art, not Chance,/As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance,/Tis not enough no Harshness gives Offence,/The Sound must seem an Echo to the Sense” (Pope 1970, 362-65).

Cynthia Whissell argues that Pope uses heroic couplets to give the sense of orderly marching warriors and he makes deliberate decisions about the words he uses to describe different events based on the phonemes themselves in the words. Whissell’s study starts with the premise that certain sounds are perceived as more “active” (/g/, /t/,
/r/, and /œː/) and others are more “passive” (/l/, /m/, /œ/, and /œː/). After an analysis of more than 52,000 phonemes in the first two books of Pope’s *Iliad*, she found that there was a marked difference in the frequency of active and passive phonemes. The episode in the selection with the highest frequency of active phonemes was the one in which Achilles withdraws from the Greek camp in protest over the appropriation of Briseis. The episode with the highest frequency of passive phonemes is the one in which the Argives are marshaled before re-engaging—the first marshaling since Achilles left the cause. It is not difficult to see here what these amassings of “active” and “passive” phonemes signify. Whether the assigning of “active” and “passive” to the respective phonemes is accurate, universal, or culturally specific, it is likely that they reflect the ideology of Pope’s poetics.

Pope’s particular style of rhyme scheme was more than just aesthetic. It was a political position; he wrote using the heroic couplet, the appeal of which was that it was a traditional form of English poetry, dating back to Chaucer. The heroic couplet is highly ordered, and marks the poet who uses it as one who does not subscribe to Miltonic blank verse and, by metonymy, Milton’s politics. Read aloud, it gives the feeling of soldiers on the march. Creating order out of chaos is a major theme in Pope's era, and not merely in form, but also content. Let us look at the first few lines of the *Iliad*, and of Pope’s translation to get a sense of his priorities. The Greek and my rough translation follow:

μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληῒδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἢ μυρί’ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε’ ἔθηκε,

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πολλὰς δ᾽ ιρθίμους ψυχὰς Ἀιδί προάγεν
ήρων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσιν
οἰωνοσὶ τε πᾶσι, Διός δ᾽ ἐτελείετο βουλή,
ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρώτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἀτρείδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δίος Αχιλλεὺς.
τίς τ᾽ ἂρ σφωε θεὸν ἐριδὶ ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;
Λητοὺς καὶ Διός υἱὸς: ὁ γὰρ βασιληὺς ἔχονθεις
νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὅρσε κακήν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί,
οὖνεκα τὸν Χρύσην ἠτίμασεν ἀρητῆρα
Ἄτρείδης: ὃ γὰρ ἠλθε θοᾶς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν
λυσόμενος τε θύγατρα φέρων τ᾽ ἀποίνα,
στέμματ᾽ ἔχων ἐν χερσὶν ἑκῆβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος
χρυσέῳ ἀνὰ σκῆπτρῳ, καὶ λίσσετο πάντας Ἀχαιούς,
Ἀτρείδα δὲ μάλιστα δύω,
κοσμήτορε λαῶν:

[The anger sing, goddess, of Peleidian Achilles
Cursed [anger], which gave the Achaians countless pains,
Sending many mighty souls of heroes to Hades
Making their selves spoils for dogs
And all birds, bringing about the will of Zeus,
From when the two separated and struggled
Atreides, lord of men and divine Achilles.
Who then of the gods set them to fight in discord?
The son of Leto and Zeus: for he in anger at the king (βασιληὺς)
Called forth the evil sickness on the army, people were dying
Because Atreides had dishonored the priest Chryses:
For he had come to the Achaians' swift ships
To free his daughter and bearing gifts to ransom her
Wreathed, holding up in his hand the golden staff
Of far-shooting Apollo, and he beseeched the Achaians,
But especially the two Atreides, those marshalers of the troops.]

(Iliad I 1-16)

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumber'd, heavenly goddess, sing!
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;
Whose limbs unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore.
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove!

Declare, O Muse, in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended Pow'r!
Latona's son a dire contagion spread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The King of Men his rev'rend priest defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

For Chryses sought with costly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the victor's chain;
Suppliant the venerable father stands,
Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands,
By these he begs, and, lowly bending down,
Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown.
He sued to all, but chief implored for grace
The brother-kings, of Atreus' royal race.

(Pope, I 1-22)

Here, in addition to seeing “ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν ” translated as “King of Men,” where the title is further emphasized by the use of capital letters, we can see that as Pope tells the story of Agamemnon’s refusal to ransom Chryseis, he flavors the translation with value judgments not as keenly felt in the Greek. “The King of Men his rev'rend priest defy'd,” gives a much heavier-handed moral assertion than οὕνεκα τὸν Χρύσην ἠτίμασεν ἀρητῆρα Ἀτρεΐδης: “because Atreides had dishonored the priest Chryses.” The priest is given the additional epithets, “venerable,” and the signs of his priesthood for Apollo are described as “awful,” where they have no modifier in the source. That is not to say that there is no judgment in Homer: “People were dying because he had dishonored the priest” is a fair enough indictment on its face, but Pope oversells the role of Chryses’s priesthood and gives it a Christian flavor with the use of “rev'rend” and “grace.” This is not surprising, however; Pope is no stranger to moralizing and prescriptive poetry, and his good friend Samuel Johnson had established that it is the only appropriate tack for literature to take. It
may be a foregone conclusion that there is virtue in Homer, for does not Homer “bear a
greater resemblance to the sacred books than . . . any other writer”? (Pope 1967, xv) Is Homer not the foundation for Roman and European virtue? This equation of ancient Greek and Christian virtue is never questioned by Pope or Johnson.

Pope sounds another interesting moral note in Book VI, when Hector returns to the palace of Troy, and is offered refreshment by his mother.

> Far hence be Bacchus' gifts (the chief rejoin'd);  
> Inflaming wine, pernicious to mankind,  
> Unnerves the limbs, and dulls the noble mind.

(Pope VI 329-31)

By contrast, the source reads:

> Τὴν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἐπεῖτα μέγας κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ·  
> μή μοι οἶνον ἄειρε μελίφρονα, πότνια μῆτερ,  
> μή μ' ἀπογυιώσῃς, μένεος δ' ἀλκῆς τε λάθωμαι·

(Iliad VI 263-65)

[Then answered great Hector of the flashing helmet:  
Do not lift the honey-minded wine to me, lady mother,  
Do not deprive me of my courage, or run off my strength.]

In his rendition, Pope clearly gives the wine much more evil intent than it is ever given by Homer. The invocation of Bacchus’ name, not present in the Greek, even in the form of his Greek counterpart, Dionysos, can be seen as a signifier of the chaos and danger that follows that god, especially for the Romans. The Greek is straightforward, arguing that now is not the time for Hector to drink any wine, but not making any claims about wine’s
inherent virtue or lack of it, which Pope does quite overtly. Wine is “pernicious to mankind,” and not a gift to men from the gods, to ease their cares, as the Greeks believed. This is clearly a moral judgment made by Pope from his position in space and time, and not at all a translation of the Greek intent. Whether the judgment was one Pope agreed with or felt was opportune is difficult to know—in any case, it was one that agreed with the norms of his age and with his immediate audience.

Pope, writing as he was in the midst of the printing revolution, saw his version of Homer as even more of an original than the Original. This is much more in evidence in his behavior concerning the criticism of it, and his attitude toward criticism in general, than it is in his preface to the *Iliad*. Though he states in the preface that, “It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language,” and “... there is often a light in antiquity which nothing better preserves than a version almost literal. I know no liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original...” (Pope 1967, xv), it is clear from a close reading of the Greek of Homer and Pope’s translation that there is nothing about it that is literal, and that, even among his contemporaries, there were those who firmly believed that he completely lost sight of the original. For Pope however, the project of translating Homer was also an issue of status and economics and his translation of the *Iliad* is an example of the way in which the elevated status of ancient Greek literature has been utilized to give translators authority and power. Pope's project of rewriting the works of classical authors,
from his translations of Homer to his epic “The Rape of the Lock” and his “Imitations of Horace,” demonstrates his deep understanding of the power of rewritings. This understanding led to an accomplishment that no other English translation of Homer has achieved: centuries of relevance. In the introduction to Robert Fagles's 1996 translation of the *Odyssey*, Bernard Knox calls Pope's translation “the finest ever made” (Fagles 1996, 6) and an Amazon search of “the *Iliad*” and “Pope” gives four pages of results. That the translation itself is much less than literal isn't as interesting for the purposes of this chapter than the fact that the choices he made—both poetic and ideological—spoke to not only his own era, but eras afterward, to this day. Whenever a classicist or another translator wants to evoke the tradition of British literary prestige, they reference the translation by Pope.

This is not to say that Pope's translation resonates with every reader. As ornamental as the language is, it is not the first choice of new students of Homer now. Even only one generation later William Cowper writes against it, both by translating the *Iliad* himself and by criticizing Pope's poetics in general, as can be seen in this short poem from “Table Talk.”

Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,  
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,  
Gave virtue and morality a grace  
That quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face,  
Levied a tax of wonder and applause,  
Ev'n on the fools that trampl'd on their laws.  
But he (his musical finesse was such,
Cowper's use of the heroic couplets, his reference to levying a “tax,” and his ultimate criticism of Pope—that he “made poetry a mere mechanic art”—show us that his criticisms of Pope are also economic and ideological. To Cowper, Pope's translation was made with much pretension and little soul. Pope's accomplishment was as much or more economic as it was artistic; the mass publication, paired with his astute understanding of his audience, and writing specifically for them are what arguably made his translation as popular as it became. But it opened him up to criticisms of insincerity, betrayal, and avarice.

Cowper's own translation is interesting for what it does differently from Pope as well as for what it does not—for therein we can see what norms have already been established with regard to the translation of Homer by English poets. Let us look at his translation of the first 16 lines of the Iliad, which Pope spent 22 lines to translate above.

Achilles sing, O Goddess! Peleus’ son;  
His wrath pernicious, who ten thousand woes  
Caused to Achaia’s host, sent many a soul  
Illustrious into Ades premature,  
And Heroes gave (so stood the will of Jove)  
To dogs and to all ravening fowls a prey,  
When fierce dispute had separated once  
The noble Chief Achilles from the son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon, King of men.
Who them to strife impell’d? What power divine?
Latona’s son and Jove’s. For he, incensed
Against the King, a foul contagion raised
In all the host, and multitudes destroy’d,
For that the son of Atreus had his priest
Dishonored, Chryses. To the fleet he came
Bearing rich ransom glorious to redeem
His daughter, and his hands charged with the wreath
And golden sceptre of the God shaft-arm’d.
His supplication was at large to all
The host of Greece, but most of all to two,
The sons of Atreus, highest in command.

(Cowper I, 1-21)

As is plain, Cowper's translation has only one fewer line than Pope's. This is largely a result of the characteristics of English, however. Greek is able to include much of the sense of English prepositions in its prefixes and inflected forms. Using the same number of lines as the source is not something the poet-translators of the early modern era attempted. Cowper, like Pope and every other translator of this era, used the Roman names for the gods rather than the Greek except once in this selection: Cowper retains “Ades,” though he leaves off the rough breathing that makes the name of the underworld and its master “Hades.” Like Pope, Cowper names Agamemnon “King of men,” as if he were the king of all the men, and not just the Myceneans; and like Pope, Cowper effaces Achilles's divinity, translating δῖος as “noble,” where Pope uses “great,” and both leave out the sense of δῖος that reflects the fact that it is literally the genitive of the name of Ζεύς, which word is synonymous with “god.” Both Pope and Cowper read the Iliad as a tragedy of the individual whose “greatest personal qualities are of no effect when union is wanting among the chief rulers,” though Cowper is not the imperialist Pope is when it
comes to that union of rulers. Their major differences are in their expression of form, but are no less ideological for that.

Cowper objects strenuously to Pope's (or any translator's) use of rhyme.

Mr. Pope has surmounted all difficulties in his version of Homer that it was possible to surmount in rhyme. But he was fettered, and his fetters were his choice. Accustomed always to rhyme, he had formed to himself an ear which probably could not be much gratified by verse that wanted it, and determined to encounter even impossibilities, rather than abandon a mode of writing in which he had excelled every body, for the sake of another to which, unexercised in it as he was, he must have felt strong objections. (Cowper 1792, vii)

For this reason, although he makes sure to establish his respect for Pope and his genius, Cowper believes that there is room for his own translation. Pope's rigid adherence to rhyme, according to Cowper, is the main reason for any textual discrepancy: “. . . the matter found in me, whether he like it or not, is found also in Homer, and that the matter not found in me, how much soever he may admire it, is found only in Mr. Pope. I have omitted nothing; I have invented nothing” (Cowper 1792, viii). This idea of the true translator as one who has neither omitted nor invented any line of his translation is a classic one; however, as we have seen and will further explore, it is a practical impossibility. Like Pope before him, Cowper is cognizant of the difficulty in translating too closely or too freely, and, like Pope, considers himself to have achieved a happy medium.

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D. Reprise on Translation Theory

In 1860 Matthew Arnold gave a series of lectures at Oxford on translating Homer and the next year published them under the title “On Translating Homer.” In the lectures he discusses Chapman, Pope, and Cowper, as well as two contemporary translations done by Francis Newman and Ichabod Wright and one done 30 years prior by William Sotheby. Arnold lists four qualities of Homer that he considers essential to the translation of the epics: rapidity, simplicity (of style), plainness (of thought), and nobility. Cowper and Wright have failed, according to Arnold, for want of rapidity; Sotheby and Pope have failed for want of simplicity; Chapman has failed in plainness of thought; and Newman, Arnold says, “has yet failed more conspicuously than any of them” for his want of nobility (Arnold 1971, 10). Rapidity, simplicity, and plainness are all more objectively determined than “nobility,” though I would argue that they are also context-dependent. Therefore I will discuss them first before then examining the vitriol that Arnold spends on Newman's “ignobility” and Newman's retort.

Arnold defines his terms by their absence in the respective translators. Cowper's “elaborate Miltonic manner” interrupts the rapidity of the source. However it is unclear what Arnold means by “rapidity.” He argues that Milton is completely unlike Homer in manner, but gives no examples or analysis. Of Cowper's translation he offers two selections: one in which he objects to the word “blazing” as “un-Homeric” and a second
in which he objects to the inversions “have Ilium's sons thine arms Stript from Patroclus' shoulders,” and “a God him contending in the van Slew.” I am at a loss to explain what it is about inversions that is inherently un-Homeric, as the structure of the Greek language is such that word order is highly variable and often serves to provide emphasis. Emphasis appears to be Cowper's goal with his inversions. It does make for awkward English, perhaps, but Arnold's charge of “un-Homeric” doesn't appear to rest on the Greek itself as much as the English translations that Arnold may prefer. He goes on to offer one line of Pope's translation that he considers more “rapid” than Cowper's:

Ξάνθε, τί μοι θάνατον μαντεύεαι; οὐδὲ τί σε χρή·

(Iliad XIX, 420)

Pope's translation is thus: “So let it be! /Portents and prodigies are lost on me:” and Arnold offers “Xanthus, why prophesiest thou my death to me? Thou needest not at/all:” as a prose translation. He does not quote Cowper's translation of this line, which is:

“Why, Xanthus, prophesiest thou my death?/It ill beseems thee.” Comparing these three treatments of one line, what Arnold means by “rapidity” can only be inferred. Does he mean the total number of words used to translate this one line? Pope uses eleven to Cowper's fourteen; both outnumber the source's nine. Does he mean total number of syllables? They use the same number. Furthermore, when one compares their translation of Book I, 1-16 above, both of them are translating each line in ten syllables. Arnold takes the lines above out of context: Pope's translation actually falls between lines:

With unabated rage: “So let it be!
Portents and prodigies are lost on me.

(Pope XIX, 466-67)
As does Cowper's:

Why, Xanthus, prophesiesthoun my death?  
It ill beseemsthee. I already know

(Cowper XIX 503-04)

Although Cowper's blank verse is not as regular as Pope's heroic couplets, there is nothing that can clearly be determined to be “slow” about it. Even the length of the particular words Cowper chooses is not dissimilar to the original Greek. Arnold's charge against Cowper appears, then, to be a matter of personal taste.

Arnold like Cowper and Newman objects to the use of rhyme in translations of Homer. His objection is more specific than theirs, namely that “rhyme inevitably tends to pair lines which in the original are independent, and thus the movement of the poem is changed” (Arnold 1971, 15). The order of the lines is no longer as Homer intended them, which then affects the thinking of the reader, which is unacceptable according to Arnold: “Rhyme certainly, by intensifying antithesis, can intensify separation, and this is precisely what Pope does; but this balanced rhetorical antithesis, though very effective, is entirely un-Homeric” (Arnold 1971, 16-7). For Arnold, an un-Homeric translation of Homer is a failed translation of Homer. He specifically argues that Pope's translation is a failed translation: “And this is what I mean by saying that Pope fails to render Homer, because he does not render his plainness and directness of style and diction. Where Homer marks separation by moving away, Pope marks it with antithesis” (Arnold 1971, 17). Arnold agrees with Bentley that “It is a very pretty poem, but you must not call it
Homer,” which leads one to wonder whether Arnold thinks it is even possible to render Homer at all. His criticism of George Chapman is that his translation is too indicative of its own era, for “the Elizabethan poet . . . cannot forbear to interpose a play of thought between his object and its expression” (Arnold 1971, 30). He does not recognize, however, that any given era will have its particular styles, and that any translator must, by nature of translation itself, “convey it to us through a medium” (Arnold 1971, 30). If he did, he would have to acknowledge that there is no rendering of Homer that is not a failure, according to his terms.

When Arnold begins to criticize his contemporary Newman for the lack of “nobility” in his translation, he begins by stating unequivocally that a translator should translate “to satisfy scholars [sic], because scholars alone have the means of really judging him” (Arnold 1971, 31). Here I feel compelled to invoke André Lefevere once more, for he convincingly argues that rewritings (which include translations) are what keep a text alive in the minds of non-professional readers—by which we can assume he means people who are not scholars (Lefevere 1992, 7). The scholars to whom Arnold insists a translator must write are generally not in need of translations; they likely can read the source. Scholars serve as gate-keepers for what is acceptable in a translation, however. As such a scholar, Arnold has the power of determining which translation is acceptable. At the time of his writing “On Translating Homer,” none of the translators

89 See also Walter Benjamin's “The Task of the Translator” for the argument that translation extends the life of a text.
had been successful in his view, and yet he refuses also to make an attempt himself. “It has more than once been suggested to be that I should translate Homer,” he begins the first lecture, “That is a task for which I have neither the time nor the courage” (Arnold 1971, 1). No one had yet been able to render Homer, and yet Homer continued to be rendered. Translators repeatedly manipulate Homer to establish the dominance of their own culture. This process continues, regardless of the protests of Professor Arnold.

I cannot leave Matthew Arnold without pointing out that his arguments belong in a category with those leveled at fan fiction writers, accused of “destroying” their source texts in the practice of creating interpretive rewritings. The target audience of the translations of Homer, like the target audience of fan fiction, is often not the professional scholars interested in the source text, but non-professional readers and devotees.

E. American translators of the Twentieth Century

The nationhood of the United States was marked early by references to antiquity. The discovery of the Elgin Marbles in 1815, as well as the influence of Classical thought on the founders, resulted in federal buildings that visually reflected Greek influence. American translations of Homer began appearing in the late nineteenth century, with William Cullen Bryant's translation. It wasn't until after World War II, however, that new American translations began to outnumber British ones.  

As an undergraduate Classics

major in the mid-1990s, my first exposure to Homer outside of cultural reference or abridged selection was Richmond Lattimore's translations. Lattimore's *Iliad* was published in 1951 and his *Odyssey* in 1967. They are still considered some of the best translations for use in college classrooms. Lattimore chose for his form a “free six-beat line” instead of attempting to translate Homeric dactyls into a high form of American poetic dialect, which he admits did not exist in 1951 (Lattimore 1951, 55). The result is what George Dimock proclaims in his 1967 review of Lattimore's *Odyssey* “The Best Yet.” Although Dimock takes some issue with Lattimore's interpretive choices, he states that Lattimore's choice of form results in a poem that “sounds Greek,” something that Renaissance translators had no interest in doing (Dimock 1967, 702).

For Lattimore's part, he devotes only one page of his 44 page introduction to the *Iliad* to a discussion of his translation. In it he explicitly disagrees with Matthew Arnold's conclusion that Homer's poetic dialect can only be truly rendered in an equivalent poetic dialect in the target language: “My aim has been to give a rendering of the *Iliad* which will convey the meaning of the Greek in a speed and rhythm analogous to the speed and rhythm I find in the original” (Lattimore 1951, 55). In addition Lattimore not only retains the Greek names of the Greek gods but attempts to transliterate the Greek names as accurately as possible. He uses *k* instead of *c* whenever it would not be too confusing to do so, and does not Romanize the -*os* Greek endings. With regard to word choice, he attempts to avoid mistakes “which would be caused by rating the word of my own choice
ahead of the word which translates the Greek” (Lattimore 1951, 55). This is to an extent impossible, as frequent choices must be made in the course of a translation—and whose choices are they, if not the translator's? Though by the time of Lattimore's translation Matthew Arnold's idea of one perfect rendering had been largely discarded, there is little to no acknowledgment in Lattimore that his translation reflects his personal interpretive reading of the epic and that this reflection is unavoidable.

The reading that Lattimore gives that most interests me here is his reading of Agamemnon. In light of the readings of Agamemnon that the Renaissance and Restoration translators give, one might think that Lattimore as a modern translator would set to right the rank of Agamemnon with respect to the other Achaian leaders. In fact, Lattimore follows the tradition of Chapman and Pope with regard to Agamemnon's kingship. In the introduction to his Iliad he gives a section on what he considers “The People of the Iliad:” Hektor, Achilleus, Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Aias. That these are his choices is interesting in the first place—there is no Menelaos or Paris in this list, which may betray Lattimore's conception of the story more than anything. This is not a story of a war over a woman—in the decade following World War II, it is a story of the heroes that fight the war. Lattimore describes each of the men with epithets of his own: Hektor is “the defender,” Achilleus the “tragic hero,” Odysseus the “prudent counsellor and complete man,” Aias the “soldier,” and Agamemnon “the king” (Lattimore 1951. 45-51).
In discussing the kingship of Agamemnon, Lattimore admittedly cannot explain exactly why Agamemnon is “the greatest king among them.”

Whether he is emperor of the Achaians, or general of the army, or the king with the most subjects, whose friends stand by him in his brother's quarrel (unless he insults them), is a question apparently as obscure to the heroes of the *Iliad* as it is to us. But essentially a king is what he is; not the biggest Achaian, says Priam to Helen, but the kingliest; a bull in a herd of cattle; a lord who must be busy while others rest, marshaling his men for ordered assault. In the quarrel with Achilleus, he demands recognition of his kingly stature, as if afraid of losing his position if he lacks what others have, in this case a captive mistress. So he comes off badly, yet even here, while he reviles Kalchas and beats down Achilleus, his first thought it for the army. (Lattimore 1951, 48-49)

Lattimore's argument here is unconvincing. Priam's words to Helen with regard to Agamemnon are as follows:

οὐδὲν μὲν κεφαλῆς καὶ μεῖζονς ἄλλος ἔασι,  
καλὸν δ᾽ ὀὕτω ἐγὼν οὐ πω ἰδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,  
οὐδὲν ὀὕτω γεραρὸν: βασιλῆι γὰρ ἄνδρὶ ἔοικε.

[Who this Achaian man is, both brave and great,  
Surely there are others whose heads are taller,  
But never have my eyes seen such a noble one  
Nor more venerable; for he seems a kingly man.]

(*Iliad* III 167-70)

Again, not the “most” kingly but very “noble” (καλὸν can also mean merely “good” or “beautiful”). These descriptors can and have been used of the other Achaian heroes, as well as the Trojan ones. That Priam uses them here marks Agamemnon as the “marshaller
of the men,” but not as a superlative “high king.” In addition, his description of Odysseus follows.

ἀρνείῳ μιν ἐγὼς ἔισκω πηγεσιμάλλω, ὅς τ’ οἰῶν μέγα πῶϋ διέρχεται ἀργεννάων.

[He seems to me like a thick-fleeced ram, who passes through a large flock of white sheep.]

(Iliad III 197-98)

So it is in fact Odysseus who is characterized with the “bull in a herd of cattle” metaphor, not Agamemnon.

Considering the discussion above of the relative rank of Agamemnon, and the weakness of Lattimore's characterization here, it is reasonable to conclude that Lattimore is relying largely on the tradition of Agamemnon as high king, rather than actual textual analysis. But when it comes to the actual translation, there is little to suggest Lattimore's own assertion that Agamemnon is the kingliest of the Achaians. Consider his translation of lines 184-87, which Salel and Hall use above to assert Agamemnon's authority.

but I shall take the fair-cheeked Briseis, your prize, I myself going to your shelter, that you may learn well how much greater I am than you, and another man may shrink back from likening himself to me and contending against me. (Lattimore 1951, 64)

Lattimore's strategy of translating at the level of the word and the line, as opposed to the whole text, ensures that the sense of the source is actually left to speak for itself in some respects.
Apart from Lattimore, the translations most likely to be found in American college classrooms today are those by Robert Fitzgerald and Robert Fagles, both also American academics. Fitzgerald's *Iliad*, published in 1974, contains no translator's note or introduction by the translator. Like Cowper's, his translation is composed in blank verse, and like Lattimore he uses transliteration stripped of romanization. He also includes accents on certain names (and not others) for reasons that I cannot discern. All Greek words are accented in the original, so it is difficult to determine why he chooses to accent Meneláos and Agamémnon, but not Akhilleus or Odysseus. Using the accents at all, however, functions as a kind of foreignization technique, indicating to the reader that they are not reading the poem in the original language—something that can easily be forgotten when the text is as fully integrated into the Anglophone tradition as Homer is.

Fitzgerald's treatment of Agamemnon is the first of the translations I discuss here that does not endow him with more authority than the source text does. Consider Fitzgerald's translation of lines 184-87 in Book I, as seen above in treatments by Salel and Hall:

\[
\text{That done, I myself}
\text{will call for Brisêis at your hut, and take her,}
\text{flower of young girls that she is, your prize,}
\text{to show you here and now who is the stronger}
\text{and make the next man sick at heart—if any}
\text{think of claiming equal place with me.}
\]

(Fitzgerald 1974, 17)
Fitzgerald translates “ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν” as “high commander” in line 172 of Book I where Lattimore uses “lord of men.” “Lord of men” might be more literal but in English carries a connotation that is not only aristocratic but distinctly Christian, whereas “high commander” is a more accurate rendition of what Agamemnon was to the Achaian army. Fitzgerald's translation could be compared to that of Alexander Pope, who strayed far from the literal to evoke what he believed to be the spirit of the original. In Fitzgerald's case, however, the spirit of the original is to be found in the text itself and its cultural context, and not in the cultural context into which it is translated. Pope's Homer is much more British in spirit, whereas Fitzgerald is trying valiantly to imbue his Homer with Greek spirit. Whether this is because Fitzgerald is influenced by a literary theory that recognizes the Greekness of the text and works to retain it, or because he is an American academic writing against the British tradition is difficult to determine in the absence of a translator's note or introduction. However, it is clear that he is breaking with centuries of convention in the way Homer has been translated into English.

The specific requirements of the literary system into which a translator is translating is not the only thing that must be understood to place a translation in context. Each subsequent translation of Homer into English was familiar with and made reference to the ones that came before it. In addition to Lattimore, Fitzgerald and Fagles—three major verse translations of Homer in the twentieth century—Robert Shorrock examines two prose translations by Emile Rieu and Williams Rouse, as well as Robert Graves's
mixture of prose and verse. According to Shorrock, twentieth-century English translations of Homer are highly intertextual: he cites Pope's translation influential enough to have touched all of their interpretations, even when they are moving away from Pope.

. . . echoes, however faint, persist: Rouse's choice of the adjective 'dire' in his 'dire pestilence' looks straight back to Pope, as does Lattimore's choice of 'hurled' for 'hurl'd'. Likewise, all but Graves favour 'souls' when describing the dead Greeks, and 'will' when talking of the plan of Zeus. (Shorrock 2004, 446)

The twentieth century's translations also had a great deal of influence on each other. Shorrock specifically argues that the last of the twentieth-century translators I discuss here, Robert Fagles, owes a great deal to both Lattimore and Fitzgerald, though Fagles only acknowledged Fitzgerald's influence directly.

Robert Fagles was also influenced significantly by Pope's translations. Fagles served as one of the associate editors of the Twickenham edition of Pope's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and in his 60-page introduction to Fagles's *Odyssey*, Fagles's mentor and friend Bernard Knox states as a fact that Pope's translation is “the finest ever made” (Fagles 1996, 5). In the “Translator's Preface” to his *Iliad*, Fagles begins by assuming his audience is in agreement with Pope's greatness: “'Homer makes us Hearers,' Pope has said, 'and Virgil leaves us Readers.' So the great translator of Homer . . . ” (Fagles 1990, ix)
The influence is mediated by the context in which Fagles is translating: no self-respecting Classicist of the late twentieth century would disregard all the work that has been done in Homeric studies to harken back to Pope's understanding of the Greeks. But Fagles indicates his stand clearly in the section of the introduction of both epics on “The Spelling and Pronunciation of Homeric Names.”

Though the English spelling of ancient Greek names faces modern poet-translators with some difficult problems, it was not a problem at all for Shakespeare, Milton, Pope and Tennyson. Except in the case of names that had through constant use been fully Anglicized—Helen, Priam, Hector, Troy, Trojans—the poets used the Latin equivalents of the Greek names that they found in the texts of Virgil and Ovid, whose poems they read in school. These are the forms we too are familiar with, from our reading of English poets through the centuries: Hecuba, Achilles, Ajax, Achaeans, Patroclus . . . Rigid adherence to this rule would of course make unacceptable demands: it would impose, for example, Minerva instead of Athena, Ulysses for Odysseus, and Jupiter or Jove for Zeus. We have preferred the Greek names, but transliterated them on Latin principles: Hêrê, for example, is Hera in this translation; Athênê is Athena. Elsewhere we have replaced the letter k with c and substituted the ending us for the Greek os in the names of persons . . . The conventional Latinate spelling of the names has a traditional pronunciation system, one that corresponds with neither the Greek nor the Latin sounds. Perhaps “system” is not the best word for it, since it is full of inconsistencies. But it is the pronunciation English poets have used for centuries, the sounds they heard mentally as the composed and that they confidently expected their readers to hear in their turn. (Fagles 1996, 65-66)

With this introductory note, Fagles marks his translation as one that prioritizes domesticating rather than foreignizing the text. Fagles's priority is “to find a middle ground (and not a no-man's-land, if I can help it) between the features of [Homer's] performance and the expectations of a contemporary reader” (Fagles 1990, x). This focus

91 The notes are not completely identical in Fagles's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The *Odyssey*, for example, adds the last section of this quote beginning with “The conventional Latinate spelling,” to the existing note in the *Iliad.*
on “the features of Homer's performance” prioritizes form and meter, not the particularities of archaic Greek culture in the text—particularities that have been smoothed over by translations such as Pope's and all the translations that look to his.

Fagles walks the middle road with the traditional influence in interpretation, as well. His translation of the scene in which Hector declines the wine offered by his mother is stripped of the judgmental language we saw in Pope above.

But Hector shook his head, his helmet flashing:
“Don't offer me mellow wine, mother, not now—
you'd sap my limbs, I'd lose my nerve for war.
(Fagles 312-14)

But his translation of “ἄναξ ἄνδρῶν” [leader of men] is the traditional “lord of men,” and occasionally refers to him as “King Agamemnon,” which implies he is king over the other Achaeans, again, and not first among equals, which is a point of contention within the text itself. Choosing language that establishes Agamemnon's kingship as established fact narrows the field of interpretation. Fagles's emphasis on what is “conventional,” “traditional,” and familiar to the English reader goes beyond the spelling and pronunciation of Greek names and places. His particular rewriting project is not to challenge the traditional understanding of the relationship between these men, but to update the presentation of Pope's rendition for modern readers, with modern aesthetics and a deeper understanding of the Greek context, but not too much. As he says himself in the translator's preface:, the more “literal” approach would be too little English, and the more “literary” too little Greek (Fagles 1990, x).
Fagles's choices go beyond the level of language to the level of cultural structures. Writing his translations in the 1980s and 1990s, looking back to the 1960s and 1970s for the most recent influential American translation, he chose a more conservative route than Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald's foreignizing choices reflect the rise of post-colonial thought in literary studies and translation with its foreignizing spellings, whereas Fagles's choices walk them back to some extent—not enough to walk back to Pope, but enough to hold Pope up as ideal. By referencing Pope and choosing romanized spellings, Fagles is, in a sense, borrowing prestige from Pope's system just as Pope borrowed it from Homer's.

F. Rewritings of Homer in other Media

Translations are a form of rewriting, and I would argue that all forms of rewriting can be theorized in terms of translation, but conventionally in Anglophone cultures we have made a distinction between translation qua translation and other kinds of rewritings: we call them “adaptations,” or “reimaginings” or “versions.” Robert Shorrock makes the point that: “. . . translations are not inherently less creative than adaptations (or any text, for that matter), and [that] they are equally deserving of critical attention” (Shorrock 2004, 440). In this chapter I have spent the bulk of the time on translations, and do not focus as closely on textual analysis of the other kinds of rewritings, indicating instead
how other media types fit the pattern of transformative rewriting in terms of systems theory.

One immediately noticeable detail about translations and rewritings is that traditionally when we look at translations of Homer we are looking at translations of the Iliad much more than translations of the Odyssey. Pope is known for the former, not the latter—which is appropriate, as he only translated twelve books of the Odyssey. Chapman and Hall did not translate the Odyssey. Lattimore, Fitzgerald, and Fagles all did, however—in fact, contrary to almost every other translator of Homer, Fitzgerald translated the Odyssey a full decade before he translated the Iliad. This early modern focus on the Iliad over the Odyssey reflects a clear cultural preference. The translators of the Renaissance and the Restoration were writing to borrow glory and amplify it for their burgeoning empire. The story of the Trojan War and its heroes was of much more use than the story of the ten-year journey home of one of those heroes. In the modern and postmodern eras, however, the story of Odysseus has held greater interest. The Iliad is the song of the wrath, but the Odyssey is the song of the man. Both epics invoke the Muse by asking her to sing a particular song, and both epics begin with the very thing they are asked to sing. The first word of the Iliad is μῆνιν (anger) and the first word of the Odyssey is ἄνδρα (man). Exploring the humanity of Odysseus is a much more compelling project for many modern and postmodern writers than rewriting the glory of warlike Achilles.
James Joyce's *Ulysses* a great deal to do with this twentieth century turn to the *Odyssey*. *Ulysses* is clearly more than a mere rewriting of Homer's *Odyssey*; indeed it is explicitly marked as such only by its title. When the deeper Homeric structure of the novel was made evident by Joyce himself and through Stuart Gilbert's 1930 introduction to the novel, it marked *Ulysses* as much more than the mere obscenity that early critics considered it to be. In *Ulysses* Joyce celebrates that which disinterested the early moderns: the triumph of the everyman and the way in which his endurance marks him as a hero.

There is enough material about the intertextual relationship between the *Odyssey* and *Ulysses* to fill a library; obviously I can only touch on this topic here. What interests me specifically is Joyce's reception of the epic and the influence of other rewritings on his rewriting of Homer. There is ample evidence that Joyce adopted Odysseus as his favorite hero and the *Odyssey* as a favorite text early in life, and Keri Elizabeth Ames (2003) argues convincingly that, although Joyce did not know ancient Greek, he was nevertheless familiar with a myriad translations and rewritings of the *Odyssey*.

Ames finds evidence of Joyce's encounters with not only Lamb's *Adventures of Ulysses* and Butcher and Lang's translation—two versions which are well known as...
influences on *Ulysses*—but also the translations of Cowper, Shaw, Pope, and Butler. Of particular interest is Joyce's preference for Pope over Cowper.

. . . his classmate Eugene Sheehy remembers that Joyce “considered the poet Cowper was only fit to write the rhymes which are found in the interiors of Christmas crackers. When requested, therefore, to write an appreciation of *The Task*, he finished off two pages of scathing disparagement of its author with an adaptation of Hamlet's farewell to the dead Polonius: “Peace tedious old fool!” (Ames 2003, 27)

Joyce's love for Pope, however, was marked by another classmate, William G. Fallon, who recalls that Joyce was allowed to write on whatever he liked at the end of the lesson on Pope's *Essay on Man*, and his choice was Pope's translation of the *Odyssey*. This preference expressed in his youth for the less literal, more expressive translation of Pope is not surprising, and when combined with the stories of Joyce's boyish love for the hero Odysseus indicates a deep and enduring affection for the *Odyssey* without a dogmatic adherence to the form and style of the source.

This is even further underlined by Joyce's lack of Greek language, though he was a proficient linguist and made attempts at both modern Greek and the text of Homer (Ames 2003, 17-18). I am once again reminded of Borges's essay—when one is unfamiliar with the language of the original, one has instead the freedom to prefer the translation that best speaks to one's own taste and further, to create one's own version of story in concordance with one's own interpretation. In addition, it should not escape our notice that Joyce's *Ulysses* was the first rewriting of the story of Homer's *Odyssey* since Virgil's *Aeneid* to so thoroughly capture the imagination of its readers and claim its own
Declan Kiberd, in his 2008 article “Joyce's Homer, Homer's Joyce,” articulates Joyce's accomplishment. “Who will deliver us from the Greek and Romans?” asked many a Romantic author, to which Joyce answered, “I will.” The root meaning of “translate” is “conquer,” because the translator half-hopes to displace the original text, or at least to release the energies latent in it but as yet not fully expressed. It is as if one molecule, brought into contact with another, releases a new “third” energy after their collision. To remember any past work, one must agree to forget many of its elements, and so the involuntary memory, often triggered by associative mechanisms, will have not just an element of surprise but also the force of revelation. (Kiberd 2008, 243)

The revelation of Joyce's *Ulysses*, according to Kiberd, is “the modernity of Homer's greatest tale.” Strange definition of “root meaning” notwithstanding, Kiberd has a crucial point about the potential power of a retold story to establish itself in our hearts and minds by using the cultural context to which it belongs and to simultaneously add something significant and new.

Joyce's familiarity with a number of translations and retellings and his refusal to disregard any version of the *Odyssey* in his reading not only emphasize his inclusivity, but the quality of his opus testifies to the value in this inclusivity. Joyce's choice of the romanized version of Odysseus's name for his title marks this as well—the story exceeds the boundaries of just one culture. As Ames argues again in her article, in this way Joyce is not unlike one conception of Homer himself—absorbing all the different versions of the song sung by different rhapsodes, and using them all for inspiration for his own work (Ames 2003, 33). Further, this kind of intertextual synthesis is far from unknown in
fandom, where multiple versions of one source text—especially in the case of films or television shows that have literary source texts of their own—are remixed into new interpretive stories.

*Ulysses* may have been the first modern rewriting of Homer that was not considered a translation, but it was far from the last. The twentieth century gave rise to many more, and in new media. A more recent rewriting of the *Odyssey*, the Coen brothers' film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000), like *Ulysses*, uses the structure of and references to the *Odyssey*, but changes the particular characters and setting to accomplish something completely new. Where *Ulysses* recreates the *Odyssey* to transform one day in Dublin into an epic, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* uses the epic nature of Odysseus's journey as a lens through which to view the mythic southern United States in the midst of the Great Depression. Beginning with a quote from Robert Fitzgerald's translation of the *Odyssey*, “O Muse! Sing in me, and through me tell the story/Of that man skilled in all the ways of contending,/A wanderer, harried for years on end . . .”, the Coen brothers weave the thematic struggles of a wily man on his way home to his family—under threat from a usurping suitor—into a satirical look at “populism” and the culture of the 1930s South. As contemporary creators of popular myth, the Coen brothers are well-versed in the semiotics of film and cultural memory, and take advantage of their viewers' familiarity with the symbols of the *Odyssey* such as the Sirens and the Cyclops, as well as the markers of the “old-timey” South.
Margaret Toscano examines the unique blend of intertextual references in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

. . . the film stitches together visual cues from famous movies of the period including standards like *The Grapes of Wrath, The Wizard of Oz,* and the classic American odyssey, *Huckleberry Finn.* It is no mere coincidence that the books these three films were adapted from are possibly more iconic than the films themselves. Their selection and inclusion as a part of the tapestry the Coens put on display underscores the complex intertwining of variegated levels of cultural production and reception evident in their work. Such American literary and folk references in *O Brother* compliment the references to Homer's Greek epic, *The Odyssey,* which acts as the film's central narrative and mythic frame. (Toscano 2009, 51)

In a *Guardian* interview the Coens claimed that they had never read Homer's epic, implying that a cultural familiarity with the frame of the tale and the character references are all that are necessary to comprehend the film. It is more than possible that they are lying, but it's hardly relevant.93 From a systems perspective, the Coens are participating in yet another use of a text from outside the system to lend prestige—this time in the form of a mythic “bona fide.” Tracing the relationship is complicated by the fact that Homer's epics have been so thoroughly adopted by both Western European and American culture that they *are* part of the system. If not in their original Greek form, they most definitely have entered the system in translation, reference, and frame.

93 The Coen brothers are well known for being untruthful about the provenance of their work. *Fargo,* for example, states that it is “based on a true story” when it is not. Horatia Harrod's 2014 piece on the filmmakers for the *Telegraph* gives more background on this aspect of their work. [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/10568514/Hollywoods-mischief-makers-an-interview-with-the-Coen-Brothers.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/10568514/Hollywoods-mischief-makers-an-interview-with-the-Coen-Brothers.html)
As with earlier rewritings of the Homeric epics, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* uses the well-known story of the *Odyssey* to say something current about their cultural and political system. The fact that the film is set outside contemporary time further emphasizes the translatability of the *Odyssey*. There are multiple displacements in the film but the central fabula of Homer's poem remains. The Coens highlight the corruption of politicians of all stripes, “populist” or not, and the struggle of Everyman to survive the crossfire. Not only is this theme relevant at the turn of the century, but in any and all times—underscored by rewriting the *Odyssey* once again.

In contrast with *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and its self-aware postmodern pastiche is Wolfgang Petersen's *Troy*, starring Brad Pitt as Achilles. Despite the fact that it was released four years after the Coens' film, there is nothing postmodern or self-aware about *Troy*. It presents itself as a straight translation, like Pope's or Cowper's, and like their translations, it makes changes that reflect the expectations of the system into which it is being written, but without any of the subtlety or subversion that even Pope effected. Also like Pope and Cowper, *Troy* interprets the character of Agamemnon as High King above all. In this version, his motive is conquest.

The movie opens with the following in title cards on the screen:

After decades of warfare Agamemnon, King of Mycenae, has forced the kingdoms of Greece into a loose alliance.
Only Thessaly remains unconquered.

Agamemnon's brother Menelaus, King of Sparta, is weary of battle. He seeks to make peace with Troy, the most powerful rival to the emerging Greek nation.

Achilles, considered the greatest warrior ever born, fights for the Greek army.

But his disdain for Agamemnon's rule threatens to break the fragile alliance apart.

The film opens upon a field of battle with visual references to the “spoils for dogs and all birds.” We come to find out that this is Thessaly, not Troy, and that Agamemnon has been collecting the armies of Greece through battles of conquest—and specifically through the skills of Achilles. He calls for single combat to determine the winner of the battle, but Achilles is still in his tent, naked and wrapped around two equally naked women. The boy who is sent to fetch him asks if it's true that his mother is a goddess and that he cannot be killed, and Achilles answers that if that were true, he would not bother with a shield. Then, when the boy tells Achilles that the man he is to fight is a giant and that he would be afraid to face him, Achilles answers “That is why no one will remember your name.”

This encounter sums up the story of Troy—the draw of celebrity and eternal life through fame. It is an aspect of Achilles' story truly enough, and the way in which Petersen and screenwriter David Benioff focus on it are revealing. The choice to portray Agamemnon in the way they do, reflecting the traditional interpretation of the poem, and
the reduction of Achilles's character to Agamemnon's resentful superstar evoke the
themes of fame and celebrity both in the literary arena and in the arena of Hollywood. In
2004 Brad Pitt was a major superstar, and other changes made to the story reflect the
priority of his stardom.\(^{94}\) Achilles lasts further into the siege of Troy in this version,
witnessing the Trojan horse. His love for Briseis is taken for true and deep, instead of the
love for the honor she represented as τιμή—a Greek word that means both honor and the
war-spoils that represent that honor. His affection for Patroklos is explained by making
them cousins rather than the lovers some Classical Greeks read them as. Within the
Hollywood system Brad Pitt cannot star in a story that makes him anything other than a
virile heterosexual. Achilles's resentment of Agamemnon is marked early in the film
when he tells the king of Thessaly, “He's not my king,” and becomes a familiar American
story of the gutsy upstart resisting the tyrant. Even if the film loses a great deal of
resemblance to Homer's \textit{Iliad} in the retelling, it really doesn't matter. As with so many
other Homer rewritings, most of the audience doesn't know the original well enough to
complain, and the version they receive speaks to the cultural and political attitudes of
mainstream Americans well. The success of \textit{Troy} as a major motion picture is good
evidence of the receptiveness of an audience to a combination of Homeric prestige and
contemporary politics.\(^{95}\)

\(^{94}\) In a \textit{Forbes} magazine article dated 6/14/2004 titled “The Best Paid Actors,” Brad Pitt is ranked #5.
\(^{95}\) According to the wikipedia article on \textit{Troy}, the total domestic box office totals for the film were
$133,378,256 and the total worldwide box office totals were $497,409,852, indicating that there is also
quite a worldwide market for Americanized retellings of Homer.
Finally, there are several recent novel versions of Homer's epics that exist as the sort of rewritings that evoke some of the postmodern aesthetic of *Ulysses* while adhering much more closely to the setting and characters of the original. David Malouf's *Ransom*, published in 2009, is an intense and lyrical look at the meeting between Achilles and Priam in Achilles' tents that night when Priam asks for his son Hector's body to be returned. Like many modern retellings, the major difference between Homer and Malouf is the attention the latter pays to the inner life of the characters and the intimacy of their relationships. Dialogue that would never had occurred to Homer feels exactly right here, as Malouf evokes the loss a mother feels for the flesh of her son.

“I carried him,” she whispers, “here, here,” and her clenched fist beats at the hollow under her heart. “It is *my* flesh that is being tumbled on the stones out there. Seven times now I've grieved for a son lost in this war. And what I remember of each one is how they kicked their little heels under my heart—here, just here—and the first cry they gave when I yielded them up to the world, and the first steps they took. Troilus was very late in walking—do you recall that Priam? You used to tempt him with a little dagger you had, with a dog's head on the handle—do you recall that?”—and she searches his face for a response. “I was in labour for eighteen hours with Hector. That is what I recall when I think of his body out there for dogs to tear at and maul.” (Malouf 2009, 51-52)

The Greeks had no concept of a child's flesh belonging to the mother. According to Hesiod, for example, women were jars to hold the man's seed and contain it while it grew. Nonetheless, rewriting these events in the twenty-first century, with all its knowledge of anatomy, biology, and genetics, as well as the psychological underpinnings of human behavior, demands this kind of update. Similarly, this rewriting reflects the shifts in literary and cultural theory. Malouf's *Ransom* is a focused view, an enlarging of
a short scene in the *Iliad* to a novel of 224 pages that explores the mind and emotion of Homer's heroes in a very modern way.

Madeline Miller's 2012 novel *Song of Achilles* takes a similar path but instead of exploring the inner life of Priam's parents as they beg Achilles for his body, Miller examines the relationship between Achilles and Patroklos, from their early days of childhood together to the death of both in the Trojan War. Miller's novel reads Achilles and Patroklos as lovers in the way that later Greek readers typically did, but adds the distinctly modern form of romance to this reading. Many reader reviewers on Amazon, clearly being unaware that there is a long history of reading Achilles and Patroklos as lovers, accuse Miller of misreading Homer or of shoehorning romance in where it does not belong. In an interview with Gregory Maguire (himself a rewriter of *The Wizard of Oz* into the critically acclaimed *Wicked*) included in the paperback edition, Miller admits that an ex-boyfriend of hers referred to her project as “Homeric fan fiction,” and called that “fairly dampening.” She goes on to say, “so be it. If it's fan fiction, it's fan fiction. I'm still going to write it” (Miller, *About the book*, 18). Miller may be distinguishing here between rewriting and “fan fiction” largely because her novel resembles the specific sub-genre “slash” more than anything else, and as the form of rewriting that is most unique to fan fiction, slash is most often held up and ridiculed as a form of extreme misreading. In another section from her “About the book” appendix Miller situates herself within the tradition of rewriting Homer that includes Vergil, “and Ovid too, and Shakespeare, and
Joyce, and Atwood, Logue, Malouf . . . hundreds upon hundreds of authors, greater and lesser” (Miller, *About the book*, 30). She then calls upon herself to justify her travel of that road so many others have already walked, and describes the ways in which Homer had moved her since she was a child.

And this is Homer's final gift to us, of so many: his expansive, magnanimous ability to inspire. He cannot be used up, or worn out, he is ever-new, abundant, boundless. His infinite variety shines forth, bright enough to illuminate not just himself but the thousands of hopeful moons that crowd around him. His inconsistencies and anachronisms turn out to be blessings in disguise, encouraging invention and freedom. The grandeur of his subject grants a soul-stirring scope. Last, but not least, the flawed, realistic humanity of his subjects—wrathful Achilles, loyal Patroclus, proud Agamemnon—provides the perfect raw clay for drama. (Miller, *About the book*, 30)

For all that Miller is embarrassed to admit that she wrote Homeric fan fiction, the truth is, she is in great company and should feel no shame. As she seems to know instinctively, there is nothing that she has done that is in any way qualitatively different from what Vergil, Joyce, and Malouf have done.

Finally, Zachary Mason's 2010 work *The Lost Books of the Odyssey* is a different kind of novel. Playing with the concept of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as being just one version of each of the original stories, Mason retells the stories of the *Odyssey* over and over again—forty-four times—in different ways each time. He prefaces the collection with a claim that these are, in fact, lost books of the *Odyssey*, and by means of this device he creates a commentary on what the “original” books really are. In one of the sections,
“Fugitive,” Mason tells how Odysseus found among Agamemnon's trophies of war a book called the *Iliad*, in which the introduction reads as follows.

> It is not widely understood that the epics attributed to Homer were in fact written by the gods before the Trojan war—these divine books are the archetypes of that war rather than its history. In fact, there have been innumerable Trojan wars, each played out according to an evolving aesthetic, each representing a fresh attempt at bringing the terror of battle into line with the lucidity of the authorial intent. Inevitably, each particular war is a distortion of its antecedent, an image in a warped hall of mirrors. (Mason 2010, 51)

This postmodern awareness of the intertextuality of all stories is both thoroughly appropriate for a version of the *Odyssey* and marks Mason's place in the Western literary cultural system of the early twenty-first century, in which pastiche, parody, and other postmodern forms are very much in vogue. This kind of self-aware meta-commentary is also very common in fan fiction, as discussed in chapter 2.

When fan fiction is written using Homer as the source text, it is often done for Yuletide, the rare fandom gift exchange run at Christmastime. Out of 229 stories based on the Homeric poems archived at the Archive of Our Own as of this writing, 47 or 20% of them were written for Yuletide. Yuletide in specific and fandom in general are their own sub-cultures, and have their own systems and norms both for the writing and the reception of their literature. When a story is written for Yuletide, it is done as a gift; thus it is written with a very specific recipient in mind. Malouf, Miller, and Mason had to write to please their publishers and their markets, just as the early translators of Homer had to work within their cultural norms. Yuletide authors write to please their recipients.
and also the Yuletide readership at large. The expectations of the audiences differ, as do the relationships between authors and readers in the different systems. Fan fiction is often written with the expectation that the audience is already intimately familiar with the source text in question, for example, and so little time is spent on introducing characters, setting, or background plot events. Fandom is a unique subculture, and just as with the above examples, the system rewrites Homer to its own specifications.

In the case of Homer fan fiction, it is clear that the prestige of the source text is less important than the affection that the writers and readers have for it. In fact, I would argue that it is the lack of reverence fan writers have for Homer that makes their particular work subversive and unique, if no less political. The Homeric poems are not under copyright; anyone who wanted to publish a transformative rewriting is legally able to do so. The fans that write Homeric fan fiction do so because they enjoy the texts, they enjoy playing with the texts, and they enjoy sharing their play with their community. Fans can sort Homeric heroes into Hogwarts houses or set the Trojan war in the context of the National Hockey league and by doing so make an argument about the communal ownership of the Western canon. This is a different incentive than that of Vergil, Alexander Pope or James Joyce—and a difference that is significant enough within the context of fandom's literary system that to call their work “fan fiction” would be reductive. However, the bulk of mainstream criticism of fan fiction—that it is
“unoriginal” and “stealing”— are criticisms that could be but never are leveled at Vergil, Pope, or Joyce.

**G. Conclusion**

When André Lefevere wrote *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* in 1992 he cited Homer in general and the *Iliad* in particular, as the strongest example of his thesis (Lefevere 1992, 87 ff.) The level of prestige Homer's epics reached in his own literary and cultural system was sought by all subsequent systems that aspired to the level of hegemony that Classical Greece achieved. Vergil's allusions to both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are dealt with more explicitly in chapter 6, but suffice it to say for the purposes of this chapter that Vergil's explicit use of those allusions to mark his own cultural system as not only equal to but superior to the Greeks is significant. Aeneas speeds through the obstacles that kept Odysseus from his home, that journey comprises less than half of the *Aeneid*. The political message of Vergil's epic—that the Romans are everything the Greeks were and more—is unsurprising given the state of the nascent Roman Empire and his relationship with Augustus.

The English Renaissance writers shared much of the moral worldview and aesthetics of the Romans, but they too looked to Homer for reinforcement of their cultural systems. Like Vergil, they translated Homer to advance their own causes at the
same time that they utilized his prestige to support their own views, until such time as their system could remove the scaffolding and seize the freedom to rewrite him further.

In the nationalistic Augustan age of the burgeoning British Empire, Alexander Pope's translation does that free rewriting in the form of his translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Like Vergil the poet of the first Augustan age, Pope makes the poem his own, and writes to the heart of his own people and the politics of his own king.

American translators and rewriters of Homer, likewise, reflect the cultural system from which they come. Like American culture itself, they have an ambivalent relationship with their English forebears—sometimes resisting them, and sometimes invoking the prestige that the English themselves had accrued. In the years after World War II, in which the United States became the Anglophone superpower, the American translations upheld the English tradition of Homer, just as the American cultural system upheld the English tradition of Western hegemony.

In the twentieth century and beyond, other rewritings that adopted a modernist or postmodernist aesthetic include James Joyce's *Ulysses*, the Coen brothers' *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, and the recent novels *Ransom* by David Malouf, *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller, and *The Lost Books of the Odyssey*, by Zachary Mason. These works reflect a break with traditional English translations of the epics but retain the awareness
of the prestige of Homer and utilize that prestige for their own aesthetic and political ends. The goal of this chapter is to draw a continuous line between the earliest Renaissance translations of Homer and the most recent postmodern novel versions, as well as fan fiction written in the Homer fandom. With such a large scope, I have had to pick and choose very specific case studies. There are so many more examples of rewritings of Homer that can and should be examined using this lens.

Zachary Mason's story of the lost books of the *Odyssey* is in the end the true story of the Homeric epics: there have been innumerable Trojan wars, each played out according to the understanding and preferences of its teller, as well as innumerable Odysseys, likewise played out. Each retelling of the stories breathes new life into them, and strengthens their place in the canonized systems in which they belong, as well as the ones into which they were borrowed. Stories that are borrowed and retold through time from early translations to references in Saturday morning cartoons—those stories are the ones that last forever. Mason's treatment of the Homeric epics, this truest form of Homer rewriting, also resembles the narrative strategies of the writers of fan fiction: filling gaps, restructuring oft-told stories, changing motivations, offering alternate worlds. Homer has always been and will doubtless continue to be a transformative rewriting forever.
CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

This dissertation has explored the ways in which literary storytelling has always depended on transformative rewriting. It has done so while simultaneously borrowing prestige for fan fiction from the Western canon. My intent has been to argue convincingly that Homer, Vergil, Shakespeare, Milton, the Grimm brothers, James Joyce, and multiple other canonical authors have engaged in the same practices as contemporary fan fiction writers. Their contexts have differed and yet the systems exerted similar pressures on the authors and resulted in similar motivations for composing transformative rewritings.

The theories and tools I use to make these arguments include André Lefevere and Itamar Even-Zohar's work on systems theory and translation studies. Lefevere's idea that a story's cultural currency is furnished by its rewritings and Even-Zohar's assertion that translations are used to borrow prestige for emergent literary cultures are both central to my argument throughout the dissertation. I also use Henry Jenkins's seminal work in *Textual Poachers* to weave together cultural studies, fan studies, and literary studies. This dissertation attempts to shift the paradigm away from distinctions between “original” and “copy” and toward a translation studies-influenced paradigm in which the shifts between the source and the rewriting demonstrate the priorities of the rewriter and can be explained by the use of systems theory without judgment. The scope of the project is
admittedly huge, and so this dissertation is only the groundbreaking of several different paths into this particular reading of rewritings. The topic of each of my chapters could easily develop into its own book, going deeper into the origins of each source text and encompassing even more rewritings: however, with the stated goal of this project being specifically to borrow more prestige for the phenomenon of fan fiction, a short survey of several different systems and texts in this history of Western literature seemed the best approach. In a way, this dissertation is itself a rewriting: of the history of literature, in a way that carves out a space for fan fiction as a full participant in literature and culture, borrowing the prestige of Homer, Vergil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, and the Brothers Grimm in the same ways that they all borrowed it from each other.

The argument here begins with a close look at fan fiction in chapter 2. Fandom as a cultural system was first proposed by Henry Jenkins in 1992 with *Textual Poachers.* Jenkins argues specifically that fandom is an interpretive community as well as a social community, and deconstructs the boundaries between fans and academics when it comes to expertise. Further, the majority of fan fiction-writing fans are women. The interpretive work that they do is low in prestige for a number of reasons. Fandom is, in Evan-Zohar's words, a “peripheral” literary system. When it moves into the center of mainstream culture as with E.L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey,* which started as *Twilight* fan fiction, it may fill a deficiency of sadomasochistic erotica but it does not exactly gain prestige, as
the source texts of the majority of fandom activity are also considered “low” popular entertainment.

Fandom has its own set of culturally specific norms. In chapter 2 we see that fandom has its own limits when it comes to unauthorized use. I distinguish between plagiarism, copyright violation, and unauthorized transformative work. Fandom generally self-polices itself for plagiarism and exists in a kind of limbo with respect to copyright violation. The Organization for Transformative Work, a non-profit advocacy group for fans, argues that all fan fiction qualifies as fair use. This legal theory is still untested. Some years ago a majority of fans would become angry at finding that another fan had remixed their fan work without permission. At this point in time, however, more and more fans are posting blanket permissions for their work to be remixed, translated, illustrated, or performed for a podfic. Fandom is relatively small and connected, and its norms require that fans contact other fans before transforming their work.

Fan fiction can make serious postcolonial arguments. In stories that I highlighted, those arguments can also engage in strategies that echo those of interlingual translation. "春 雨 (Spring Rain)” by mercredigirl and “Promise of the परववई” by dhobikutti both rewrite popular media texts in order to argue against an imperialist worldview. "春雨 (Spring Rain)” rewrites Joss Whedon's cult favorite Firefly to highlight the ways in which...
Whedon uses Chinese culture and Chinese bodies as background without using Chinese actors for Firefly's main characters. “Promise of the परववई” rewrites Mary Poppins as an Indian ayah of the colonizer's children, foregrounding the tradition of British imperialism whereas the source text takes British economic power as a given. These stories and many others demonstrate that fan fiction in the context of fandom communities can make the same sophisticated cultural arguments as highly prestigious literary postcolonial fiction.

In chapter 3 I focus on Sherlock Holmes rewritings—both in its early and traditional form and in its modern media form online. I draw parallels and highlight differences between what is considered the oldest organized fandom and its new media iteration. The early Sherlock Holmes fandom takes the form of the Baker Street Irregulars by 1934 and it and its scion societies still exist. The earliest fan activity takes the form of fan letters, essays, and newsletters. Today most of the fan fiction in the online archives is actually based on the twenty-first century film and television adaptations of Sherlock Holmes. Traditional BSI fandom is primarily male and analytical. The fan fiction-writing fandom is primarily female, playful, and creative, but is no less expert for that.

I highlight two fan fiction stories from the Sherlock Holmes fandom that exhibit the unique characteristics of the literary system of fandom and demonstrate the ways in which they use rewritings of Sherlock Holmes to resist sexist and racist elements of the source text, a particular interest of fandom culture in general. The films and television
series that adapt Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's source text have been doing the same kinds of transformative rewriting as fan fiction for decades, but often with different political motives. I discuss the classic films starring Basil Rathbone as well as the more recent films starring Robert Downey Jr., and the two television series—the BBC's *Sherlock* starring Benedict Cumberbatch and CBS's *Elementary* starring Johnny Lee Miller. Each of these make system-specific choices in their rewritings, whether it is Basil Rathbone's Sherlock Holmes fighting Nazis in the 1940s or Benedict Cumberbatch's Sherlock Holmes using a smartphone to determine that it was raining in Cardiff to explain a victim's wet clothes. Each one of the rewritings offers a recontextualization and an interpretation of the source text, and each one of the transformations is acceptable to its respective system.

In chapter 4 I discuss the system of transformative rewriting that characterizes folklore. As Stith Thompson defines the term “folktale,” its defining characteristic is its nature as a retelling, and I focus largely on the afterlife of such folklore through written collections, translations, and adaptations. I argue that folktale borrowings are not significantly different from the reasons any system rewrites stories from other cultures. The Brothers Grimm, for example, collected and rewrote stories of German folk culture in the service of German nationalism.
The Grimms adjusted their rewritings to the tastes of the target system. The *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* were rewritten multiple times by one or both brothers and in different configurations and collections. Each time the tales were revised they became more palatable to a bourgeois audience though they retained markers of their folk origins. The Grimms attempted to balance “natural” folk culture with the “coarseness” that would offend the bourgeoisie. The effect was a version of German “folk”tales that could transcend national boundaries and achieve the literary fame that Lefevere describes.

The *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* were collected from oral recitations that were not entirely German and not entirely of the folk. The source texts were not canonical from the beginning, in other words, which gave flexibility to the rewritings that persisted through time and space. I discuss specifically the first Danish translations of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* as a case study. Not only were the tales absorbed into the Danish system to such an extent that Danish schoolchildren to this day believe the Grimms were Danish, but the translators and other adapters who were working contemporaneously with the Grimms did not question their own authority to rewrite the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* to their own specifications.

The *Kaffeterkreis* was another group of writers with links to the Grimms and a desire to rewrite and reconfigure the motifs of traditional folklore. Made up entirely of women, the *Kaffeterkreis* was a kind of literary salon that met in Berlin between 1843
and 1848 to read, write, and discuss their own compositions of literary fairy tales. Their resemblance to modern-day fandom is striking in many ways. One of the extant stories believed to be written by Gisela von Arnim explicitly subverts the traditional male-centered coming-of-age tale. In “The Rose Cloud” a young woman learns a trade from her wealthy unmarried aunt and becomes independently successful by reining in her daydreams and developing practical skills. The women of the Kaffeterkreis used pseudonyms when they published their stories to their own journal, just as members of fandom do. Their writing practice was inextricably tied to their community practice, as fandom's is. In fact this writing group is a striking antecedent to fandom in a pre-electronic age.

The further rewriting of these already rewritten literary fairy tales is most visibly manifest in mainstream American culture in the form of Disney films. The Walt Disney company has been rewriting traditional tales since their first full-length animated film Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs premiered in 1937. This dissertation, however, primarily explores Disney's current project rewriting their own versions of fairy and folktale characters in the Disney-owned ABC-produced television show Once Upon a Time. The characters and plots that are reimagined for Once Upon a Time are clearly based on Disney's versions, but the twists and turns introduced in the television episodes are decidedly modern interrogations. Snow White fights with a sword at her prince's side, Red Riding Hood is herself a werewolf, and the Evil Queen has a past that lends her
sympathy. The executive producers of *Once Upon A Time* have explicitly stated that the characters they include in the larger plot depend entirely on which characters the Walt Disney company has the legal rights to use. In addition *Once Upon A Time* must be read as written within the constraints of a system controlled by Disney. The shift to versions of folk and fairy tales in which the women are central and given more agency is seen in Disney's most recent animated princess movies *The Frog Prince*, *Brave*, and *Frozen*.

Chapter 4 concludes with a look at the relationship between folktales, contemporary speculative fiction—that is, science fiction and fantasy—and fan fiction. This relationship is seen most strongly in the career of award-winning science fiction and fantasy writer Seanan McGuire. McGuire comes from the community of fandom and still participates in Yuletide challenges. Her fiction is heavily influenced by the structures and motifs of folklore, most notably her Amazon Kindle Serial *Indexing*, which posits a world in which fairy-tale narratives are attempting to exert narrative power on reality. The main character is an agent of the ATI Management Bureau which categorizes “incursions” using the Aarne-Thompson index, the fundamental resource for folklore classification by real scholars. In the story McGuire explores the relationship between narrative power and reader agency, ultimately arguing that the readers have the power to control the narrative.

In chapter 5 I show that the English Renaissance had very little interest in the authority of an “original” source text. The literary system of Shakespeare and Milton was
defined in large part by rewriting Classical Greek and Roman narratives, Biblical stories, historical tales, and contemporary ones. Rewriting in the English Renaissance was also largely about borrowing literary prestige, whether from ancient Greece and Rome or the literature of contemporary Italy, Spain, and France. At the time of these borrowings, English was considered a minor literary language; by the end of the Renaissance English was literally “the language of Shakespeare.”

Several of Shakespeare's plays display Classical influences but only two are specifically influenced by literature rather than history. Of those two, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Troilus and Cressida*, the latter is the one that is a direct rewriting of an ancient source text, namely Homer's *Iliad*. The changes that Shakespeare makes to the characterization and the plot diminish the honor of Homer's heroes and focus more on Aristotelian questions of the relationship between choice and virtue. Ultimately, Shakespeare is arguing for a movement away from mere borrowing of Greek and Roman prestige. He engages with the questions raised by Aristotle about the appropriateness of Homeric virtue, and he does it specifically by emphasizing the lack of virtue in the Homeric heroes. With similar complexity, Shakespeare echoes Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the mechanicals' prologue in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ultimately mocking Golding's concern for the moral state of his reader. According to one reading of the play, Shakespeare uses the *Metamorphoses*, Golding's
translation, and his own reading to comment on the relationship between reader and rewriter, and the lack of control that an author has over the interpretation of his work.

This intertextual quality of Shakespeare's work can be seen in all of his texts, so specific examples are restricted here to the classical references to literature. In the case of Shakespeare and genderswap, I limit myself to discussing *As You Like It* on account of its obvious contemporary source text, John Lodge's novella *Rosalynde*, published in 1590. William Shakespeare's use of gender swapping was not unique to him or even to Lodge, but the way in which Shakespeare used gender swapping to interrogate the gender norms of Elizabethan England was more complex than other authors who used the conceit.

Gender swapping is also fairly common within fandom communities. The major differences lie in the depth of embodiment of the gender switch. In *As You Like It* Rosalind takes on the persona of a young man by changing costume and comportment; in most fan fiction genderswap stories, a character's actual body has either been changed overnight or the story begins with that character always having been the opposite gender of what they are in canon. In both fan fiction and in Shakespeare, the degree to which gender is essential is called into question.

In chapter 5 I also discuss the use and power of translation in the Renaissance system to rewrite classical Greek and Roman texts with new interpretations. One example
is the work of Lady Jane Lumley who first translated Euripides into English. Often disregarded in the history of classical translation as the student exercise of a young girl, Lady Lumley's translation reformed *Iphigeneia at Aulis* into a meditation on an ethical dilemma, centering the young Iphigeneia in the story of a young girl's sacrifice for her father's duty and honor. Other Classical translations also strip the cultural specificity from the source text in order to interrogate a philosophical question of particular import to Elizabethan culture, such as the nature of kingship or fate. Finally I examine Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and its concern with the moral danger his readers encounter in reading the heathen text. His translation is necessary not only to furnish an English version but to serve as guide through the treacherous content.

Chapter 5 also includes a discussion of the first translations of the Bible into English, and the ways in which John Milton's *Paradise Lost* fits into that context. The story of how the English Bible started as a heretical document in the fourteenth century and developed into the canonical King James Version in the sixteenth is a classic case of translation and rewriting in a changing system. In this system Milton's rewriting of Genesis, filling gaps in a way that is remarkably reminiscent of fan fiction, follows the logical progression of a culture that has changed its position on the authority of the Catholic church and its priests. In addition, it is clear that Milton was influenced by a particular piece of midrash, the *Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer,* when composing *Paradise Lost.* The significance of Milton's use of midrash is twofold. First, in order to distance itself
from Catholic exegesis the new English Protestantism was engaging in the older Hebrew Bible instead of the Greek Septuagint. This is another example of Even-Zohar’s translation theory in systems. The new Protestant system was “deficient” in its independent exegesis, so it borrowed some from the Hebrew system. Secondly, as Rabbi Rachel Barenblat has argued, midrash itself is a form of fan fiction. Midrash is written to fill in gaps, recontextualize, and explain, and it is written in tight cultural communities that assume that an extensive understanding of the source text is already established. Ultimately, as is true for many of these historically significant rewritings, Milton's *Paradise Lost* became part of the Western canon by rewriting another part of Western canon.

In chapter 6, I discuss at great length another such piece of Western canon that is a rewriting, namely Vergil's *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* rewrites the Homeric epics in ways that structurally resemble the methods of fan fiction. A relatively minor character from the source texts is elevated to the level of protagonist and a new story is told to expand and recontextualize this character. In the case of the *Aeneid*, the text is also imbued with cultural significance as this minor Trojan character becomes the forefather of the great Roman Empire.

The *Aeneid* is a classic case of the transformative cultural power of borrowing between systems. At the time of Vergil's writing, Rome was very powerful in terms of
military and civic structure but was “deficient,” to use Even-Zohar's term again, with respect to literature and culture. The great cultural power at the time remained Greece and thus rewriting the most prestigious Greek texts in a way that both Romanized and “improved” them, Vergil borrowed prestige from Homer at the same time that he denigrated the Greeks—primarily Odysseus. Every obstacle that Odysseus faced in the Odyssey was either avoided or easily disposed of by Aeneas, and every mention of Odysseus in the Aeneid makes clear that he is either wicked and deceitful or obsolete.

In the Middle Ages the Aeneid itself was the text that was rewritten in order to borrow prestige. Medieval Christian Europe was deeply ambivalent about the Aeneid. It was held in high esteem as the quintessential example of Latin eloquence and served as the teaching text for Latin until the twelfth century, and yet its paganism was troubling. In order to retain the prestige of the eloquence and efface the paganism, medieval rewriters took great liberties with the source.

There were multiple medieval readings of the Aeneid, which Christopher Baswell sorts into “allegorical,” “romance,” and “pedagogical.” These three categories intersect and blend, and all of them exert a domesticating force on this epitome of Roman literature. They convey the history and cultural power of the Aeneid, but not its pagan worldview. Thus like fan fiction writers who write against problematic aspect of their beloved source texts, medieval translators and other rewriters excised the paganism they
found troubling and replaced them with Christian frameworks for their vernacular audiences.

The romance rewritings of the *Aeneid* are particularly analogous to fan fiction as they are interested in relationships and deeper characterizations of women. The *Roman d'Eneas* is the most significant example of an early medieval vernacular redaction of the *Aeneid* that helps to initiate the genre of romance. Both Dido and Lavinia are given more characterization in the *Roman d'Eneas*, but this does not make the romance an explicitly feminist text. The move from the *Aeneid* to the *Roman d'Eneas* is a move from one set of gender norms to another. Women are still considered inferior and must be controlled, but they are also part of the potential audience and must be given some representation in order to engage their interest. The romance version of the *Aeneid* is unlike fan fiction because it is not written by the women who are seeking greater representation in their own stories. Few women were literate at the time, but powerful female patrons motivated a shift to greater focus on women.

Spiritual rewritings of the *Aeneid* are largely based on the use of Vergil himself and of the *Aeneid* as a symbol of a system and a history. Saint Augustine in his *Confessiones* had Dido and her consuming love for Aeneas set as the opposite of passion that should be directed at God. Augustine simultaneously uses a textual example from the *Aeneid* and the *Aeneid* in general as a symbol of his boyhood paganism which he
repudiated. In doing this, he borrows from the *Aeneid* in order to add to the growing power of the Christian paradigm in the Western world in the fourth century. Similarly, Dante Alighieri uses the medieval tradition of the *Aeneid* as Christian allegory to use Vergil himself as a guide in his exploration of the human soul at the same time that he utilizes Vergil’s literary form. Dante is building the vernacular of Italian and naturally goes back to the fountainhead of romance language, the epitome of Latin eloquence that is Vergil.

Finally, in chapter 7, I discuss the Homeric epics and many of the ways they have been rewritten throughout history. Ending with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* brings me full circle personally because my own fan fiction writing began with stories I wrote for Yuletide that used the *Iliad* as the main source. In terms of the argument here it is important that the Homeric epics themselves are not original source texts but are part of an oral tradition of stories based on and around the Trojan war. Recent Classical scholarship has determined that the Epic Cycle, a collection of poems that concerned the origins of the gods, the Theban war, and the Trojan war, actually pre-date the Homeric epics. In addition, the performance traditions of the rhapsodes who recited Homer at the Panathenaia are now seen as more improvisatory than previously thought, referencing multiple versions of Trojan war stories and composing new versions on the spot. The written composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* make them similar to the Grimms’ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*; that is, they are literary canonization of an oral tradition.
In chapter 7 I also trace the history of English translations of the Homeric epics, with attention paid to the pressures of the cultural systems in which the translations emerged. The first English translations were published in the sixteenth century, and were indirect translations relying on French translations. I focus on the way in which each translator expressed the relationship of Agamemnon to the rest of the Achaian kings. Early translators such as Chapman and Hall chose phrasing that positioned Agamemnon as an unambiguous “High King” rather than as questionably first among equals. One of the central questions of the *Iliad* is the extent to which Agamemnon is actually the supreme authority, and whether Achilles is required to obey him. The earliest English translators either had difficulty understanding a scenario in which there can be many kings equal in rank fighting on the same side or were averse to maintaining that distinction for their contemporary audiences.

The preeminent English translation of the eighteenth century—and indeed for several centuries after—was that of Alexander Pope. I discuss in detail the ways in which Pope asserted that the value of a translation was in its close adherence to the source text at that same time that his actual translation did anything but adhere closely to the *Iliad*. Pope's requirement that his English translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* fit into his personal and political poetics—that is, his requirement that they rhyme—distort the
source text significantly. His translation choices also give a moral aspect to activities, such as the drinking of wine, not found in the source and give a Christian flavor to existing moral themes. Within the context of Pope's system—the Restoration period of English history, in which the value of a singular king particularly resonated—these changes are effective and unexceptional although some contemporaries were critical of the liberties he took. Like Vergil before him, Alexander Pope reconfigured Homer to serve his own system's requirements and confer prestige upon his own culture.

The impact of Pope's translation was so great that Robert Fagles, one of the preeminent Homer translators of the twentieth century, explicitly names it as an influence. The most influential English translations of the twentieth century are American rather than English, just as the Anglophone hegemony of the Western world became American rather than English. I discuss three of the most influential American translators of Homer, Richmond Lattimore, Robert Fitzgerald, and Robert Fagles. Lattimore's analysis of the themes of the play reveal influence from earlier English translations but his translation itself is refreshingly close enough to the Greek that those interpretive influences are hard to see. Fitzgerald makes some attempts at foreignization by spelling Greek names with closer transliteration, but he is inconsistent and provides no translator's note to discuss his motives. Finally, Fagles argues explicitly that the Romanized spellings of traditional English translations are traditional and comforting, though he does not go so far as to translate the Greek gods back into Roman ones, as Chapman and Pope did.
The point of this examination of the details of translation choices is to argue that translation is no less a rewriting within the constraints of a literary system than a piece of fan fiction is. All rewriting is interpretive and therefore requires that choices be made. The cultural system within which a translator or other rewriter is working influences the choices she makes.

The various translations of Homer into English go on to influence other rewriters, especially when they do not have the Greek to read the original. James Joyce was one such rewriter. Joyce showed a marked preference for Pope's translation of the *Odyssey* as a schoolboy, and the freedom with which Pope rewrote the epics in his translation foreshadows the freedom that Joyce takes in *Ulysses*. Like Vergil's *Aeneid*, Joyce's *Ulysses* completely departs from the source text in order to create a completely new piece of Western canonical literature. Like Vergil's *Aeneid*, *Ulysses* owes at least part of its enduring power to its relationship with its source text.

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries gave rise to even more departures from the Homeric source that engage with its literary legacy. The Coen brothers' film *O Brother Where Art Thou?* uses the epic structure of the *Odyssey* to comment on an entirely different topic, the mythic quality of the southern United States during the Great Depression. Wolfgang Petersen's *Troy*, starring Brad Pitt, seems on the surface to be a
more straightforward attempt at an adaptation of Homer but is in fact as constrained by its contemporary Hollywood system as Vergil is constrained by the Roman system. The gods are stripped from *Troy* and the themes are those of the plucky individual against the powerful tyrant. Brad Pitt's star power and Achilles's star power together are the central force moving the story forward.

More recently some contemporary novels that rewrite the Homeric epics do so in ways that authors of fan fiction will be quick to recognize. David Malouf's *Ransom* expands to the length of a novel a short moment in the *Iliad*—Priam's appearance in Achilles's tents to ask for the body of his son Hector. Like many modern rewritings, Malouf pays close attention to the inner life of his characters, something that it would have never occurred to Homer to do. Madeline Miller's *Song of Achilles* examines the relationship between Achilles and Patroklos and reads them as lovers in the same way that much of Greek antiquity did. One could consider Miller's novel a form of "slash," and in fact the reception to her novel in the Amazon ratings system reveal that many readers consider her novel a grave misreading of Homer. Miller herself admits that there is little that distinguishes her novel from fan fiction. Finally, Zachary Mason's *The Lost Books of the Odyssey* posits forty-four different readings of the events of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in terms that are self-aware and distinctly postmodern. Odysseus discovers a copy of the *Iliad* itself in one of the stories, in which the introduction argues that "there have been innumerable Trojan wars, each played out according to an evolving aesthetic,
each representing a fresh attempt at bringing the terror of battle into line with the lucidity of the authorial intent” (Mason 2010, 51). This sentence sums up not only the argument of The Lost Books of the Odyssey, but also chapter 7.

The intricate ways in which fan fiction participates in the postmodern phenomenon of internet read/write remix culture is specific and unique, while at the same time—if one looks at the history of rewriting through a systems theory heuristic—a pattern can be detected at the macro-level when an overview of historical literary systems is attempted. Fan fiction can be written for the simple joy of expressing one's creativity, or it can be written to address a critical issue a reader or viewer has with the source text. In either case, fandom works within the system in which internet-based content creators are free to express themselves and build their own audiences without the approval of editors or other gatekeepers.

Fan fiction remains on the periphery of the current literary system, at least in the United States.96 The history of rewritings, however, demonstrates that they move from the periphery to the center on a regular basis. The implication of following this pattern through a history of literature, which this dissertation has done, is that the systems theory that André Lefevere and Itamar Even-Zohar apply to translation studies can and should

96 An example of a different cultural norm for derivative fan work is dojinshi, the Japanese phenomenon of fan-made manga, which is bought and sold openly and encouraged by the industry. For more on dojinshi, see Noppe, “The Cultural Economy of Fanwork in Japan: Dojinshi Exchange as a Hybrid Economy of Open Source Cultural Goods,” (2014) a PhD thesis available open access at http://www.nelenoppe.net/dojinshi/Thesis.
be applied to media studies and fan studies as well. Every adaptation of book, comic book, video game, or blog to television or cinema can be read through the lens of systems theory to ground the choices made in the cultural context of the target audience.

Literary studies as a field has much to learn from fandom. Some of the principles of media fan culture can already be seen in the work of literary scholars and using fan work as literary case studies can reinforce certain theoretical stances such as the death of the author and reader response. Fandom reminds us that great works of literature are often created within communities where members read, react, interpret, and produce together. Spend any reasonable length of time immersed in fan culture and you will be convinced that there is no one right way to interpret a text. The anarchic nature of fandom provides a fertile ground for literary production that challenges authority, whether of hegemonic discourse, constructed ideas of “Western canon,” or the entertainment industry.

Fandom teaches us that resistant writing can be found anywhere, and oftentimes in the most unexpected places and in the most playful forms. We know that women and other marginalized writers have used translation and rewriting in many different cultural contexts throughout history to disrupt the discourse. Anywhere in the world you can find women telling stories about stories. Fandom gives us another example of this, and one that is specific to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries for further study.
Finally fandom offers literary studies proof of the power of the Internet as a medium for cultural production. Many scholars in media studies and the digital humanities have been demonstrating the power of the Internet to affect social change in a culture. Fan fiction offers literary studies a means by which to join this conversation.

Once we start thinking of internet culture as a system, there is a wealth of textual material to discover and analyze. Through the absorption of the textual production of Internet culture into the academic system comes the literary legitimacy that to this point has eluded fan fiction. I contend that translation studies is in particular an academic field that is already inclined to respect the idiosyncrasies of particular cultural contexts and preserve their dignity in the course of academic analysis. My fannish identity is not a national one, but it is a cultural one. I am not the only academic fan speaking up for the literary legitimacy of fan fiction, but to my knowledge I am the only one in translation studies.

When I first began this project, a colleague asked me, “where do we draw the line between literary rewritings and fan fiction?” This dissertation grew out of the desire to efface the artificial line between so-called “high” literary rewritings done by Vergil and Shakespeare and the “low” cultural production of fan fiction. In terms of purpose and structure there is very little difference. Through the course of my research and the
refinement of my thinking however, I came to the conclusion that fandom is a unique subculture, or more accurately a loose confederations of many subcultures, and to argue that all transformative rewriting can be accurately called “fan fiction” would be reductive. Fandom is a unique heterogeneous cultural system, just as Augustan Rome and Elizabethan England were. These differences were and are important influences on the work of rewriters in their systems, and cannot be disregarded. The same is true for fan fiction and fan work in general. Fandom is a culture; it has norms and it has its own language which occasionally needs translation—as evidenced by the glossary of fandom terms that is appended to this dissertation. Fandom is unique, as all cultures are unique, but it is also a legitimate literary system. By utilizing the term “transformative rewriting” to describe all such work instead of applying the term “fan fiction” to all canonical literary rewriting, we can group fan fiction with Vergil and Shakespeare for the purposes of analysis, but retain the unique qualities of fan fiction in its cultural context.
APPENDIX: A GLOSSARY OF FANDOM TERMS

AU (Alternate Universe): used to describe fan fiction that changes one or more elements of the source text's canon. Can also, less often, be applied to other fanwork such as fan art or fan vids. Some AUs simply change an element of the source's setting, others may change a central plot point. In any case, AUs are interested in exploring what elements of a story are tied to this changed element, and which are not.

Big Bang: a specific kind of challenge that generally requires large word counts and assigns a fan writer to a fan artist for collaborative work.

Canon: in a fandom context, the source considered authoritative by the fans of that source text. Canon is often simply a list of details from the original source text, but in some cases such as comic book narratives written by multiple authors or sources that include tie-in novels for film and television stories, what qualifies as “canon” can become more complicated.

Challenge: an organized fan activity in which participants agree to produce transformative work within a certain set of rules. Examples of kinds of challenges include exchanges, “Big Bangs,” fests, and bingos. Yuletide is an example of an exchange.

Clairvoyant Wank: a community on the JournalFen site, Clairvoyant Wank is where emerging fandom drama can be described before it has developed enough to be featured on Fandom Wank.

Crossover: a term used to describe fan fiction in which two or more source texts are combined in some way. Some crossovers introduce characters from the first source text to the characters from the second; some simply place characters from one source text into the setting of the second. Other crossovers may take advantage of actors that two
fandoms share and write a story that addresses the fact that two characters from two separate sources share the same face.

**Fan fiction (fic):** a piece of fiction written by fans for fans using a source text as a point of departure. The activity has arguably been around for millennia (and is the subject of this dissertation), but the term itself in its present definition dates back to Star Trek fandom in the 1970s.

**Fandom:** a community of fans who interact in some way, often by producing fan work or deep discussions of the object of their passion. “Fandom” is also the term used to mean “source text” within the community of fans.

**Fandom Wank:** a community on the JournalFen site. Fandom wank was for many years the clearing house for any drama that happened within LiveJournal-based fandom or other tangential settings. Posts on Fandom Wank were often deeply researched and comment threads could grow to hundreds of posts as fans discussed the implications of developments while also mocking participants. Fandom Wank has been much less active in recent years as fandom has moved to sites like Tumblr.

**Fill:** the term used to refer to the story that fills a fan request for a particular theme, plot, or pairing in a comment-based meme or fest.

**Gen:** used to describe fan fiction that contains no sexual content. The term derives from “general audiences,” the MPAA term for a film that is appropriate for all ages. Generally used in opposition to “het” or “slash.”

**Genderswap:** the term used for a device employed in fan fiction and fan art in which one or more characters switch binary sex. Genderswap can be deployed in several different
ways, but usually either posits that a character always was a different gender or else uses a plot mechanism to change a character's gender as part of the story.

**Headcanon:** a fan's personal interpretation of canon, usually filling in the gaps left by canon. Headcanon can be influenced or expressed through fan fiction or other fanwork.

**Het:** short for “heterosexual,” used to describe fan fiction that involves heterosexual relationships. Generally used in opposition to either “gen” or “slash.”

**Kinkmeme:** a community that engages in writing fan fiction, usually anonymously, within the comment threads of posts within the community. The anonymous nature of the kinkmeme ensures that the requests and the fills are as outrageous as the fans desire without any possible shame attaching to the individual fans. “The Theory of Narrative Causality” was originally posted to a kinkmeme.

**Listserver, or mailing list:** the preferred platform for fandom communities in the early 90s —after 'zines, but before LiveJournal. Users subscribe to the listserver and receive all mail each user posts to the list. Active lists could generate more than 100 emails in a day.

**Mary Sue:** a term used to describe a character in a piece of fan fiction who is original to the work and generally considered an idealized self-insert rather than a balanced character. It is a term that was created to criticize certain kinds of fan fiction and is at this time generally held to be a sexist critique of women who write fan fiction to satisfy their personal desires. The origin of the term is a piece of parodic Star Trek fan fiction written in by Paula Smith in 1973 to highlight a pattern of female self-insert characters who were more competent than any of the source's characters and who warped the shape of the narrative around them.

**Newbie:** general term in Internet culture for a new user. New members of an Internet
community are often marked by ignorance of established norms.

**OTW, or The Organization for Transformative Works:** a nonprofit organization established by fans to protect and preserve fannish communities by creating spaces to archive fan work and fannish history, and to advocate for fans whose work tests the boundaries of copyright law.

**Podfic:** fan fiction read aloud and converted to podcast form for downloadable listening.

**Remix:** in a fandom context, a story that is a reinterpretation of another piece of fan fiction. There are specific challenges devoted to remixing other fan works.

**RPF, or “real person fiction:”** fan fiction or other fan work devoted to telling fictional stories about actual people, usually celebrities.

**Slash:** used to describe fan fiction in which characters of the same sex or gender are romantically paired. Slash is more commonly used to describe male/male pairings, while “femslash” describes pairings of two or more women. Generally used in opposition to “gen” or “het.”

**Yuletide:** an annual rare-fandoms gift exchange challenge which resembles a “Secret Santa” gift exchange in that the gifts are given anonymously and the challenge archive opens on Christmas morning. The “rare-fandom” aspect of Yuletide means that many of the stories are atypical in their source texts. Fandoms have included Homer, fairytales and folklore, Shakespeare, historical RPF, fan fiction based on television commercials, music videos, or meta fan fiction about fandom itself.

**’zine or zine:** short for “magazine,” a term used to describe an amateur periodical. Before the advent of the Internet, fans shared their fan fiction in these amateur print magazines and subscribed to them.
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