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THE REINVENTION OF THE ROUND TABLE

Literary Adaptations Throughout the Arthurian Legends

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to find out how literary adaptations have shaped and developed the Arthurian narrative from its earliest forms into what it is today. The Arthurian narrative as we know it today is actually a patchwork of multiple, individual literary works and is a notable example of medieval literature. In a prototypical Arthurian narrative, Arthur manages to pull out the Sword in the Stone and is crowned king, establishes his kingdom and the Knights of the Round Table and encounters adversity with them at his side and finally falls in battle in Camlann. However, these familiar plot elements are originally separate narratives, but were based on the same narrative conventions. The current elements of King Arthur and the Arthurian narrative was formed through these individual adaptations by a myriad of authors.

The Arthurian genre was eventually developed through the efforts of these individual authors. There was no authorative body that could have owned in the earliest stages of the Arthurian literary scene that could have claimed ownership of it, nor regulate what the contents of an Arthurian text should be. Instead, the authors eventually established the Arthurian genre conventions through adaptations that reprised the same popular narrative elements of earlier works and omitted elements that were not appealing enough. This entire phenomenon is an example of intertextuality, or the communication between literary works. Certain narratives are adapted further by different authors, who extends the original narrative further with their own versions. Over time these narratives may achieve great popularity and eventually the reoccurring plot elements of these adaptations begin to become established as central elements of an Arthurian narrative. There are three main methods of adaptation; *expansion*, *reprisal* and *reinvention*. *Expansion* introduces new narrative elements that were absent from earlier narratives, such as through the creation of new characters and storylines. *Reprisal* is mainly the repetition of an earlier narrative without any substantial changes or additions, but performs the important functions of reinforcing certain narratives and their contents. *Reinterpretation* approaches earlier narratives from a different viewpoint, which generally alters the content of the texts in a substantial manner, for example T.H. White's 1958 adaptation has a more pacifistic approach than earlier works. However, I wish to highlight the fact that there more than one form of adaptation present in a literary adaptation. A literary adaptation's main form of adaptation is then determined by a given text's ultimate goal and purpose.

The conclusions of this thesis show that the modern Arthurian legends are indeed the result of multiple authors' handiwork. Geoffrey of Monmouth (1100–1154) had established the Anglophonic Arthurian literary tradition c. 1136 by attributing the name "Arthur" to the unnamed Romano-Briton victor of the Battle of Badon in his *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Geoffrey had *expanded* upon an earlier author's work, Nennius' *Histora Brittonum*, where the victorious war leader was originally unnamed. Geoffrey's work inspired numerous contemporary authors to produce additional chivalric narratives, such as Chrétien de Troyes (1130–1191), further *expanded* Arthur's court and introduced key characters such as Lancelot, who is absent from Geoffrey's work. The Arthurian legends of today is largely based on Sir Thomas Malory's (1405–1471) adaptation from the Late Middle Ages. Malory had collected many of the popular but scattered Arthurian narratives into a more coherent compilation, the *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485). However, Malory did not invent anything substantially new into the narrative and mainly *reprised* the contents of the earlier narratives. Modern adaptations of Malory's work are for example, Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), T.H. White's *The Once and Future King* (1958) and Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* (1983). Twain's adaptation is a more satirical adaptation of Malory's work, whereas White's adaptation is more pacifistic in comparison to the original work. Zimmer Bradley's adaptation approaches the Arthurian legends from a more feminist point of view, which aimed to provide a voice for the female characters of the Arthurian legends, who were thus far more shallow and largely subordinated compared to the male characters. Adaptation and the innovations that it provides to earlier works continues till this day. In addition to literature, the Arthurian legends have even been adapted into movies and videogames.

Keywords: Arthurian literature, genre, adaptation, intertextuality

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Tässä tutkielmassa pyritään selvittämään miten erinäiset sovitukset ovat muokanneet ja kehittäneet arturiaanista tarua varhaisemmista versioista nykyiseen muotoonsa. Nykyaikainen arturiaaninen kertomus on itse asiassa useamman eri kirjailijoiden teoksien kooste. Kuningas Arthurin ja hänen Pyöreän pöydän ritareidensa taru on huomionarvoinen esimerkki keskiaikaisesta tarukirjallisuudesta. Tyypillisessä arturiaanisessa kertomuksessa Arthur vetää kuuluisan miekan kivestä ja kruunataan kuninkaaksi, myöhemmin hän joutuu ritareidensa kanssa erinäisiin seikkailuihin ja lopulta saa surmansa Camlannin taistelussa. Nämä tutut kertomukset ovat kuitenkin alun perin erillisiä taruja, mutta perustuivat samaan tarumaailmaan. Kuningas Arthurin ja arturiaanisen kirjallisuuden nykyiset piirteet syntyivät lukuisien eri kirjailijoiden adaptaatioden eli sovituksien työn tuloksena.

Arturiaaninen genre eli kirjallisuuden laji kehittyi itsenäisten kirjailijoiden sovituksien myötä. Varhaisessa arturiaanisessa kirjallisuudessa ei ollut minkäänlaista virallista auktoriteettiä, joka olisi voinut omistaa ja säädellä mikä on oikein tai väärin teoksien sisällöissä, tai määrittää mitä lajityyppiin kuuluu. Sen sijaan kirjailijat perustivat vähitellen arturiaanisen lajityypin jatkosovittamalla ja levittämällä suosittuja kertomuksia ja juonenpiirteitä. Myös epäsuositut piirteet karsiutuvat vähitellen tämän kautta. Tämä koko ilmiö on esimerkki intertekstuaalisuudesta, eli tekstien (ja kirjailijoiden) välisiin vuorovaikutuksiin. Suositut kertomuksen saavat jatkoa erinäisten tekijöiden toimesta, jotka sovittavat lähdekertomuksista omia jatko-osiaan. Ajan myötä nämä saattavat levitä suureen suosioon ja tiettyjen juonenpiirteiden jatkuva toistaminen vähitellen vakiinnuttaa ne keskeiseksi osaksi arturiaanista kertomusta. Sovituksen muotoja on ilmennyt kolme: *laajennus*, *toisto* ja *uudelleentulkinta*. *Laajennuksessa* kehitetään uutta sisältöä, jota ei ollut aikaisemmissa teoksissa, kuten uusia hahmoja tai juonia. *Toistossa* taas aikaisempaa teosta toistetaan uudelleen miltei kokonaisuudessaan, eikä sovituksessa kehitetä mitään merkittävän uutta, mutta toteuttaa tärkeän tehtävän aikaisemman teoksen sisällön vakiinnuttamisen lajityypin kannalta. *Uudelleentulkinnassa* taas lähestytään aikaisempia teoksia uudesta näkökulmasta, joka usein muuttaa teoksen sisältöä suuresti kuten esimerkiksi T.H. Whiten 1958 sovitus on pasifistisempi sisällöltään kuin alkuperäiset teokset. Muistuttanen kuitenkin, että sovituksissa ilmenee enemmän kuin yksi näistä kolmesta menetelmistä, mutta teoksien lopulliset päämäärät määrittävät niiden pääasiallisen sovituksen muodon.

Tutkielman loppupäätelmissä käy ilmi, että nykyaikainen arturiaaninen taru todellakin on useamman eri kirjailijan työn tulosta. Geoffrey Monmouthiläinen (1100–1154) perusti englanninkielisen arturiaanisen perinteen noin vuonna 1136 nimeämällä Badonicuksen taistelun voittaneen johtajan Arthuriksi *Historia Regum Britanniae* -teoksessaan. Geoffreyn teos *laajensi* aikaisemman kirjoittajan, Nenniuksen, *Histora Brittonum* -teosta, jossa kyseinen roomalais-brittiläinen johtaja oli alun perin jäänyt nimeämättä. Geoffreyn teoksen ritarilliset teemat innostivat useita muita sen ajan kirjailijoita luomaan lisää ritarillisia kertomuksia, kuten Chretien de Troyes (1130–1191) muun muussa loi Lancelotin, jota ei alun perin ollut Geoffreyn teoksessa mukana. Troyesin teoksen suosion myötä Lancelotista on muodostunut keskeinen hahmo arturiaanisessa tarinankerronnassa ajan saatossa. Nykypäivän arturiaaninen taru on pitkälti Sir Thomas Maloryn (1405–1471) myöhäiskeskiaikaisen sovituksen mukainen. Malory oli koonnut hajanaisista arturiaanisista kertomuksista yhtenäisemmän kokonaisuuden *Le Morte d'Arthurin* (1485). Hän ei kuitenkaan kehittänyt mitään merkittävän uutta sisältöä, tällöin hänen teoksensa vain *toisti* aikaisempien teoksien sisältöä. Nykyaikaisemmat sovitukset Maloryn teoksesta ovat esimerkiksi Mark Twainin *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), T.H. Whiten *The Once and Future King* (1958) ja Marion Zimmer Bradleyn *The Mists of Avalon* (1983). Twainin teos on satiirisempi versio Maloryn teoksesta, kun taas White on pasifistisempi versio alkuperäisen sotaisuuteen nähden. Zimmer Bradleyn teos taas lähestyy arturiaanista tarua feministisemmästä näkökulmasta, jonka päämääränä on antaa enemmän puheenvuoroja arturiaanisten tarujen naishahmoille, jotka ovat tähänasti jääneet varsin pinnallisiksi ja alistetuiksi hahmoiksi verrattuna tarujen mieshahmoihin. Sovittaminen ja sen tuomat uudistukset aikaisempiin teoksiin jatkuvat tänä päivänäkin. Arturiaanista tarua sovitetaan nykyään kirjallisuuden lisäksi jopa elokuviksi ja videopeleiksi.

Avainsanat: arturiaaninen kirjallisuus, tekstilaji, adaptaatio, intertekstualisuus

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck –ohjelmalla.

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1 Introduction

The Arthurian narrative as we know it today is actually the patchwork result of numerous authors, scribes and poets, each contributed to or reworked parts of the Arthurian literary material since its conception in the eleventh century. King Arthur and most of what is known today of his associations are largely fictional, yet it is possible to trace his modern character's origins back to a few authors who had expanded upon his folkloric origins, which are typically of unknown authorship. This phenomenon is known as adaptation, which is an intertextual activity. Intertextuality is a term that signifies that a text is related to texts or has connections to them. The meanings that a text has is also shaped by these other texts depending on how much it relies on them. For example, a book review's meaning is highly reliant on the book which it is reviewing. Should there be no such book that the review is evaluating, then the resulting text may be highly confusing, to say the least. This thesis itself is also intertextual as well, as it refers to and relies on other texts explicitly to achieve its full meaning.

Preliminarily, I will be analyzing in which manner(s) has the intertextual phenomena manifested in and shaped Arthurian literature into its present form. The central research statement of this thesis is that the current Arthurian legends are the result of a long history of intertextual activities, particularly literary adaptations. Intertextuality is always present in a large body of literary texts, either as narrative, theoretical, academic, political or otherwise available for social debate and/or commentary. Literary adaptation is the conversion or transference of a literary work into another medium, but it is also possible to do so into the same medium, which will be shown later. Adaptation performs an important intertextual function by propagating texts and facilitating communication between authors and their texts. Studying how adaptations have shaped the Arthurian legends will not only serve to concretely exemplify how intertextuality operates in written texts, but also illuminates how the Arthurian narrative had indeed been shaped into its present form(s) through numerous different authors and circumstances as well.

While modern adaptations or parodies of recent productions of the past century such as novels, movies or video games are more discernible for their motives or purpose, finding authorial motivations in older works such as the Arthurian literary material may be more difficult due to its long history. The purpose and intended effect of an older literary text may have become more difficult to distinguish due to language or cultural change, thus necessitating the discussion of the literary background that surrounded a text in order to better understand not only the text, but also the historical context that surrounded it. In order to best understand modern versions of an Arthurian text, one must take older versions and models of the text into consideration, because contemporary literary texts are intrinsically related to older texts in one manner or another, knowingly or unknowingly.

Therefore, by analyzing both new and old Arthurian texts and then identifying their functions as a work of literature will their intertextual ties be revealed, which especially provides further insight and meaning to the later versions of a text. In this manner, it is possible to not only rediscover the historical (and literary) significance of earlier works, but also show how much an Arthurian text draws upon previous bodies of Arthurian literature as well. Preliminarily, modern Arthurian texts are easier to digest and deconstruct due to their temporal distance from us, whereas older Arthurian texts may require further close reading into their contents and their historical context for further insight. Thus, the main research targets of this thesis are the earliest and then the more recent, post-Medieval additions to the Arthurian literary material, with an especial focus on intertextual elements, particularly on their forms of literary adaptation which contributed in shaping Arthurian literature into what it is today. The forms of adaptations are tentatively named as *expansion*, *repetition* and *reinvention*, which describes the key method(s) in which an adaptation carries out its final "purpose" or contribution as a literary work or text. Before discussing these adaptations there will be a few chapters on literary intertextuality, genre, (medieval) authorship and short overviews of past and present critical literary circumstances that surrounded each major era of Arthurian literature.

King Arthur as we know him today is mostly based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae (c. 1136)*, a pseudo-historical account of monarchs of Britain. While there are earlier works that were related to Arthur that pre-dated Monmouth's (termed as pre-Galfridian), it was not until his text that started the proliferation and establishment of the Arthurian genre. (Dean 3–31). In order to understand how intertextuality had shaped the Arthurian narrative into what it is today, one must first come to understand the circumstances that surrounded it. The narrative is only the end product of these intertextual processes, whereas the processes themselves that lead to it are seldom noted.

Any kind of literary work that includes either King Arthur himself as a major character, or the members of Arthur's court such as his Knights of the Round Table as a central element qualifies as an Arthurian work. Works containing these as major elements can be clearly regarded as Arthurian, whereas allusions or cameos of Arthurian elements alone do not necessarily mean that a work is chiefly an Arthurian narrative. In short, depending on how central these Arthurian elements are within a text, a work may or may not be a work of Arthurian literature. There are no established rules or regulated norms nor recipes for an Arthurian genre, as we will come to understand later as we delve into a few examples of literary works that exemplify this. Rather, it is up to the reader to decide whether or not they consider a work Arthurian, as genres are not a property contained within a text, and neither is it contained within the readership either. Genre exists as the intertextual relationship between a text and a reader, a shared convention with a social force (Frow 102).

Prior to Monmouth, a ninth century Welsh monk named Nennius attributed the name of Arthur to an unnamed sixth century Romano-Celtic war leader in his *Historia Brittonum,* which could be regarded as the basis of Monmouth's version a few centuries later, in addition to being the source text that established the connection between the name Arthur and the historical Romano-Briton war leader of Badon. This unnamed war leader defeated his Anglo-Saxon adversaries in the historical Battle of Mount Badon, and has had multiple names attributed to him such as Aurelianus or Artorius prior to Monmouth (Korrel, 1984). A few centuries later after Nennius, Monmouth's

Historia Regum Britanniae popularized Arthur, leading to multiple newer adaptations by different authors who expanded upon the narrative surrounding Arthur. One such author is for example Chrétien de Troyes (c. 1150), a French poet, who further contributed to Monmouth's text by expanding on Arthur's fictional court in his literary works, which introduced new key characters into the Arthurian narrative such as Lancelot and Gawain (Gawain was an older mythological figure that was previously unrelated to Camelot). Around this time the Knights of the Round Table as a fictional order was also established by another author, Robert Wace (c. 1155), a Norman poet.

While these have occurred nearly a millennia ago, it is worth considering the possibilities of applying modern literary models upon the Arthurian material. Doing so would not only be a worthwhile undertaking in order to forward the field of literary studies, but also shed light upon how or why a given version of the Arthurian narrative came into being. Of especial interest is be the latest adaptations of the Arthurian material of the past three centuries where new reinterpretations of the Arthurian legends have emerged. Due to the vastness of the Arthurian material and the difficulties in procuring older texts, in addition to their temporal distance from today, it would be much more feasible to focus on the modern Arthurian adaptations of the past few decades for ease of access and clarity of meaning. Nevertheless, the earliest medieval Arthurian figures and texts will be discussed in further detail, but mostly for the purpose of understanding the backgrounds and origins that have led to today's end products.

A prototypical Arthurian narrative generally involves an Arthur, generally having humbler beginnings and not knowing of his noble birth, then being mentored by Merlin and subsequently crowned king after drawing an enchanted sword from a stone. Arthur ushers in an era of prosperity with his rule and the capital and seat of power of his kingdom is Camelot, often depicted as a castle, but at times referring to his kingdom as well. The Knights of the Round Table operate from Camelot, who are King Arthur's trusted knights and envoys. Usually, between the establishment of Arthur's rule and the collapse of his kingdom, the narrative tends to shift from Arthur to his knights, such as the famous Grail quest, where Arthur assumes a secondary role while his knights take the

spotlight. Alas, eventually the members of his court also cause his downfall: Arthur's wife has an affair with one of his finest knights, Lancelot, which destabilizes the court and eventually the kingdom as well. Another knight, Mordred, then seizes this opportunity to start a revolt while Arthur is way on a military campaign. Arthur rushes back and the Battle of Camlann commences, at the end of which Mordred is slain and Arthur suffers a grievous injury and is then ferried to Avalon.

The adaptation of the Arthurian narrative, either reinventing the narrative, or expanding upon it are the most productive of the three forms of adaptation previously mentioned. Attempts at reinventing the narrative in a new direction has resulted in alternate narratives that share the same central elements, but differing in the twists and turns in the narrative. Examples are works such as the *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), a satirical time-travel science fiction about an American factory owner transported back in time into the eleventh century and becomes a member of Arthur's court and industrializes the nation but also causes its downfall in a messy revolution toward the end. Another example is the *Mists of Avalon* (1983), an alternate feminist version of the Arthurian narrative, where the main character is female character, Morgan le Faye, instead of Arthur or his knights. As in the previous example, the narrative also concludes in the fall of Camelot and Arthur passing away in Morgan's arms on the ferry to Avalon.

As shown, both reinventing adaptations have the same key plot developments common to most adaptations of the modern Arthurian narrative, but differing somewhat in the direction the narrative takes or ends. Alternatively, expanding the Arthurian material such as how Chretien de Troyes and Robert Wace have done is much more productive. Chretien de Troyes introduced Lancelot as a new a character into the Arthurian material, whereas Wace provided more depth to Arthur's court by introducing the Knights of the Round Table as an organization. This method offers much greater freedom to author as they will not have to reinterpret existing events nor spend a great deal of time worldbuilding, when they can simply make use of and partake into an already established schema. This will further be elaborated upon in the genre section of this thesis.

2 Relevant Theories and Intertextuality

Intertextuality is, in its basest definition, the relations between literary texts, such as their literary surroundings, interactions and connections to one another, that allow them to acquire additional interpretations to their meanings. The intertextual dynamics of the Arthurian narrative, or genre, is immensely vast as a result of its near millennia long history, which has given it plenty of time to interact with its literary surroundings. In order to comprehend it, it is worthwhile to discuss the various conventions and fields that are relevant/pertain to it. I argue that each time an Arthurian work is adapted in the past, there are perceivable influences from that contemporary world that produced it. These may simply be contemporary ideological values, virtues and expectations of the Arthurian world and chivalry. Remember, King Arthur was attested to have lived in the fifth century by multiple authors and scholars, where the collapse of the Roman empire had occurred very recently. The medievalist, chivalric period and elements popularly depicted today of the Arthurian legends did not occur in the British Isles until the eleventh century.

Nevertheless, while pointing out the historical anachronisms in the depiction of Arthurian characters would provide a substantial topic, it is not the main concern of this literary thesis. Instead, the focus is mainly on the underlying literary circumstances that lead to these, in order to better understand the forces that shaped the Arthurian genre into what it currently is today. Thus, the relevant fields to explore are the conventions of genre and authorship to provide a meta-framework/discussion for analyzing the Arthurian material. Afterwards, the comparison of medieval conventions on authorship and/or medieval literary traditions to more recent ones, such as poststructuralism, will be useful for better understanding the differences of the past and present Arthurian narratives. These are by no means fully exhaustive of all the phases and facets of the Arthurian literary material, but in my opinion, simply one of the more prominent philosophical phases that are useful in establishing a steady foundation for further study and research.

Julia Kristeva pioneered the term intertextuality in her 1981 book *Desire in Language*, which relates back to the Saussurian semiotic sign system. Saussure posits that a "sign" consists of a

signifier, which is a linguistic sign such as a spoken or written word, and a *signified,* the entity that the linguistic *signifier* refers to. Together, these form a sign, but it should be noted that the relationship between these two are arbitrary, which means that they have to be socially agreed upon. In order to do so, units of signs "negotiate" their meaning with other signs used in practice, or *parole*, taking care not to overlap with one another. For example, this means that the relationship between the word "book" and the object consisting of layered paper, is entirely arbitrary, and any other word could and can even be used or substituted in its place. Examples of this arbitrariness is for example other languages that have the different signifiers or words (buch, livre, kirja, книга, 本 and so on.) in order to signify this same object, are the most practical examples that the connection between signifiers and the signified are indeed arbitrary.

Instead of focusing on signs and symbols in linguistic environments and how the production of meaning is conducted through them, Kristeva instead applies it to texts instead. Kristeva (1981) applies Saussurean semiotics onto texts and argues that the novel is the transcription of phonetic language: "Phonetic speech, oral utterance, sound itself, become text: less than writing, the novel is thus the transcription of vocal communication. An arbitrary *signifier* (the word as phone) is transcribed onto paper and present as adequate to its *signified* and referent. It represents a 'reality' that is already there, preexistent to the signifier, duplicated so as to be integrated into the circuit of exchange; it is therefore reduced to a *representamen* (sign) that is manageable and can be circulated as an element assuring the cohesion of a communicative (commercial) structure endowed with *meaning* (value)." (Kristeva 53). As noted by Kristeva, neither she nor the novel is the originator of the connection between the *signifier* and the *signified*, or the intertextual phenomenon, just as Saussure is not the originator of semantics either, but both semioticians were vital in raising awareness and further study into their respective fields.

Texts form connections to other texts, either directly/explicitly or indirectly/implicitly and in doing so they acquire their own meanings. This connection, or meaning, can be the very definition of the text itself, or it can be of additional value. For example, a critical response text to another

theoretical text no doubt is most cohesive when considered together, and thus the contents of the text acquires its very definition to the text it is responding to, just as how the verb “to bottle” requires the definition of the noun “a bottle” to best explain its meaning. The tale of Arthur drawing the sword from the stone then being crowned king and then the tale of his death at the Battle of Camlann is another example of this kind of intertextuality. Should one only read the Battle of Camlann where Arthur dies at the hands of his son, one would be left with many questions regarding the narrative, therefore the Battle of Camlann lacks cohesion in isolation. Of course, it is mostly a matter of the author choosing to either elaborate these connections or not. On the other hand, a text that was written entirely as a standalone text as well, such as Chrétien de Troyes’s *Lancelot of the Cart* (c. 1177) can be read independently from the larger body of Arthurian literature, but acquires additional meaning when the reader is already familiar with the texts that it has connections to.

2.1 Genre

A literary genre is not contained within a text in an explicit manner, nor does it originate from the readership of a particular text. It is an arbitrary set of concepts that influences how a given text is interpreted. Unlike the vastness of its intertextual dimension, the Arthurian “genre” is a bit simpler. However, this does not simply mean that it is actually simple, as one can guess; the notions, connotations and comprehension of genre can vary, especially when changes in genre perceptions are further amplified by the passage of time through different twists and turns. Genres are to a reading the same as a situational context is to a linguistic occasion, just like the aforementioned bottle example. During the reading of a text, the reader will pick up thematic patterns within a text, such as the presence of knights and dragons, which positions the reader to assume that the text adheres to a particular convention of fantasy literature due to the frequently co-occurring elements. The reader’s perception of these thematic patterns and the subsequent connection that the reader makes to an established set of convention provides a text the contextual elements that steer the

text's meaning towards a particular direction. The reader recognizing these thematic patterns in one text and then interpreting its connection to other similar texts, or even a larger body of literature, exemplifies how genres are structured. Genre is the intertextual connections of a text, external of the text itself, but is reliant on its readership in recognizing this connection. Frow (2005) summarizes it as follows:

> Genre is neither a property of (and located "in") texts, nor a projection of (and located "in") readers; it exists as a part of the relationship between texts and readers, and it has a systemic existence. It is a shared convention with a social force. (Frow 102)

Furthermore, genre guides the interpretation of a text "because it is a constraint on semiosis, the production of meaning; it specifies which types of meaning are relevant and appropriate in a particular context, and so makes certain senses of an utterance more probable, in the circumstances, than others" (Frow 101). Knowledge on how to efficiently read a text and understand it is thus reliant on knowing and recognizing what kind of text it is, or rather, what kind of genre the text partakes in. Recognizing the genre that a text belongs to allows a reader to invoke on previous experiences and knowledge in a compressed form to better facilitate their reading. In order to do so, the reader must rely on knowledge that had been acquired outside the immediate text. Therefore, the knowledge a reader is expected and required to have in order to be a highly efficient reader is intertextual knowledge. Thus, "genre is, amongst other things, a matter of discrimination and taxonomy: of organizing things into recognizable classes" (Frow 51).

In addition to being a factor of efficiency, genres are a highly useful and productive concept, as it allows the reader or consumer to easily seek out literary works that interests them, in addition to providing producers of such genres a stable source of income by easily catering towards a clearly identified target audience. A genre usually has its own schema of narrative elements that are typical of it, such as the medieval setting and chivalric knights being the Arthurian literary recipe's core ingredients. From this foundation, a text can then either follow a more familiar narrative arc, or experiment with a different pattern. Strong deviations are however at times unpredictable in their

reception. This is where the shortcomings of a genre begin to become highly evident, a work is judged poorly if it did not sufficiently conform to the conventions of its genre. Therefore, genres not only describe the works that fall under them, but also prescribe them (Todorov 43–52).

According to Dubrow (1982), a genre's conventions concern not only the author, but also the reader as well. The author is expected to adhere to the genre's schema and the reader is expected to familiar with them, but should the author deviate from these schemas into say, a different genre altogether, or subvert the genre's expectations outright, then it would no doubt invoke a feeling of betrayal of the audience's expectations of the text's genre (Dubrow 3), this is perhaps more readily considered in a negative manner as the flouting of the specific genre's conventions on the author's part, rather than positive experimentalism with the genre's limits. Thus, in an ironical manner, the conventions of a genre are important for defining the genre itself and the texts that fall under it, but at the same time these conventions and schemas also causes a stagnation in the heterogeneity of its texts by imposing limitations in order to adhere to the expectations of a readership or some other goal. If a work deviates strongly from its parent genre but manages to become successful and then attract a sizeable readership, it may fork off into a new sub-genre of its own. Defining the works that came before it of which conventions it transgressed, setting itself apart from its predecessors through its differences to them (Todorov 43). Whenever there are tensions within a genre with or between their sub-types, "these larger forms tend to govern and define the more specific genres and sub-genres. The logical relationship is something like that between genus and species, a metonymic relation of the part to the whole" (Frow 64).

At this point, it is perhaps feasible to even argue that just like intertextuality, where texts interact with each other and acquire different meanings, genres interact with one another in a similar manner as well. However. the definitions of genres are a more complex matter, not chiefly due to the features of a text, but due the disagreements over the problematic definitions of genre that a text belongs to, which in itself is far too broad, necessitating further differentiation and specification (Dubrow, 1982). Works that have telltale features of a particular genre, but also have traces of

characteristic features from other genres, or even features unique to the work itself, tend to be the most probable candidates for the creation of a new sub-genre, one that currently exists between the boundaries of two different genres, but has yet to be named. Arthurian literature's parent genre could be considered chivalric literature, and a feature unique to it is the presence of a certain character, King Arthur, in its earlier stages, before eventually including the Knights of the Round Table as well.

Thus, a text inescapably will belong to one or more genres, which they in turn also modify (Frow 1). This is aligned and also complements the previous statements regarding how texts may fork off into a new sub-genre of their own, or establish a new genre on the boundaries of two or more genre types. In order for a text to spawn its own genre entirely, it first needs to establish its own sub-genre from its predecessor, after which both the predecessor and the branch continue to develop in such different directions that they no longer bear a clear connection to one another. In Deleuze-Guattarian terms, *a multiplicity had become the substantive*, no longer being reliant on its predecessor(s) in order to define its own meaning and position (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). According to Deleuze & Guattari, a multiplicity is an offshoot or facet of something larger (a substantive), such as a sub-genre being part of a larger and particular literary genre. But by becoming a substantive, the multiplicity has managed to establish itself as an independent entity from its originator.

Returning to the topic of how a text modifies the genre it falls under, rather than establishing a new genre. A text may still conform to the conventions of its genre despite its differences and be adequately well received that they develop the genre to which they belong to into a new direction, but not enough that it would warrant the coining of a new term. The introduction of new narrative elements into the earlier Arthurian narrative, such as the Knights of the Round Table and the Holy Grail are examples of this, despite there being a clear distinction between the earliest version of the narrative and the later versions by different authors, such as when comparing Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* to *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) by Sir Thomas Malory (c. 1415–1471).

Nevertheless, it is possible to label the different phases that genres have been through, such as how Elizabethan tragedy and Restoration tragedy are the possible ways to differentiate the specific phases of English tragedy in order to be more specific. Thus, it is just as possible to label the aforementioned Arthurian additions to the Arthurian literary body as *post-Galfridian* elements, works that are clearly derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose Latin name is Galfridus. In short, unless there is a sufficient need, reason and purpose to be more specific in differentiating these phases, then the broader but less specific term will likely be preferred for its convenience, while the more specific terminology will be a technical terminology for specific lines of work or professions.

In the end, it is worth considering how much the choice of a genre for a given work influences decisions on its contents. Established genres carry with them a whole series of prescriptions and restrictions that were established by that genre's previous writers. Thus, modern authors utilizing genres are no different from the ones that had come before them, as by producing works in a given genre, they freely adopt the conventions that they have inherited from past authors, with or without their own knowledge. Even the tales recounted by the pilgrims in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (c. 1400) are versions of well-known tales, and on top of it all, they are retellings. No author or artist of any art, has their complete meaning alone. Their significance and the appreciation that they receive is also the appreciation for the authors and artists of the past that had preceded them (Dubrow 9–44). This then further leads to the next topic of authorial responsibility as well as the traditions that had governed previous works to which modern retellings of them ultimately trace their lineage to.

2.2 Authorship and Medieval Literary Traditions

Whenever an author or poet explicitly invokes an Arthurian character, object or other closely related narrative element, they will inevitably also draw upon older figures, conventions and

information with or without their own awareness of the origins of these Arthurian elements. Pertaining to authorship, this brings up the question whether or not they could be held as being solely responsible for any given version of the narrative, or having the ownership of it. Genette (1997) highlights that a book generally consists of multiple texts, termed *paratexts*, by various different writers, including texts by other writers than the original author, such as the writer of the preface, the cover illustrator, the editorial notes by an editor or any other textual element that is present. This does not only apply to books, but also other forms of textual material, such as a written report that quotes someone else's words (Genette 8-10). Therefore, if a book is to be judged and responsibility should be assumed, it would generally apply to everyone involved in the book's creation, which in itself is highly problematic.

Indeed, as previously stated, the Arthurian narrative itself consists of elements that have been worked and reworked by a multitude of different writers, both named and unnamed authors. The Vulgate cycle is probably the most notable example where the authorship is uncertain even until this day, but it is speculated to have been the result of multiple different authors (Kennedy, "Visions" 37). Furthermore, even narratives that have a named author such as *Le Morte d'Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory does not necessarily mean that they are the main progenitor, after all, Malory's version is simply a collection of previous Arthurian narratives. Therefore, it would be difficult to pinpoint specific writers as being personally responsible for particular elements of in a literary work, this in turn means that due to the patchwork nature of a frequently adapted text, such as the Arthurian legends, it would be difficult to point out particular meanings that an author might have intended. According to poststructuralists, the author and authorial intent in a literary work should be irrelevant, since by focusing on the author, we are restricting a text's full potential (Barthes, 1967).

During the Medieval period (and highly likely, way before that.) intertextuality between multiple different authors was very commonplace. Folkloric tales without an identified author are a clear example of how narratives are shaped by many hands that expand, reinvent or adapt narratives, many of whom are unnamed as well, and thus regarded as "apocryphal" or of uncertain

authorship and thus of questionable authenticity as a result. These may nevertheless become a persistent element of a larger narrative, due to its contributions or contents being more popular and important than its author's identity or agenda (Minnis 11-12). C.S. Lewis sums this up as it applies to Arthurian tradition:

> If there was a historical Arthur, he was probably a Roman. His legend is Celtic in origin. The particular handling of it which we are now considering is the adaptation, thoroughly Anglo-Saxon in spirit, of a Norman poem. Its later dissemination is the works of French poets and romancers. Its modern developments almost exclusively English and American. (Lewis 24)

Thus, it is imperative to understand that the phenomena of intertextuality and adaptation are to be welcomed, without fear of or need to latch onto any form of authority or fear of it. Similarly, Medieval literature was meant to be treated as being authorless or more specifically, ownerless and thus these works are free to be adapted further by other authors. The authorities that are meant to judge a work of literature are therefore considered to be the audience themselves, which also includes other authors as well. They will determine whether or not an adaptation will persist or perish in the future due to its contents by either continuing to extend it, or cast it aside in favor of more established or appealing conventions (Hutcheon 106–09).

However, according to Sean Burke's *The Death and Return of the Author* (1998), the notion of the absence of an author is both undesirable and too idealistic, since it also prevents us from fully perceiving a text's true nature and meaning. By forgoing the author and not trying to look for them between every line, it may prove to be more enjoyable to fully immerse oneself into the contents of a text. But if we include the author and their motives into the reading, we may glimpse a valuable insight into the author's life that may otherwise be lost to us as the centuries go by, or especially if they become altered in some manner that may lead to a loss of meaning. Compounded with the ever-changing nature of language, cultural values and worldviews, literary works constantly require retranslations to be understood once again, either linguistically or ideologically. Not only do meanings and nuances of words change, but the values and virtues that we hold today may differ greatly from those who came before, especially if they lived over a millennium ago. In the case of

the Arthurian legends, it is the patchwork nature of its plot elements that make it increasingly difficult to decipher, and especially in terms of authorial intentions, which ultimately also ties back to the responsibility for a text (Genette, 1997). “No one denies that creative artists have intentions; the disagreements have been over how those intentions should be deployed in the interpretation of meaning and assignment of value” (Hutcheon 107).

I argue that, for example by analyzing *Le Morte d’Arthur* with the inclusion of Sir Thomas Malory’s personal history, we can perceive that there was truly an influence in how he had structured his adaptation, which is also a valuable insight into Malory’s contemporary life that would otherwise be lost to us from his version of the Arthurian narrative. Malory partook in the War of the Roses that was mostly an English matter and as such Arthur was portrayed as an English king, ignoring his Celtic origins (Kennedy “Visions” 38). However, it is not to say that neither the omission nor inclusion of an author into a text’s reading is more correct than the other, but in my opinion, they are alternate ways to approach and interpret the Arthurian narratives. Yet, I would encourage exploring these different readings, since in intertextuality, texts gain different perspectives and meanings through the employment of factors external to the text itself. Language usage is tinted with intentions, both written and spoken, and especially in a literary narrative, there are multiple characters with voices in a text, each with their own contributions to the narrative. These characters in Arthurian literature are likely to have originated from different authors as well, thus potentially making the interactions between said characters the intertextual meta-interaction between different authors as well. This then leads to a new chapter in literary theorems that Arthurian literature is also subjected to.

2.3 Poststructuralism and intertextuality

We have arrived at the current phase of literary theorems that surround the Arthurian literature. Starting with the twentieth century, various new schools and models of thought have manifested

and gained dominance in society and academic circles, but these positions of power are not fixed and are quite turbulent indeed. Most notably, structuralism was at the forefront of many academic circles early on, but eventually its shortcomings began to give rise to newer schools of thought, most notably poststructuralism in the literary circles. Poststructuralism is, in a dumbed-down form, the “resistance”, or response to the structuralist school of thought. Structuralism’s key characteristics is the fixation on prescriptive models and predictability, but these oftentimes highly idealistic and unrealistic models eventually shifted the favor away from structuralism and lead to the emergence of poststructuralism that is much more descriptive. As one may have noticed, the previous statements regarding genre are indeed rather strongly poststructuralist, perhaps even overcomplicating matters than they truly are through extensive usages of abstractions in the pursuit of a universal definition for genre, not just the literary kind. Rather than selecting a list of specific poststructuralist models for a comprehensive discussion in this thesis, only touching upon certain models where applicable is enough.

Intertextuality between literary works could be visualized as a network of rhizomes, or a mass of connective roots, in contrast to an arborescent model (a model of a tree). The plants from which a rhizome grows from can be regarded as the visible and concrete texts, whereas the rhizome/root that grows from it is the discrete intertextual connections between these texts. Superficially, these texts appear to be individual entities, but they are in-fact, a singular and individual entity. However, here is also where this analogy between text and plant begins to fall apart, as an individual text is an individual text, rather than actually being the same text scattered into multiple fragments. There are, however, texts that are released or published in an incomplete state, therefore making the previous analogy still valid. Regardless, a majority of texts tend to be released in a complete state, as are their subsequent releases, but they have the rhizomatic links between one another. In contrast, an arboreal model signifies a hierarchy between texts, where every branch eventually connects back to the point of origin, which is the domineering standard in the hierarchy. In a literary sense, in an arborescent model, there is an origin text from which every other derivative text traces its origins to

and are regarded as inferior to it (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). While the rhizome theory is not a strictly intertextual theory, it can be highly effective in illuminating the phenomenon of intertextuality. According to the Deleuze and Guattari, a rhizome is an informational unit that is in itself independent, but at the same time, connected to other rhizomes. Both authors were mainly concerned with philosophy and were opposed to hierarchical tree models, as they argued for how hierarchy and dominant norms or schools of thought often repressed most things that did not conform to them. The most important point of the theory is that everything can be a rhizome, which connects to other rhizomes, but there should not be any hierarchy between these rhizomes. Preliminarily, the insistence on the absence of hierarchy seems unrealistic to me, which will be further explained in the next section under one of the types of adaptations; repetition.

The *arborescent* literary model is a structuralist model, just as how the structuralist concept of genres prescribes standards to adhere to, both of which signify hierarchical powers that inhibit productivity. Thus, the support for poststructuralist models such as the rhizomatic model and the debates surrounding genre in the previous section are responses for the shortcomings of structuralism. The arborescent model in Arthurian literature has also come and gone, such as Geoffrey's text *Historia Regum Britanniae* is no longer the version of choice for most adaptations, but variants of its derivatives that have further expanded upon its narrative. For example, King Arthur campaigning to Gaul to face the Roman Emperor has been replaced with his pursuit of Lancelot in later adaptations as the reason for his excursion into mainland Europe before having to return to Camelot to suppress a revolt instigated by Mordred. Nevertheless, after this chapter and its contents, we should be quite well equipped to explore the types of literary adaptations, both new and old. Genres influence a text's meaning and interpretation on a metaphysical level, whereas understanding the differences between the past and present literary conditions will allow for a greater understanding of the literary adaptations and their purposes. In addition, intertextuality will also work similarly to genres, but is far more concrete in illuminating how texts acquire meaning through their connections and relations to other texts.

2.4 Types of Literary Adaptations

As previously stated, due to the main goal of this thesis being the analysis of how intertextuality had shaped the Arthurian narrative into what it is today, it is worth discussing what literary adaptations are first. Adaptations are an intertextual phenomenon, due to their intrinsic connection to other texts when they are first created. These connections can then be either overt or covert. Overt adaptations often rely heavily on these other texts for the meaning of their (textual) contents. Covert adaptations, on the other hand, acquire additional meanings for the interpretation of their contents but are not heavily reliant on them for the adaptation's main interpretation. Examples of overt adaptations are for example, book reviews that directly reference other texts, whereas covert adaptations are for example the adaptations of Arthurian literary works that will be analyzed later in this thesis. Should there still be a confusion regarding the differences of these two forms of adaptation, then a good point to memorize is that for overt adaptations the disappearance or lack of availability of their source text(s) would greatly impact the adaptation's reception, whereas for a covert adaptation this would merely decrease the number of alternative interpretations and the potential insight the referent texts would have provided.

The major form of intertextuality to be analyzed in this thesis is the literary adaptation, specifically the adaptations of a literary works that were made by authors who are different from the source text's author. Through this analysis, individual Arthurian works will be deconstructed in order to understand their effect and/or contribution to the wider Arthurian narrative. So far, I have personally identified three main types of adaptational strategies; *incorporation/expansion*, *repetition/reprisal* and *reinterpretation/reinvention*. While these forms may give an image of adaptations as neat categories, the reality is that a literary work may fall under more than one type of adaptation, thus I wish to stress that one should expect that a work may and likely will overlap between more than one form of adaptation.

Expansion involves expanding the narrative with new elements, such as the introduction of new characters or plot elements that further extend it or fill the gaps in it. Chretien de Troyes' introduction of Lancelot and Wace's creation of the Knights of the Round Tables would be an example of this. In my experience, this is by far the most productive and popular form of intertextual adaptation. *Incorporation* is a slightly more specific method of expansion, which mainly describes how older or unrelated pieces or bodies of literary works that were already pre-existing came to be incorporated into the Arthurian narrative. For example, Merlin's and Gawain's characters predated Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, but were later incorporated into the Arthurian narrative by either Monmouth himself, or other authors. It is worth noting that incorporation and expansion could be considered as separate forms of adaptations, but I have decided to include them together under the same chapter, since by incorporating an older or newer element into the Arthurian narrative also expands the literary material. Expansion as a form of adaptation differs from incorporation in the regard that it contributes to and already regards itself as part of the larger body of literature, whereas elements of incorporation were initially independent and were later incorporated into the discourse.

Repetition or *Reprisal* on the other hand as an intertextual phenomenon is much less productive than the previous two, but serves an important function in reinforcing and cementing certain narrative elements, particularly of new material introduced from the previous form of adaptation. Often major plot elements from previous works are retained, but the order and details may be slightly different. Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* would be an example of this, while his adaptation was perhaps the first to actually gather the loose Arthurian narratives into one coherent literary work, it is the modern repetitions of his adaptation that eventually cemented the main plot elements of the modern Arthurian narrative that we are familiar with today, establishing the additions by de Troyes and Wace as part of the Arthurian narrative arc.

Lastly, *reinvention* or *reinterpretation* is an oftentimes radical adaptation of an already existing narrative. A revisionist or reinterpretive adaptation approaches an established narrative

from a different viewpoint. The term revisionist may be a little negative in describing it, but useful in exemplifying how radical this kind of adaptation can be. Most reinventions are generally well received, or an interesting and refreshing take on the old Arthurian traditions. Over the past few decades, modern adaptations of the Arthurian narrative have actively approached the traditions from a new viewpoint, such as T. H. White's The Once and Future King (1958), which approaches it from a pacifistic viewpoint, portraying Arthur's and his knights' growth from a more psychological point of view, rather than from their martial prowess alone.

Ultimately, the author(s) of a given work or adaptation are the most pivotal in determining the direction an adaptation will take. According Barthes and then the deconstructionist literary critics, a literary text or work should be judged by its contents alone, without incorporating its author(s) into its reading in order to find any additional meaning. While for a majority of the Arthurian texts this may be true, the inclusion of an author into the reading of a text does provide significant insight into its meanings. However, it should be noted that authors have a capacity for being protean, capable of producing texts that differ from their personal viewpoints and values in order to appeal to a certain readership.

Not only that, but the search for an authorial intent in the Arthurian narratives is especially difficult due to two factors; the great age and volume of the literary material and the myriad of authors that have taken part in shaping them. Rather than focusing on the author, the work's intended audience and the effects the work has on them is of much greater significance, since this enables one to potentially discover the original intentions of the text, which may aid in finding clues about the original author's intentions.

Nevertheless, while the authorial intent of older Arthurian texts may be more difficult to discover, modern Arthurian texts are much easier to decipher and do provide additional insight into their contents after taking into consideration their author's circumstances, such as T. H. White's pacifistic values were perceivable in his *The Once and Future King* (1958) which is a retelling of the Arthurian narrative, which itself was adapted from Sir Thomas Malory's more martial orientated

Le Morte d'Arthur, which was influenced by Malory's own life and experience as a knight during the fifteenth century, where England was in a state of civil war. It is worth reiterating that the inclusion of the author into the reading of a text may turn out to be a double-edged sword, as not all authors necessarily include their own motives into their works due to the aforementioned protean aspect, especially for example in the case of Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889). Twain was a notable satirist and his adaptation carried plot elements that likely differed from that of his own personal worldviews, therefore care should be exercised when including the author into the reading of a text, as mistaking Twain's satire as pro-imperialistic sympathies can lead to a very different reading of his text. Again, keep in mind in the next sections is that an adaptation may fall under more than just one form of adaptation, sometimes more clearly in one category than another.

3 Expansion and incorporation, creating new material and/or using earlier narratives

Expansion and incorporation are forms of adaptation that increase the literary material of a given body of literature, such as through new characters, plot elements, settings or even entire narratives. Expansion is mainly the creation of entirely new characters, plot elements and narratives, whereas incorporation includes (mostly) earlier, unrelated works of fiction into another body of literature. Opportunistic targets for incorporation are for example folkloric characters and/or narratives, but can also happen to more recent works as well. Folkloric narratives tend to be mainly apocryphal in nature and thus providing ample opportunities to be included into a larger whole by authors and poets. Through incorporation, elements of these older or unrelated individual narratives or bodies of literary works were incorporated into the Arthurian narrative. Throughout this chapter, the term incorporation will mostly be used interchangeably with expansion, since by incorporating a literary material into another body of literature, it also expands the body of literature in question.

These literary elements that are about to become incorporated to another may share similar themes such as having chivalric elements, which help facilitate their smooth inclusion. However they are not a strict requirement, but smaller works or isolated narratives that have similar themes and motifs tend to be much more desirable for incorporation, if not into Arthurian literature, then perhaps into some other body of literature that shares the common themes. The focus of this chapter is on two matters: the new additions to the Arthurian narrative that are mainly influenced and derived from prior Arthurian narratives, extending the original narrative further, or new additions that are from earlier, originally non-Arthurian narratives which were later incorporated into Arthurian literature. Merlin's characteristics is based on the pre-Galfridian Welsh wild man of the woods, Myrddin Wyllt. Gwalchmei is another example of a pre-Galfridian character, but his ties to Arthur had already been established well before the *Historia Regum Britanniae*.

3.1 Arthur

Monmouth was pivotal in the establishment of the Arthurian literary genre by expanding upon Nennius' unnamed war leader of Badon by naming him Arthur and attesting his feats into the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Monmouth's adaptation inspired numerous authors to reprise his account, but eventually new characters, narratives and plot elements were created as well. An important development occurred later with the creation of the order of the Knights of the Round Table by the Norman poet Wace. Instead of reciting Monmouth's account, Chretien de Troyes chooses to instead expand upon the Knights of the Round Table introducing more characters like Lancelot. Lancelot's later exploits described in the Lancelot-Grail cycle is on the other hand, of uncertain authorship, most likely by multiple unnamed authors or poets, who nevertheless came after de Troyes (Kennedy, 2003). Expanding upon a narrative outside its initial setting offers more freedom and opportunities to create new characters and narratives, which are much lucrative opportunities for further adaptation and literature.

Later on, Malory collects the most popular, but disjointed Arthurian narratives and writes them into a cohesive narrative, now known as his adaptation the *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Malory's adaptation mainly consists of Monmouth's and multiple other popular medieval tales combined together. For example, Lancelot and the Holy Grail was part of the *Post-Vulgate Cycle*, which was an independent narrative, but its setting is strictly Arthurian. Malory therefore incorporated other Arthurian narratives into Monmouth's adaptation to expand it. In Monmouth's original version many of Arthur's legendary Knights of the Round Table do not exist and he campaigns into Gaul to face the Roman emperor instead of pursuing Lancelot. By Malory's version many of the well-known Knights of the Round Table are now present, such as Lancelot and Gawain, and Arthur's campaign into Gaul near the end is in pursuit of Lancelot instead of confronting the Romans in battle. Through this process, Malory has partaken into a literary continuum with other Arthurian authors, as per Genette's statement earlier.

3.2 Gawain

In modern Arthurian narratives, Gawain is an important character in Arthur's court, but is absent from the earlier ninth century Arthurian text by Nennius. However, according to Green (2007), Gawain already existed as the character Gwalchmei from *Culhwch and Olwen*, a c. eleventh century Welsh folkloric tale during Monmouth's times. Gwalchmei is the son of Arthur's sister and thus his nephew, sharing the same familial associations as modern-day Gawain, (Green, "*Concepts*" 168–75) and was later incorporated into Monmouth's narrative as Walwen or Walgan. According to Monmouth, Arthur has two nephews from his sister Anne (Morgan) and his brother-in-law King Lot; Walgan and Modred:

> … and Lot, who in time of Aurelius Ambrosius had married his sister, by whom he had two sons, Walgan and Modred, … (Monmouth 157)

In *Culhwch and Olwen*, a cousin of Arthur named Culhwch sets off on a quest, but was warned that he would not succeed without the aid of his cousin, Arthur. Culhwch seeks him out and receives support in the form of six warriors from Arthur's court, which included Kay, Bedivere and, most importantly for this section, Arthur's nephew, Gawain (Ford 131–32). *Culhwch and Olwen* is significant as it most likely predated Monmouth's account and offers a glimpse into the older, Welsh Arthurian characters, but it is of especial interest here due to it being one of the two last surviving account of a pre-Galfridian Gawain (Green, "*Concepts*" 171), or Gwalchmai as he is referred to in the *Culhwch and Olwen* narrative. Green concludes on the identity of Gawain (Walwen) and Gwalchmei as being one and the same in the following manner:

> … Walwen, … is sufficiently close to Gwalchmei by Arthurian standards (citing Peredur, Perceval and Myrddin, Merlin) to have the former as the nature of Arthur's war-band and family derivative of the latter as the Welsh name was taken into non-Welsh sources, and the above evidence does support the notion that Walwen and Gwalchmei were one and the same. (Green 172–73)

Nevertheless, the absence of Gawain in Nennius' account, but his presence in Monmouth's as Walwen/Walgan, evidences that the character had been incorporated from Welsh folkloric narratives and then further expanded upon in subsequent adaptations. Furthermore, the evidence of

Culhwch and Olwen as a separate narrative and very likely being older than Monmouth's shows that there had previously existed a pre-Galfridian Arthurian narrative, before being included into another author's text (Monmouth's in this case). These manifestations are simply the end results of the intertextual processes that had occurred during the process of adaptation, which is in this case, incorporation and expansion.

3.3 Merlin

Merlin's case is also an example of incorporation. His character today mainly consists of two components, the first one is the Welsh folkloric character Myrddin Wyllt, who was unrelated to Arthur. Pre-Galfridian Welsh narratives such as the Black Book of Camarthen presents him as a prophetic but mad, man living in the Caledonian Forest. Myrddin was likely the origin and basis for Monmouth's Merlin which he and future authors and poets have further built upon. First, I will go through the pre-Galfridian character, Myrddin Wyllt, then analyze Merlin using the Galfridian sources in addition and comparison to Nennius' account. In doing so, it is possible to isolate the sides pre- and post-Galfridian aspects of Merlin from each other, being useful afterwards in identifying the influences and characteristics of Merlin's character that were incorporated into his character that we know today.

According to Green (2009), Myrddin's name is based on the Welsh name of the Caledonian forest, *Caer-fyrddin*, rather than the other way around that medieval speculations may have suggested. The prototypical characteristics of Myrddin is that he has prophetic abilities, but is insane and lives in the woods in self-isolation. Myrddin had fled into the woods after the disastrous defeat of the faction that he had supported, then lapsed into madness afterwards. With this madness he also gained his prophetic abilities and characteristics. Another related character, or perhaps the same, is present in Scottish folklore by the name of Lailoken. In the same manner, Lailoken himself is a wild man living in the woods who has prophetic abilities. In fact, it is speculated that Lailoken

is the original character that was then later on transported into Welsh folklore, before being incorporated into Arthurian narrative (Green, "*Arthuriana*" 234–37).

One noteworthy name for Merlin is Myrddin Emrys, Latinized as Merlin Ambrose or Merlinus Ambrosius. Ambrose is the Latinized form of the name Emrys (Walters 35). There is a historical Welsh figure known as Ambrosius as well, but Merlin himself is a separate individual from him. In Monmouth's accounts, Ambrosius is a separate entity from Merlin and seemingly not at all familially related to one another, therefore it is more likely that Myrddin Wyllt was the basis for Monmouth's Merlin's character instead. This longer name of Merlin was likely due to Monmouth's incorporation of the Ambrose child from Nennius' account into Merlin's character in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, rather than the historical Ambrosius. In Nennius's account, the character named Ambrose was attributed to the child that was brought before King Vortigern. Vortigern was told by his advisors that the site upon which he intended to construct a fortification would not stand, unless he shed the blood of a child who was born without a father upon the ground. This fatherless child that was brought before Vortigern proceeded to reveal the real reason for the castle's inability to persist; that an underwater pool or pond lie underneath the ground where the castle is supposed to be constructed, but not without humiliating the king's advisors as he does so. Satisfied, the king then asked for the child's name, who revealed himself as Ambrose:

> …"By what means was it revealed to you that this citadel could not be built, unless the spot were previously sprinkled with my blood? Speak without disguise, and declare who discovered me to you;" then turning to the king, "I will soon," said he, "unfold to you everything; but I desire to question your wise men, and wish them to disclose to you what is hidden under this pavement:" they acknowledging their ignorance, "there is," said he, "a pool; come and dig:" they did so and found the pool. … ..."What is your name?" asked the king; "I am called Ambrose (In British Embresguletic)," (Nennius 19–20).

This same narrative regarding Vortigern's hindered construction plan is also present in Monmouth's text, but begins with the child already known as Merlin, but also revealed to be the same Ambrose from Nennius' account:

> … "Because you are ignorant what it is that hinders the foundation of the tower, you have recommended the shedding of my blood for cement to it, as if that would presently

> make it stand. But tell me now, what is there under the foundation? For something there is that will not suffer it to stand." The magicians at this began to be afraid and made him no answer. Then said Merlin, who was also called Ambrose, "I entreat your majesty would command your workmen to dig into the ground, and you will find a pond which causes the foundation to sink." (Monmouth 110)

Thus, we can see that the narrative of Ambrose had been incorporated into Merlin's character by Monmouth through such a simple manner. I would argue that this may have been the source for the longer Merlinus Ambrosius name as well. This also marks the Ambrose child in *Historia Regum Britanniae* as being a separate individual from Ambrosius, as Merlin Ambrose is an advisor to king Ambrosius during his reign in Monmouth's version. Therefore, it is much more likely that a majority of Galfridian Merlin's characteristics came from the folkloric Myrddin Wyllt, specifically the more prophetic characteristics, rather than the mad ones, as Merlin's known characteristics do not include a lack of mental clarity. Thus, Merlin's role as an advisor to Arthur's lineage is perhaps a later addition that began with Monmouth's *Vita Merlini* or Prophitae Merlini, which has since been solidified as part of his character, which was absent from Myrddin/Lailoken and the Ambrose child. Monmouth had chosen to discard the narrative of Merlin being an insane wild man of the woods, but has chosen to retain his prophetic abilities, which evidences that a selective process had occurred during adaptation. Subsequent adaptations have also included this version of Merlin, rather than describing him madman living in the woods.

3.4 Ambrosius

Moving on from Merlin and returning to the Ambrose crossroad, the aforementioned historical Ambrosius Aurelianus is also a noteworthy figure in terms of literary incorporation as well. Ambrosius' Welsh name is Emrys Wledig, which the previous account by Nennius actually referred to when it used the word *Embresguletic* for the Ambrose child. This would effectively mean that the Ambrose child is, in fact, the historical Emrys Wledig, in addition the brief mentions of Ambrosius by Nennius seem to support this. However, in the later version by Monmouth, Emrys Wledig is separated from Merlin by instead attributing the encounter of the Ambrose child with Vortigern to

Merlin, as shown earlier. Monmouth's Emrys Wledig is known as Ambrosius Aurelius and he and Merlin co-exist in the same narrative, since Merlin was first an advisor to Ambrosius, then Uther Pendragon and finally Arthur. The remainder of the Galfridian Ambrosius' feats and characteristics draw from the historical Emrys Wledig.

The historical Emrys Wledig is a significant Welsh figure that has many similar successful military characteristics to the Arthurian line of rulers, and as earlier stated he is the original figure from which the fictional Galfridian Ambrosius originated. In Monmouth's account, he is only referred to by his Latinized name Ambrosius Aurelius. Nennius' Ambrosius corresponded better with the historical Emrys Wledig, but also had potentially fictional attributions as well, as shown in the Ambrose child narration. Nevertheless, Nennius' account considered him important figure, as he was "the king among the kings of Britain" (Nennius 22). Similarly, Monmouth's Ambrosius was a leader of a coalition of British kings, up until his death and transfer of rulership to Uther (Monmouth 137–38). In connection to Arthur, the historical Wledig Emrys was likely Romano-British war leader who won important battles against the Anglo-Saxons in the fifth century, but most notably he was recorded by Gildas' to be the victor Battle of Mount Badon in his polemic *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (Green, "*Concepts*" 31), which is traditionally attributed to Arthur instead in Arthurian narratives.

Yet, despite this discrepancy, while Monmouth's Ambrosius follows Nennius' account, he is a separate individual from the Ambrose child from Nennius' account. Monmouth attributes the Battle of Badon to Arthur instead, and expands on Ambrosius' role as an experienced military commander and Uther Pendragon's brother, thus making him Arthur's uncle (Monmouth 94). Therefore, considering the greater prominence given to Ambrosius in *Historia Regum Britanniae*, when compared to its predecessor, the *Historia Brittonum*, Monmouth had both incorporated and expanded upon Ambrosius' role significantly in his adaptation, but omitted certain details from him, very similarly to how he did with Myrddin Wyllt.

3.5 Non-literary contributions to the Arthurian material

As an additional peculiarity, literary texts are not the only ones that become incorporated into or expand upon the Arthurian material. While the following details and events are not strictly literary in nature, they are nonetheless performing intertextual functions, as through their actions and contributions they show a familiarity and adherence to Arthurian conventions. Certain individuals or collectives have made efforts to be included into the Arthurian material in the past (and perhaps today and the future, as well). It may sound odd, but the process is rather simple in the end, as shown in the following examples:

In 1190, the monks of Glastonbury Abbey in modern day Somerset, South-Western Britain, claimed to have discovered the grave of Arthur and Guinevere. Their remains were claimed to have been discovered in a massive tree trunk coffin, but no remains nor coffins of the discovery remain, except for a leaden cross supposedly bearing Arthur's epitaph. However, the cross's inscription was proven to be a forgery due its usage of a more modern, medieval Latin script, Arthur himself lived around 700 years ago in the fifth century. The date of these discoveries is also conveniently within the same time period as the proliferation of Arthurian literature. Thus, it has been disputed to have simply been a publicity stunt in order to raise funds for the repair of the abbey, which was heavily damaged by a fire in 1184 (Rahtz, 1993). Nevertheless, the geographical peculiarities and location of Somerset lends it an advantage when advocating for its importance to Arthurian literature. Twelfth century Somersets consisted of numerous low-lying valleys and large bodies of water suggested that it might have consisted of marshlands in the past, which is a common landscape in Arthurian narratives, especially with Avalon.

Another prominent and significant case was in the latter half of the fifteenth century, during the War of the Roses. Among many of the Tudor dynasty's attempts to claim the English crown, one of these were a claim to be part of Arthur's lineage. Henry VII's red dragon banner, the Round Table and other Arthurian motifs are present in his court and heraldry, in addition to his son being

named Arthur evidences these pursuits. Coinciding with this time period was the publication of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, as well, which was widely popular due to the present circumstances, perhaps even promoted by supporters of the Tudor lineage, that lead to its skyrocketing popularity.

This indicates that there was an awareness and value of Arthurian genre conventions that had been established through intertextual adaptation, or literary reprisal in this case. As Frow had stated earlier, genre exists between a text and its readers, whom then allocate a text's worth and significance to them according to its textual content and cultural importance. Malory's adaptation capitalized on the contemporary situation by drawing upon already familiar and established Arthurian elements in order to perhaps address the matters of monarchy and physical prowess, which lead to its ensuing popularity despite its alleged shortcomings. After all, according to Todorov, a literary work is judged based on how well it conforms to its genre conventions (Todorov 42).

Returning to geographic locale and incorporation, Colchester is also a potential example of how a geographic locale ended up being incorporated by external actors. It has been suggested that the ancient town or city of Camulodunum, modern day Colchester, may have been the origin of the name Camelot (Morris 138). Colchester was a major capital city for the pre-Roman Celts, the Romans themselves and post-Roman settlers. In addition, I believe that the name Camlann may be related to this locale as well, therefore leading to the last major battle of Arthur being the Battle of Camelot if we are to follow by this line of thought.

This concludes the chapter on incorporation and expansion as forms of adaptation. Merlin was indeed quite different in his pre-Galfridian depictions as the Welsh Myrddin Wyllt or his Lailoken source. Gawain too, was a pre-Galfridian Arthurian character, which the *Culhwch and Olwen* has shown, which suggests that there was already a substantial Arthurian narrative pre-dating Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, however, his case is closer to expansion rather than incorporation, because Gwalchmai's connection to Arthur was simply further expanded, rather than

being an entirely different and unrelated character like Myrddin, who was later incorporated into the Arthurian material. The historical Emrys Wledig is much more similar to Myrddin, since originally, he had no ties into the Arthurian narrative, but through Nennius he was first expanded upon through the Ambrose child narration, then fully incorporated as part of Arthur's lineage by Monmouth, being the in-between of both expansion and incorporation. Of the non-literary incorporations, Glastonbury and Colchester are concrete examples of how locales are incorporated into the Arthurian narrative as well, Glastonbury incorporated itself through self-promotion, whereas Colchester was being incorporated by others as the potential location of Arthur's court. The Tudor's claims and pursuits on the other hand, were not too dissimilar to Glastonbury's, as they too, attempted to incorporate themselves as part the Arthurian continuum.

All in all, virtually anything can be incorporated into the Arthurian narrative, both new and old, as the aforementioned examples of both literary and non-literary cases have exemplified. While literary texts are the concrete manifestations of intertextuality, care should be taken not to neglect the non-literary "intertexts", as their participation and contributions to the literary material are no less important, since they too have incorporated and expanded literary material. Moreover, as shown in Gawain's case and somewhat in Ambrosius' case as well, narratives can undergo more than one process of adaptation. In fact, I would argue that this is in fact, the norm for a majority the literary elements present in the Arthurian material. Returning to the claims made during the previous chapters on intertextuality, present texts and their contents that are part of a continuity not only invoke their previous associations, but also draw upon them, knowingly or unknowingly.

4 Repetition/reprisal, reinforcing narrative elements and/or norms through reiteration

This chapter will mainly focus on the already familiar and aforementioned Arthurian narratives and characters, by citing Arthurian works that are similar or copies of one another, most notably to Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, rather than introduce any new material (characters or narratives) into this analysis. This also coincides with this chapter's thematic focus as well, as repetition or reprisal as an intertextual phenomenon generally does not introduce anything radically new into the discourse, but rather, repeats and thus reinforces already familiar themes and norms. Malory's adaptation does contain characteristics that overlap with revisionist and/or incorporative adaptation as well, but his adaptation mostly performs the function of repetition/reprisal adaptation. This is also true with other adaptations as well and especially adaptations that reprise an earlier work's content since they generally replicate the overlappings as well. One will be hard pressed to find examples of works that is purely of one form of adaptation alone.

According to Maisonnat et al (2007), literary reprisal is the latest form that intertextuality had taken. Literary reprise is the repetition of literary works of the past, and that literary works are part of a continuum, where nothing is original and as such anything supposedly new has actually already been written and discouraged the search of an origin text as being futile (Maisonnat, Paccaut-Huguet & Ramel, vii). Intertextual repetition or reprise as a form of adaptation generally repeats an earlier narrative without any significant alterations, therefore effectively repeating the contents of the earlier works. Metzidakis (1986) also argues that individual readers judge a work to be a copy if it repeats certain features that they can personally recover (Metzidakis, "Repetition and Semiotics" 41). Intralingual translation, or retranslation of a work can also be considered an example of intertextual repetition. Generally, an intralingual repetition of a work manifests as the re-presentation of an earlier literary work in a more modernized vocabulary and perhaps connotations, depending on the contemporary target audience. (Metzidakis 71).

Repetition/reprisal is seemingly less productive when compared to the previous two forms of adaptation, but serves an important intertextual function in reinforcing and cementing popular narrative elements, which effectively propagates them. In fact, the very fact that authors reiterating and repeating the same narrative elements or norms showcases intertextuality at work, as repetition/reprisal is reliant on the interactions between different authors or their works for it to happen. Furthermore, in the absence of a unified, authoritative body that can regulate or prescribe the Arthurian genre, this form of intertextuality is perhaps the most pivotal in establishing the Arthurian schema. New innovations through incorporation/expansion and/or revisionist/reinterpretive adaptations that introduce new characters, narratives, norms and conventions are eventually cemented through the repetition and re-adaptation of these innovations until they become established elements of the Arthurian genre.

Metzidakis also argued earlier in his 1984 journal article that, while repetitions are regarded as inferior and unoriginal in most critical circles, readers tend to see the new through the old, and attempt to comprehend and expand their knowledge of the unknown by utilizing models and patterns that are familiar to them. When confronted by something one does not yet know, one relies on previous knowledge in order to arrive at some understanding. Were a literary work to have no predecessor, then the critic would literally be at a loss for words. Metzidakis argues that aspiring critics of literature have two options, to insist on a text's purity and originality and that no one may do anything using those texts, or accept the long tradition of literature to which a given text owes its aesthetic and/or critical dimensions. To insist on the former, one reduces a literary work into a personal fetish, whereas opting for the latter, one realizes that one is using words that can be verified and culturally located in a given society (Metzidakis 50–52). Therefore, anything that is new is generally built upon the old, and literary texts are almost inescapably built upon the previously known and established models. Thus, future Arthurian narratives knowingly or unknowingly build upon earlier pre-established genre conventions and clichés when they cater towards a particular readership.

4.1 *Le Morte d'Arthur*

The most popular and known schema of the Arthurian narrative today is mostly the result of contemporary adaptations of *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) by Sir Thomas Malory (c. 1415–1471) through the repetition/reprising adaptations that stemmed from it. Sir Thomas Malory's adaptation is actually a collection of earlier Arthurian narratives, consisting of Monmouth's work as the base, but also including the Knights of the Round Table and the Grail Quest, forming a unified and chronological narrative. *Le Morte d'Arthur* is an adaptation that superficially performs the functions of an intralingual translation, thus effectively making it a repetition/reprising adaptation, but it has a few personal alterations as well, influenced by Malory's contemporary circumstances.

However, these are not sufficient to make Malory's adaptation a revisionist or reinterpretive adaptation, since he is mainly concerned with repeating earlier narratives and in doing so, further reinforcing the themes that were already present and prevalent in the Arthurian narratives. Malory allegedly compiled his adaptation while he was imprisoned during the War of the Roses, which circumstances had much in common with the Arthurian narrative's setting. Furthermore, I wish to stress that the adaptation of *Le Morte d'Arthur* is not Malory's handiwork alone, as it was published over ten years after Malory's death by the publisher William Caxton (c. 1422–1491), whom had extensively revised Malory's adaptation.

Prior to the discovery of the Caxton's unpublished draft of *Le Morte d'Arthur* in 1934, also known as the Winchester manuscript, which was William Caxton's initial draft of Malory's adaptation, the 1485 adaptation published by Caxton was mainly regarded as Malory's handiwork, until comparisons between the draft and the final work evidenced extensive editing by Caxton. Following the discovery of the Winchester manuscript, newer adaptations after 1934 of *Le Morte d'Arthur* may signify that their adaptation is based on the Winchester manuscript, which means that they had used a source that had allegedly not been edited as extensively by Caxton, therefore effectively being much closer to Malory's handiwork than Caxton's. While Maisonnat et al. have discouraged that the attempts to search for an origin text as futile, authors and publishers

nevertheless appear to find value in such pursuits. There had been interesting debates over the superiority and inferiority of the Winchester manuscript, such as one session during the 1993 Kalamazoo congress. The debate was considered to be inconclusive by its organizer, but nonetheless sparked interesting points of debates for years to come (Salda, 1995).

Nevertheless, *Le Morte d'Arthur* is known today as the version of Arthurian legends most adapted from, but it is most probably not the first attempt at compiling a larger Arthurian narrative utilizing the scattered Arthurian narratives of different authors. As previously stated, there are perceivable influences from the contemporary world that adapts the Arthurian legends each time. In Malory's case, Arthur is depicted as an Englishman, rather than a Romano-Celtic war leader fighting the ancestors the English in Nennius' and Monmouth's account (Kennedy "Visions" 37–38), this particular alteration is significant, as it would and should have been sufficient enough to warrant *Le Morte d'Arthur* as being an expansive or revisionist adaptation, yet it does not cause a significant deviation in the narrative.

Malory's Arthur is the King of England and battles opponents to his rule and incorporates them into his kingdom, very likely based on the current civil war of succession in fifteenth century England that Malory was exposed to and at times partook in it. In light of this, Malory's adaptation could effectively be seen as an attempt to boost the morale of his faction by popularizing an earlier and familiar narrative into a more contemporary setting. While Malory's adaptation could be regarded as a revisionist and/or incorporative adaptation as well, his adaptation mostly performs the function of repetition/reprisal adaptation, which is the main reason it is discussed as one in this chapter despite the obvious overlaps between types of adaptations. This is due to the *Le Morte d'Arthur* not pursuing a dedicated effort at creating a starkly different narrative than its predecessors, nor does it invent anything radically new, it thus mainly performs the function of repetition. Malory simply built his adaptation by combining the scattered Arthurian narratives into a chronologically coherent narrative, with minor alterations that would make it more suitable and appealing for his contemporary readers.

Examples of works that repeated the narrative of *Le Morte d'Arthur* without major alterations are for example, *King Arthur's knights; the tales retold for boys and girls* (1911) by Henry Gilbert (1868–1936), *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* (1953) by Roger Lancelyn Green (1918–1987) and *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976) by John Steinbeck (1902–1968). All three of these works are intralingual translations, with their main goal to present the Arthurian narrative in a modernized language, especially targeting a younger readership such as children so the language used has to be adjusted accordingly.

4.2 Reprisals of *Le Morte d'Arthur*

King Arthur's knights; the tales retold for boys and girls (1911) by children's author Henry Gilbert is an example of intralingual translation, where the earlier text has simply been re-presented in the same language. His work is thus part of a continuum of Arthurian adaptations, but traces itself back to the earlier, pre-Winchester manuscript adaptation that was edited and published by Caxton, since it was the oldest known *Le Morte d'Arthur known* prior to the discovery of the Winchester manuscript in 1943. Intralingual translation in Arthurian literature is generally motivated by the need to either update, revise or alter the language used in an earlier version of a work, which is the case here. Gilbert's preface claimed that his book is an attempt at telling the story of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table in an interesting manner for boys and girls who love adventures. Gilbert acknowledges that there had been earlier publications on these same British tales in a form intended for young audiences, but believed that they were partial in their approach. The author speculates that children have perhaps familiarized themselves earlier with *Le Morte d'Arthur* found on their parent's bookshelves, but have not managed to read the rest of it due to the archaic and difficult language. Therefore, Gilbert aims to present the Arthurian narrative in a manner that would be appealing to the young readers, mainly in the choices of words (Gilbert v–vi). Gilbert's reasoning and choices reflect the earlier claims made by Metzidakis over intralingual re-translation of texts and their intertextual functions.

Steinbeck's unfinished adaptation is based on the Winchester manuscript, which allegedly makes it closer to Malory's adaptation. As Steinbeck's adaptation was made after the discovery of the Winchester manuscript, he differentiated between Caxton's edited *Le Morte d'Arthur* and the manuscript draft. Steinbeck's adaptation was left incomplete and was published posthumously in 1976. Steinbeck, like Gilbert, also reasoned that he wished to present the archaic narrative in present day language, as he acknowledged that not everyone shared his passion and fascination with the more archaic use of language (Steinbeck 1–3). The adaptation's is an intralingual repetition that mainly repeated the contents and structure of the Winchester manuscript, but modernized the language in the work, in addition to being occasionally more psychologically detailed in the narration of its characters in some chapters:

> And Sir Ulfius rode out to look for Merlin.
>
> Now Merlin was a wise and subtle man with strange and secret powers of prophecy and those deceptions of the ordinary and the obvious which are called magic. Merlin knew the winding channels of the human mind, and also he was aware that a simple open man is most receptive when he is mystified, and Merlin delighted in mystery. Therefore, as if by chance, the searching knight Sir Ulfius came upon a ragged beggar in his path who asked him whom he sought.
>
> The knight was not accustomed to be questioned by such a one, and he did not deign to reply. Then the ragged man laughed and said, "There's no need to tell me. I know. You are looking for Merlin. Look no further. I am Merlin."
>
> "You—? You are a beggar," said Sir Ulfius.
>
> Merlin chuckled at his joke. "I am also Merlin," he said. "And if King Uther will promise me the reward I wish, I shall give him what his heart desires. And the gift I wish will be more to his honor and profit than to mine."
>
> Sir Ulfius was wonderstruck and he said, "If this is true and if your demand is reasonable, I can promise that you shall have it."
>
> "Ride back to the king then; I will follow you as quickly as I can."
>
> Then Sir Ulfius was glad, and he turned about and put his horse to great speed until he came at last to the tent where Uther lay ill, and he told the king he had found Merlin. (Steinbeck 17–18)

This contrasts with Malory's adaptation, which lacked an entire paragraph detailing Merlin's characteristics in addition to the slightly longer interaction between Sir Ulfius and him. Steinbeck perhaps perceived the original passage to have been too straightforward and unappealing for his

contemporary readership. Instead, he opted emphasize Merlin's background in much greater detail compared to the original's more simplified narrative flow which can be seen in the following:

> So Ulfius departed. And by adventure he met Merlin in a beggar's array, and there Merlin asked Ulfius whom he sought; and he said he had little ado to tell him.
>
> "Well," said Merlin, "I know whom thou seekest, for thou seekest Merlin; therefore seek no further, for I am he. And if King Uther will well reward me, and be sworn unto me to fulfil my desire, that shall be his honour and profit more than mine, for I shall cause him to have all his desire."
>
> "All this will I undertake," said Ulfius, "that there shall be nothing reasonable but thou shalt have thy desire."
>
> "Well," said Merlin, "he shall have his intent and desire. And therefore," said Merlin, "ride on your way, for I will not be long behind."
>
> Then Ulfius was glad, and rode on more than apace till that he came to King Uther Pendragon, and told him he had met with Merlin. (Malory 25–26)

While Steinbeck's addition was perhaps for cohesive purposes, it could also be considered as an expansive or revisionist characteristic in adaptation. However, the additions remained relatively parallel with the source text's narrative flow, rather than contrasting it greatly, unlike what T.H. White's 1958 revisionist adaptation did, which that will be discussed in the next chapter. Therefore, Steinbeck's psychological additions only fleshed out the Winchester manuscript further, rather than introduced any radically new material into it, therefore it mostly only reprised the source text.

While there are many more instances of repetition in prior bodies of Arthurian literature, this chapter has been quite strict in focusing solely on Malory's adaptation rather than exploring additional works where repetition has taken place. However, this strictness was necessary as Malory's version is the clearest and most widespread example of intertextual repetition in the Arthurian literary field to date. *Le Morte d'Arthur* or a derivative of it has been the basis for many subsequent adaptations known today, and continues to be the prototypical model for any adaptation that aims to capture and present a majority of the Arthurian narratives in a coherent and contained manner. This in turn also means that Malory's adaptation and the subsequent derivatives of it had managed to establish an informal, prototypical model of the Arthurian narrative, through the repeating adaptations reinforcing the model.

Intertextual repetition will more or less always be present in literature, as there are various reasons to conduct an intralingual adaptation for example due to literary works being archaic or otherwise difficult to understand by modern readers. As shown in both Gilbert's and Steinbeck's works, both authors reasoned that the archaic language should be updated into present day English. However, at times the language usage alone is not regarded as a sufficient enough to motivate writers to embark on such an undertaking. Therefore, the next most opportune reasoning would be that the values, virtues and symbolisms present in the older works may be regarded as archaic, difficult to understand or otherwise inappropriate for the contemporary audience. An adaptation that makes major alterations to these aspects of a work is regarded as a revisionist adaptation, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

5 Reinterpretation/revisionism, revisiting and reinventing earlier narratives

This chapter is mainly concerned with revisionism present in Arthurian fiction and literature. The intertextuality of this type of adaptation is much more visible due to their reliance on earlier texts and conventions upon which they build their narratives. Revisionism and reinterpretation in literature will be examined in theoretical texts and then applied to Arthurian literature using three literary works pertaining to the phenomenon in order to exemplify the phenomenon. Revisionist works of Arthurian literature are intertextual adaptations that differ from the previous forms of adaptations in the manner that they reinterpret or reimagine the already established and familiar narratives, plot elements or characters by other authors in some drastic manner as their main focus. These adaptations overlap or intersect with other forms of adaptations such as the aforementioned incorporation/expansion and repetition/reprisal, most notably with the latter. They are closest and most similar to repetition/reprising adaptations due to their tendency to revisit Arthurian narratives, but differ by altering the narrative extensively toward a particular direction that changes the meaning from the predecessor text(s), in the case or revisionist or reinterpretive adaptation it is usually an ideological drive. Unsurprisingly, they can also overlap with incorporation/expansive adaptations due to their tendency to introduce entirely new material, such as characters, settings or plot elements due to the inventive/innovative nature of revisionism. The resulting adaptation's narrative is usually one of a kind as a result of the innovative reimagination as well.

Postmodern Reinterpretations of Fairy Tales: How Applying New Methods Generates New Meanings (2011), a collection of essays on literature edited by Anna Kérchy, focuses on the contemporary fictional repurposings and theoretical revisitings of several fairy tales and fantasies. While Arthurian literature is not mentioned nor included in it, the ideas behind the essays can be applied to Arthurian literature, specifically the collection's third section that engages with the rewriting of myths. The foreword of the collection by Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère posits that fairy tales generally were "stories to think with", meaning that fairy tales engage with their

audience's internal (and contemporary) interpretations of them. Fantasy as a genre is also exploratory in nature, testing the limits and boundaries of their genre and audience (Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère i-iii). I agree and argue that the exploratory nature of the fantasy genre (which fairy tales fall under) makes it highly malleable as well, especially for revisionist adaptations, since it offers the freedom for drastic reinterpretations and even encourages it, especially when the readership more readily suspends their disbelief. At this point and today, the prevalent Arthurian folkloric narratives can more or less be considered to be part of the genre of fantasy, enjoying these aforementioned freedoms and benefits.

Furthermore, I wish to argue that these folkloric narratives and fairy tales were more important in how they engaged with their beholders than their textual content. Folkloric narratives generally contained a traditional lesson and/or moral element, or exhibited contemporary values of the era that it was conceived in, but enshrouding this education under the clever guise of an entertaining narrative. These underlying elements could even be regarded as the text's appellative function or the true goal of the text. However, the message contained within these narratives are generally up to the recipient to interpret, either on their own or with the guidance of the community they belong to, which may lead to these messages being interpreted differently due the passage of time, since their meanings depends on their audience's internal cognitive models. The lead to potentially different outcomes due to an audience's cultural and/or environmental circumstances. It should be noted that due to an aged narrative's purpose and goal are often not entirely clear, especially when there has been a myriad of authors with different goals such as in the case of Arthurian literature. Joosen argued in her chapter from the collection that "Whether such a 'real narrative voice' in a polyphonic genre as the fairy tale can ever be discerned is highly questionable" (Joosen 164). Indeed, I agree that the search for an original intention is difficult, and at times it can end up being inconclusive. Instead of doing so, I would rather encourage to look to creating new meanings and interpretations instead. Addressing the obscurities in meaning and purpose of older fairy tales substituting a new meaning to the text by reimaging it under a new and particular

thematic focus (genre, ideology etc.). Revisiting and reinterpreting these kinds of folkloric narratives from modern and postmodern perspectives have generated new meanings and interpretations for these narratives.

According to Lacy (2009), "the Arthurian legend of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is a remarkably malleable body of material, capable of being expanded, contracted, or radically changed in form to fit the design of an author or the tastes of the public. Since 1900, and far more so since 1950, the legend has been shaped into social and political satire, comedy, science fiction and fantasy, feminist fiction, mysteries and thrillers, comic books and more than a few examples of pure silliness. Both on the printed page and on the screen and stage. In addition, we have a good many basic retellings of the traditional story, most inspired by Malory and recast either for adults or, more often, for young readers. Such adaptations are accomplished with varying degrees of fidelity either to the source or to the presumed spirit of the 'Arthurian period', whether that period is assumed to be the sub-Roman 'Dark Ages' or, more often, the high 'Middle Ages'" (Lacy 120). Authors of these time periods would typically provide different perspectives and contemporary approaches to the Arthurian material that are suitable for the interests of their audiences. In other words, common Arthurian themes are retained in these twentieth and twenty-first century revisionist adaptations, such as Merlin and the sword in the stone, or the relationship between Lancelot and Guinevere, but the process of reaching these narrative outcomes have become much more liberal. Just as how Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* was influenced by the War of the Roses, so too were T.H. White's *The Once and Future King* (1958) and Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* (1983) influenced by the prevalent circumstances of their times. After all, in order to be a revisionist and reinterpretive adaptation, a work has to re-engage with the earlier narratives using a different perspective.

Concluding the theoretical aspect behind revisionist and reinterpretive adaptations, they are intertextual in their reliance and direct interaction with earlier, established narratives and narrative elements. These kinds adaptations tend to exhibit a perspective that contrasts with earlier adaptations, which hints at an author's contemporary values or the prevalent circumstances of their times. This is the result of how fairy tales engage with their readers and encouraging their personal perceptions and interpretation of the tales, as the stated in the foreword of the collection. The differences of revisionist adaptations tend to be in stark contrast to what would be termed as "traditional", but this innovativeness should be welcomed nonetheless due to the fairy tales' and the fantasy genre's malleability. A pure and "traditional" narrative is not necessarily the correct one either, as Joosen has stated that a real, an original, authorative voice in such a polyphonic narrative as fairy tales is highly questionable in the end. After all, folkloric narratives are hardly the work of one person, especially when a majority of them has been transmitted orally for a long time, or in the case of written literature as well, as we have seen with Arthurian literature's intertextuality. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the adaptations of the Arthurian narrative were much more colorful due to their experimental and innovative perspectives.

In short, a revisionist or reinterpretive adaptation is likely to exhibit or address either an author's contemporary values or circumstances, be innovative in their narrative arc compared to earlier adaptations yet retaining familiar major themes and finally, these adaptations tend to be in the nineteenth and twentieth century, but are not exclusive to it, such as Twain's adaptation in 1889 that is part of the works to be discussed next. With these characteristics outlined, they will then be examined and highlighted from the three selected literary works that have adapted the traditional narrative in a revisionist way. For this chapter, the selected literary works to be examined are Mark Twain's satirical adaptation *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1917), T.H. White's pacifistic *the Once and Future King* (1958), Marion Zimmer Bradley's feminist *the Mists of Avalon* (1983). Each of these select works have a significantly different interpretation compared to the traditional adaptations discussed earlier.

5.1 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) is a satirical "what-if" adaptation that narrates the story of Hank Morgan, a nineteenth century Connecticut firearms engineer who is transported back in time into an early Medieval England in the sixth century. The adaptation is mainly satirical, but its thematic focus is strongly revisionist in order to achieve its satire. Twain's adaption playfully experiments with the Arthurian legends, since the story explores new directions by focusing on Hank's interaction with the Arthurian world yet still retaining key narrative milestones, such as the fall of Camelot and Arthur's death (Keebaugh, 2007).

In Twain's adaptation there are three plot elements that stand out in particular, which could be perceived as either Twain's own interests or elements that hold some value for his contemporary audience, which are worth analyzing for further insight. First, Hank holds contempt for the privileged gentry and sympathy for the peasantry, providing them with the means to gain an advantage against the gentry, this is reminiscent of the reoccurring class conflicts that were prevalent during the previous eighteenth century. Second, Hank's attempts at abolishing slavery in Arthur's kingdom, which corresponds to the abolishment of slavery in the United States in 1865, an event that took place during Twain's own lifetime. Lastly, the final clash between Hank's loyalists and the gentry, where Hank's side was armed with technologically superior weapons against his more "primitive" medieval opponents, is an interesting juxtaposition. This either highlighting the potential advantages of the Industrial Revolution, or showcases the brutality of it, or even both. In any case, the adaptation vividly explores the effects of modern nineteenth century industrialism and ideologies in a medieval setting as a major and central theme.

Hank definitely intends to instill a modern way of life and thinking into the medieval population, for example, by trying and successfully managing to abolish slavery through a few unfortunate mishaps together with Arthur. Hank manages to convince Arthur to join him in seeing how the peasantry live by disguising themselves as peasants, perhaps in order to try and have him see his kingdom from a different view. This turns awry however, and they are both captured and

about to be sold off as slaves, but the pair are eventually saved by Arthur's loyalists. The entire ordeal convinces Arthur to abolish slavery (Twain 334–50), an action that would most likely please the contemporary American audience familiar with the current era reforms during Twain's time. This plot element is notable in the regard that, while in pre-Norman England, slavery was widely commonplace and mundane, abolishing slavery is a more recent "innovation", and should be especially familiar for the American audience. Near the end of the adaptation, the topic of abolishing slavery is brought up once again and depicted as a positive change, in addition to juxtaposing it with other beneficial modern innovations:

> Slavery was dead and gone; all men were equal before the law; taxation had been equalized. The telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph, the type-writer, the sewing-machine, and all the thousand willing and handy servants of steam and electricity were working their way into favor. We had a steamboat or two on the Thames, we had steam war-ships, and the beginnings of a steam commercial marine; … (Twain 398)

In addition, Hank also expresses modern sentiments and philosophies, particularly against religion and the gentry, which eventually brings him and his allies into conflict with the Catholic church and its allies. Early on in the adaptation, Hank utilizes his industrialized knowledge and secretly builds factories in order to produce modern inventions to his advantage for the upcoming conflict, recruiting the peasantry while generally avoiding the genteel classes throughout the narrative:

> I was pretty well satisfied with what I had already accomplished. In various quiet nooks and corners I had the beginnings of all sorts of industries under way—nuclei of future vast factories, the iron and steel missionaries of my future civilization. In these were gathered together the brightest young minds I could find, and I kept agents out raking the country for more, all the time. I was training a crowd of ignorant folk into experts—experts in every sort of handiwork and scientific calling. These nurseries of mine went smoothly and privately along undisturbed in their obscure country retreats, for nobody was allowed to come into their precincts without a special permit—for I was afraid of the Church. (Twain 76–77)

Hank finally reveals his machinations to the entire nation and world after successfully defeating the knights of England in battle using his technologically superior innovations such as firearms and explosives, marking a turning point in the narrative where instead of hiding his activities and he is now effectively in control of the entire nation:

> When I broke the back of the knight-errantry that time, I no longer felt obliged to work in secret. So, the very next day I exposed my hidden schools, my mines, and my vast system of clandestine factories and work-shops to an astonished world. That is to say, I exposed the nineteenth century to the inspection of the sixth. (Twain 397)

However, Hank's dominance does not last, since near the end of the narrative, a majority of his trusted allies are slain in a conflict between Arthur and Lancelot, which significantly weakened his position in the country. At this point, the narrative overlaps with earlier Arthurian narratives, of how Guinevere was to be burned at the stake and how Lancelot rescues her but slays numerous knights in his attempt, including Gawain's two brothers Gaheris and Gareth. This prompts Gawain to urge Arthur to accompany him to besiege Lancelot's castle in his homeland, allowing Mordred to freely usurp the throne back in England, which results in Arthur's death when he returns to reclaim it, robbing Hank of his most valuable supporter.

Afterwards, the plot diverges once again. The gentry and most of the nation now turn against Hank and his loyalists due to the interdict placed upon Mordred for his usurpation by the Catholic Church also included Hank, as they feared that Hank had grown too powerful, in addition to the convenience of confusion caused by the civil war. Hank and his loyalists then retreat into a cave that is armed with modern weaponry such as automatic machineguns and electrical fences. Despite the support of the Catholic Church and the majority of the English nation. Hank's side, numbering fewer than a hundred, manages to fend them off with little difficulty, since the Church had issued a ban on utilizing electricity or any of the nineteenth century innovations (Twain 413–27). This forced technological juxtaposition between, industrialized weapons of war being used against technologically inferior but numerically superior opponents that ultimately loses, seemingly invokes imperialistic imageries. Regardless, Hank is mortally wounded toward the end and placed into a deep sleep by Merlin, fated to not awaken until thirteen centuries later, reminiscent of the fate of Arthur and concluding the main narrative in medieval England.

In conclusion, Twain took a satirical approach in his revisionist adaptation, and there are perceivable elements of industrialism and nineteenth century values throughout his entire work, especially industrialism which was a contemporary phenomenon in Twain's lifetime. The class

struggles in the adaptation warrants discussion as well, since it could be seen as Twain highlighting the similar class struggles of industrial age with the medieval age. The contrasts between the peasantry and the gentry in feudalism is similar to the characteristics of the working-class and their more privileged counterparts in industrialism. Twain's work should be seen as a form of social commentary of the popular values and virtues of his contemporary life during the highly industrialized late nineteenth century, where the egalitarian social structure is the way of the future in juxtaposition to the aristocratic and monarchical governments of the past. After all, folkloric narratives engage with their contemporary readers and authors too are part of them. The adaptation has plot elements that appeal to Twain's contemporary readerships, particularly the abolition of slavery is an element that definitely has its appeal towards an Anglophone audience of the nineteenth century, especially in post-American Civil War (1861–1865) North America. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the contents of a text do not necessarily reflect the author's internal values, since authors are often "protean" in their writing, capable of adapting and blending into various genres and styles. This is especially true in the case of Twain's satirical adaptation, so one should be cautious of mistaking the views expressed in the adaptation by Hank (or the narrator) to be that of Twain's. Next, the adaptation did retain major plot events and developments from earlier works, which rely on a reader's intertextual knowledge to make the connection, but innovated with the rest of the narrative. Such as the Grail quest, Guinevere and Lancelot's affair and the outcome of the battle at Camlann, all of which are present in earlier adaptations of the Arthurian narrative, but with Hank being present or involved with in some manner that alters it slightly or significantly. While the adaptation was not part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, since it was authored during the final years of the eighteenth century, its contributions and innovativeness were valuable enough that it had been re-adapted multiple times in the following centuries of Arthurian fiction.

5.2 *The Once and Future King*

T.H. White's *The Once and Future King (1958)* is mainly an adaptation of Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur (1485)*, since White greatly admired Malory's work and dedicated a short text at the beginning of his work. White claims to have mostly kept the original work intact and presents it as Malory's, while narrating as himself. However, White's adaptation has a few key differences to the source work, reasoning that he is presenting it to a modern audience and thus needs to modify it somewhat, similar to Gilbert and Steinbeck that was discussed earlier, thus White's adaptation would have been a reprisal of Malory's work. However, it is actually more of a revisionist adaptation, since by comparing White's and Malory's adaptations with one another, a clear ideological difference can be perceived between them, in addition to an inversion of plot elements. Arthur's past and childhood are explored in much greater detail in White's narrative, with his death left out, whereas Arthur's childhood and past are much less detailed in Malory's version.

White portrays Arthur as a troubled monarch, who is highly reluctant to use violence or confrontations in order to settle disputes. whereas Malory's narrative was more about Arthur's physical prowess. White's Arthur is mostly tormented by challenges that are not physical in nature. Lancelot also faced his own dilemmas owed to his psyche as well despite his unmatched martial prowess, which contrasts with Malory's focus on martial prowess alone. White ended the narrative just before the Battle of Camlann takes place and left out Arthur's journey to Avalon as well, whereas, Malory's narrative left out Arthur's younger years and concentrated on his time as king and his glorious end. Should we consider the two narratives of equal length, then it would seem that White left out the final battle and in order to make use of the freed-up space to instead expand upon Arthur's beginnings in much greater detail, effectively overlapping as an expansive adaptational technique in addition inverting the narrative somewhat from Malory's. White's adaptation does not glorify violence or warfare in any way, and revises the Arthurian narrative from a much more pacifistic point of view.

White's Arthur is portrayed as an unconventional military leader, preferring to avoid unnecessary bloodshed and ending a conflict as peacefully as possible, or if that is not possible, then soon as possible. Rather than engaging in the same customary military conventions that his predecessors have internalized, Arthur instead used them to his advantage which, are described as atrocities in White's adaptation. In the conflict with the eleven kings, Arthur chose to attack at night and he also chose to go directly for their leadership instead, ignoring their rank and file (referred to as kerns) in order to minimize casualties and potentially end the conflict as soon as possible:

> Arthur began with an atrocity and continued with other atrocities. The first one was that he did not wait for the fashionable hour. He ought to have marshalled his Battle opposite Lot's, … Instead, he attacked by night. In the darkness, with a warwhoop – deplorable and ungentlemanly tactics … The King's second atrocity was that he neglected the kerns themselves. … He wished them no particular harm – concentrating his indignation upon the leaders who had seduced their addled pates… In the meantime his business was with the leaders – and, as the day dawned, the atrociousness of his conduct became apparent. … He ought to have charged this screen of terrified men, dealing them an enormous execution. Instead, he neglected them. He galloped through the infantry as if they were not his enemies at all – not even troubling to strike at them – pressing his charge against the armoured core itself. The infantry, for their part, accepted the mercy only too thankfully. (White, vol. 2, chapter xii)

This is in contrast with Malory's adaptation and descriptions of events of the same battle, where Arthur's and his knight's military actions are described in an admirable manner. Malory's Arthur is much more gruesome and violent and makes no mentions of him attempting to avoid taking a life while on the battlefield:

> So forthwith King Arthur set upon them in their lodging. And Sir Baudwin, Sir Kay, and Sir Brastias slew on the right hand and on the left hand that it was marvel; and always King Arthur on horseback laid on with a sword and did marvellous deeds of arms, that many of the kings had great joy of his deeds and hardiness. … Then he drew his sword Excalibur, but it was so bright in his enemies' eyes that it gave light like thirty torches. And therewith he put them aback, and slew much people. … And King Arthur was so bloody that by his shield there might no man know him, for all was blood and brains that stuck on his sword and on his shield. And as King Arthur looked beside him he saw a knight that was passingly well horsed; and therewith King Arthur ran to him and smote him on the helm that his sword went unto his teeth, and the knight sank down to the earth dead. … (Malory 30–32)

Arthur's mental character outside the fields of battle differed between the adaptations as well. In Malory's adaptation, Arthur is portrayed to be more kingly and appeared to be comfortable or

rehearsed, despite the suddenness of his situation when it was discovered that he drew the sword from the stone and was thus rightfully king:

> "Sir," said Ector unto Arthur, "will ye be my good and gracious lord when ye are king?"
>
> "Else were I to blame," said Arthur, "… And if ever it be God's will that I be king as ye say, ye shall desire of me what I may do, and I shall not fail you—God forbid I should fail you!"
>
> "Sir,"said Sir Ector, "I will ask no more of you, but that ye will make my son, your foster brother, Sir Kay, seneschal of all your lands."
>
> "That shall be done," said Arthur, "and more, by the faith of my body, that never man shall have that office but he, while he and I live." (Malory 28–29)

White's Arthur is also much more emotional and reluctant, since the adaptation aimed at providing further depth into Arthur's mental character, as seen in the following extract of the same occasion as the previous one:

> "Sir," said Sir Ector, without looking up, although he was speaking to his own boy.
>
> "Please do not do this, father," said the Wart, kneeling down also. "Let me help you up, Sir Ector, because you are making me unhappy." …
>
> "Sir," said Sir Ector humbly, "will ye be my good and gracious lord when ye are King? … I will ask no more of you but that you will make my son, your foster—brother, Sir Kay, seneschal of all your lands?"
>
> Kay was kneeling down too, and it was more than the Wart could bear.
>
> "Oh, do stop," he cried. "Of course he can be seneschal, if I have got to be this King, and, oh, father, don't kneel down like that, because it breaks my heart. Please get up, Sir Ector, and don't make everything so horrible. Oh, dear, oh, dear, I wish I had never seen that filthy sword at all."
>
> And the Wart also burst into tears. (White, vol.1, chapter xxiii)

As shown, White's adaptation contrasts greatly with Malory's adaptation, therefore it is not a reprising adaptation like Gilbert's and Steinbeck's like White had purported it to be. These differences have their potential reasons as well, as earlier stated, fairy tales tend to engage with their beholders and the contemporary circumstances of the authors themselves. Malory was a knight during the War of the Roses, where there were two factions fighting over the order of succession and fighting for a cause was glorious, which influenced his adaptation (Tucker 65–68). White was a pacifistic writer who had lived through the World Wars, thus themes of pacifism and an aversion to conflict is present in his adaptation (Hadfield 208).

Therefore, it can be concluded that White does not share the same values as Malory did when he adapted *Le Morte d'Arthur* and ended up revising it instead, evident in the novel's different view of chivalry and war. To Malory, chivalry was about personal prowess whereas for White it was about individual clarity, revealing the internal values and characters of Malory and White. Malory was a knight struggling to contribute to the war effort, whereas White was a pacifist weary of warfare, and WW1 had effectively removed any sense of glory in war and replaced it with the horrors of warfare, which White attempted to convey in his adaptation. While White had a great deal of respect and reverence for Sir Thomas Malory's work, he did not appear to agree with Malory's militaristic values. He instead decided to depict King Arthur as a gentle and brave king who is much less warlike than his earlier version. Overall, it can be concluded that White's narrative is a revisionist retelling of *Le Morte d'Arthur* from a different point of view, one focusing away from Arthur's physical prowess and engaging more with his mental development and struggles instead.

5.3 *The Mists of Avalon*

The Mists of Avalon (1983) is a feminist adaptation of the Arthurian narrative by Marion Zimmer Bradley. The adaptation narrates the Arthurian events mainly from the viewpoint of the female characters, most notably its main character Morgan le Faye, or referred to as Morgaine in this adaptation. Morgan le Faye is nowadays generally regarded as a villain in traditional Arthurian tales starting with *Le Morte d'Arthur*, but she was originally either a benevolent or ambivalent character, which should be an interesting perspective into this study. According to Joosen, to feminist theorists argue that female characters in fairy tales are often reportrayed as villainous by male authors in subsequent revisions, as was the case of female characters in numerous fairy tales by the Brothers Grimms, which were originally from their female friends (Joosen 163). Joosen further stresses that fairy tales and storytelling are semiotically a female art, thus leading to the justification of feminist reinterpretations or readaptations of folkloric narratives to not just be a different perspective into the

fairy tales, but also potentially being the reclamation or reconstruction of their narratives that had been authored by male authors. She also concludes that "Typical of the history of fairy tales is that female tales survive in the writings of men." (Joosen, 2011). Thus, it would be interesting to study the *The Mists of Avalon*'s narrative in comparison the other Arthurian literature.

Even if one is skeptical of whether or not the claim regarding fairy tales being of female origin being true, I believe it will nonetheless be an interesting and refreshing new perspective into the Arthurian narratives. So far, most of the major Arthurian narratives previously discussed have been almost entirely authored by male authors. For example, the narrative of *Le Morte d'Arthur* is chiefly masculine, as it has a very masculine-orientated focus and agenda. With the female characters serving mainly as either villains, side characters or being otherwise subordinated to the male characters and their pursuits. Guinevere was only briefly Arthur's object of desire in earlier narratives and was later repurposed to serve as a cause of strife between Lancelot and Arthur in later adaptations after *Historia Regum Britanniae*. The Lady of the Lake assisted Arthur by providing him with Excalibur and later aiding him in retrieving it from Accolon, one of Arthur's knights, who had been deceived by Morgan le Fay into fighting against Arthur.

The *Mists of Avalon* mainly narrates from the viewpoint of the female characters within the Arthurian tales, providing them with their own individual narratives, such as Morgaine and Gwenhwyfar, or known to us as Guinevere. The main character, Morgaine, is depicted as a Celtic priestess who is torn between saving her traditional Celtic culture and adhering to the ever-growing influence of Christianity upon her life. The book consists of four distinct parts. The first part tells of Morgaine and her early life, which coincides with Uther Pendragon's rule and how her father is killed in battle and the meeting of a young Arthur. The second part narrates about the time when she is a lady-in-waiting for Gwenhwyfar, Arthur's wife, and her life in the court of Camelot. The third part narrates her expulsion from Camelot to live away in Wales and her ordeals there. Finally, the last part is when her son Gwydion, is knighted as Mordred, eventually stages a revolt and is slain, in

addition to rending Camelot asunder and killing Arthur, after which Morgaine takes Arthur to Avalon to be buried.

Interestingly, unlike the previous narratives, Mordred, called Gwydion in this adaptation, is portrayed to be Morgan le Faye's and Arthur's son, rather than Morgause's and Arthur's. Morgause is depicted as Morgan's aunt instead of being her sister, and tricks Morgan into letting her raise Mordred as her own son instead. This reprises Mordred's more traditional and established role in the Arthurian tales, rebounding the deviation as seen in the following two extracts:

> She thought for a moment of her little son, Gwydion. He hardly knew her now; when she would have picked him up and petted him, he fought and struggled to go to his fostermother. … He did not even know he was her son, he would grow up to think himself one of Morgause's brood. Morgaine was content to have it so, but she could not stifle her reluctant sorrow. (Zimmer Bradley, vol. 2, chapter 6)
>
> Lancelet laid his hands on Gwydion's brow. "I confer on you the honor of a Companion of the Round Table, by permission of our king. Serve him always, and since you have won this honor by craft rather than brute strength though indeed you have shown that too, well enough-I name you among this company, not Gwydion, but Mordred. Rise, sir Mordred, and take your place among the Companions of Arthur." Gwydion-no, Mordred, Morgause remembered; for the naming of a Companion was a rite not much less serious than baptism-rose and heartily returned Lancelet's embrace. He seemed deeply moved, almost unhearing the cheers and applause. His voice broke as he said, "Now I have won the prize of the day, whoever is judged winner in these games, my lord Lancelet." (Zimmer Bradley, vol. 4, chapter 5)

This keeps in line with what was earlier stated regarding how revisionist adaptations tend to retain some elements of the works that they have reinterpreted. While the narrative clearly adheres to the traditional plot elements of an Arthurian tale and has numerous familiar characters from the Arthurian legends, the events that take place and the characters differ from previous Arthurian adaptions or reinterpretations. As an additional peculiarity, the friction between Christianity and the Celtic culture is evident and a popular topic within the narration, whereas in earlier works Christian values were championed strongly and there were hardly any mentions of other religious or cultural opponents to Christianity:

> In my time I have been called many things: sister, lover, priestess, wise-woman, queen. Now in truth I have come to be wise-woman, and a time may come when these things may need to be known. But in sober truth, I think it is the Christians who will tell the last tale. For ever the world of Fairy drifts further from the world in which the Christ

> holds sway. I have no quarrel with the Christ, only with his priests, who call the Great Goddess a demon and deny that she ever held power in this world. At best, they say that her power was of Satan. Or else they clothe her in the blue robe of the Lady of Nazareth-who indeed had power in her way, too-and say that she was ever virgin. But what can a virgin know of the sorrows and travail of mankind? And now, when the world has changed, and Arthur-my brother, my lover, king who was and king who shall be-lies dead (the common folk say sleeping) in the Holy Isle of Avalon, the tale should be told as it was before the priests of the White Christ came to cover it all with their saints and legends. (Zimmer Bradley, prologue)

This is an interesting and welcome plot element, as historically, Arthur was likely to have been a Celtic leader, yet throughout the Arthurian narratives, such as Monmouth's and Malory's adaptations, Christian motifs and imageries are strongly and repeatedly invoked by the characters. Arthur's likely Celtic heritage is replaced with depictions of him as a Christian Englishman and characters or elements from insular mythology are repurposed and presented into religiously unproblematic positions, giving their cultural origins no prominence. Thus, not only does *the Mists of Avalon* potentially reconstruct a feminine narrative, but it also potentially unearthed folkloric/mythological elements that clashed with the prevalent religious officials that have since been edited out in subsequent adaptations. Studying how Christian motifs were introduced into Arthurian narratives and potentially reconstructing the insular aspects that might have been omitted may be a topic worth pursuing for future research, but the prerequisite research and discoveries would fall outside the scope of this thesis at this point, so it will not be pursued further.

All in all, *the Mists of Avalon* exhibits the same meta-characteristics of revisionist/reinterpretive adaptations just like as Twain's and White's have. It had established an alternative direction for the narrative, but ultimately retained the major plot developments and events. It had also rebounded Morgan le Fay's character back to her earlier Galfridian depictions as benevolent or at least ambivalent character, sidelining the later portrayals of her as a villainess. In addition to Morgan, the other female characters were also explored in much greater depth, vastly so when compared to earlier works such as *Le Morte d'Arthur*'s Guinevere who, despite her prominence, was a fairly shallow character in the end, as her psychological inner workings were mainly unexplored, mainly appearing to exist only to fulfill the role of a wife for Arthur in addition

to being repurposed for causing even more strife in later adaptations after Monmouth's initial work. Had Zimmer Bradley been familiar with Joosen's theory regarding how villainous folkloric female characters came to be, then she would had contributed to Joosen's theory by managing to reconstruct a non-villainous Morgan le Fay successfully, as an earlier, benevolent version of her had existed in *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Furthermore, while Zimmer Bradley's adaptation is more likely to have been a feminist revisionist/reinterpretive adaptation rather than a reconstruction of an originally feminine narrative, it is perhaps more valuable for its reconstruction of insular elements that might have been omitted in later Arthurian narratives, since Christian themes and motifs seemed highly out of place to me whenever they are invoked in older Arthurian narratives. In conclusion, the adaptation is feminist revision/reinterpretation rather than reconstruction, but a fairly convincing Celtic reconstruction.

6 Conclusion

Adaptations are the most prominent end products of intertextuality in Arthurian literature and have been vital in shaping the it into what it is today. The interactions between literary works are just one aspect of intertextuality itself, and the intertextual elements present in a text, such as references to other texts provide a text additional meanings. The intertextual dynamics of an Arthurian narrative is immensely vast due to it partaking in a near millennia long history of Arthurian literary traditions. Depending on how heavily a text relies on the texts that it references, such as directly addressing another text for example in book reviews, the more important the intertextual connection is to the text's meaning and interpretation. The opposite of this would be through implicit allusions in a text, which provide a text additional depth and meaning, but are not as necessary for the text's cohesion. The decisions on which manner of adaptation and intertextual reliance an author chooses happens before the production of the literary work themselves, occurring in-between the pre-existing adaptations and the adaptation to come. The previous chapters have listed the three main forms of adaptations which perform important functions in the establishment and evolution of the Arthurian narrative.

Expansion and *incorporation* as forms of adaptations have introduced new material into the Arthurian material and are especially important for a literary genre in its earlier stages. Expansion generally involves the invention of entirely new narrative elements, such as characters, plot elements and narratives that build upon or contribute to an earlier narrative. Incorporation on the other hand utilizes pre-existing narrative elements and incorporates them as part of another narrative. These two creative methods can occur on a large scale, such as the incorporation or invention of an entire narrative as Chretien de Troyes had done, or on a smaller scale through the creation of individual characters for example like Monmouth had done with Myrddin, to name a few. Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae incorporated an earlier account by Nennius into its narrative, but in doing so it (perhaps unknowingly) began the establishment of an Arthurian narrative. The Arthurian legends are significant enough that even non-literary agents have tried to

incorporate themselves as part of them, such as the case of Glastonbury Abbey's and the Tudor's attempts. While both forms could be regarded as separate forms of adaptations, I have grouped them together into one chapter due to how closely related they are in their functions as sources of entirely new material for the Arthurian narrative.

Unlike the previous, *repetition* or *reprisal* does not introduce anything radically new into the discourse. While seemingly not as productive as *expansion* or *incorporation*, reprising adaptations perform the important function of reinforcing certain narrative elements and eventually leads to the establishment of an Arthurian narrative schema or genre. This effectively cements and propagates the contributions that *expansion* and *incorporation* had made, therefore it is worth being careful to not mistake their lack of creativity as unproductive. Furthermore, reprising adaptations of the Arthurian narrative effectively update a population's awareness of the Arthurian legends. In addition to this, they are also opportunities for authors to modernize an earlier narrative's language through intralingual translation, such as how Gilbert and Steinbeck had mainly done with Malory's adaptation. Should a modernization surpass the language content of a narrative and also touch upon the values present in an earlier narrative by reinterpreting and representing them that differs the source work, then it is no longer a mere reprising adaptation, but a *revisionist* or *reinterpretive* adaptation.

Revisionist and *reinterpretive* adaptations are similar to the previous in that they also tend to reprise an earlier narrative, but unlike a reprising narrative, they often introduce new elements by approaching an earlier narrative from a new perspective that reinterprets the narrative(s). Revisionist and reinterpretive adaptations provide opportunities for refreshing new perspectives of the pre-existing literary works that can stimulate discussion in many fields, since they typically tackle and/or involve contemporary matters that are of interest to consumers and critics alike. The works selected for this thesis in order to exemplify this form of adaptation were Twain's satirical adaptation, White's pacifistic adaptation and Zimmer Bradley's feminist adaptation. Twain's adaptation satirized his contemporary late-nineteenth century society, while White's adaptation was

a pacifistic approach to the Arthurian narrative with post-World War influences and lastly Zimmer Bradley's adaptation is exceptional for its much stronger deviation from the more traditional Arthurian narratives, approaching them from a feminist point of view in addition to casting cultural clashes between religion and insular traditions. Each of these works were significant in how they reflected their contemporary world's matters, similar to how Malory's work also reflected his own, as well, which strongly overlapped with this type of adaptation in addition to being a reprising adaptation as well.

So far, this thesis has attempted to present the types of adaptations and the adaptations themselves as nonconcurrent and separate from each other. The reality is that most, if not all, adaptations overlap somewhat more or less with one or more forms of adaptation. As seen in how Monmouth both incorporated and revised Myrddin's character and omitted his madness, or how Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* consisted of incorporated and revised the narratives from Monmouth, de Troyes and many other tales with uncertain authorship. The adaptation's revisionist additions were in the form of casting Arthur as an Englishman and the thematic focus was more martially orientated, corresponding to Malory's own contemporary environment during the English civil war. The narrative could even be argued to be a reprising adaptation as well, since it repeats the narratives that it incorporated and therefore helped to cement and establish them which later adaptations of *Le Morte d'Arthur* propagated. Later adaptations that reprise the Malory's adaptation also reprises its overlaps if they do not revise its ideological contents. This can be assumed to be true for most if not all literary works of the Arthurian legends, as authors who adapt them also draw upon established conventions, invoking the past associations of the narratives, knowingly or unknowingly, thus their contributions and the contents of their adaptations are part of an intertextual continuity. Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that there is a dominant form of adaptation that an adaptation seeks to achieve at a given time. An adaptation's type can be determined from a text's main purpose and intention that it aims to fulfill, and if that is not possible, then the effect it achieved in its particular readership should be taken into consideration instead.

The polyphonic nature of folkloric narratives such as the Arthurian legends causes its authorial voice and ultimate purpose to be murky, especially when it comes to earlier narratives. This is typical of medieval authorship and literature as well, where no author is regarded as an owner of a text. Due to the purpose of an adaptation not always being entirely clear from the its text alone, it is thus perhaps better to study the reactions of the audience instead. This will likely yield much better results in order to better understand the introspective effects that folkloric texts produce, in the absence of an author's intentions. The result may not be what the original authors may have intended, but after all, fairy tales are meant to engage with a reader's own perceptions of its contents and stimulate interpretation. This then leads to us to the current era of the Arthurian legends, where there are numerous adaptations that aim to reinterpret or re-present the legends in present day twenty-first century understandings of the Arthurian legends.

To conclude, the main outcome of this thesis is that Arthurian literature has indeed been shaped by multiple hands through intertextual processes, based on the insights gained from close readings of the selected Arthurian narratives, and taking into account the literary backgrounds of the Arthurian texts. The methods an author may have used to achieve these intertextual adaptations are many, which this thesis has attempted to outline in a rather oversimplified and narrow manner, which hardly does the literary works much justice. Therefore, there three considerations for future research in this specific field based on this thesis. First, one could for example address and overcome these narrow and oversimplified limitations, especially seen how often the adaptations overlapped. Source material is immensely vast that the thesis struggles to grasp, difficulties in being comprehensive. Earlier on in this thesis, expansion and incorporation were separate topics, but due to time and space constraints and their categorical overlaps, they had been combined. Particularly, older narratives that fell outside the scope of this research, such as the older insular narratives (Celtic and Welsh), which could very well have been included into this study, since a significant portion of the thesis relied on additions from Norman French narratives and authors (most notably de Troyes). A continuation of this thesis could for example, attempt to address these limitations

more comprehensively, such as by expanding into more categories or sub-categories of adaptations that could account for the categorical overlaps in much better capacity. Next, a topic that was dropped earlier on during this thesis there was a consideration for discussing and studying literary conventions from the medieval period had been affected by the introduction of copyrights. Lastly, a potential topic that I would encourage for future research could for example, be the study of how much pre-Galfridian insular narratives have influenced and contributed to the Arthurian narrative that it is today. After all, modern authors may be aware or unaware of the intricate details of the pre-Galfridian narratives, yet no doubt have partaken in it as part of a literary continuity, (as part of the points raised by regarding an author's indebtedness to previous authors and on matters of authorial responsibility by Genette). This approach is more historiographical and may face difficulties in procuring the required literary sources, however, in addition to difficulties working with apocryphal sources.

All in all, the intertextual phenomenon of adaptation of the Arthurian legends is quite alive and well. As the older poets and authors adapted and expanded upon the Nennius' and Monmouth's accounts, so too do modern authors, creators and film directors adapt and expand upon these same accounts through later adaptations as part of a continuity. At times they attempt to reiterate the popular Arthurian traditions through reprisal, at others they try and present it in a new fashion or perspective through revision/reinterpretation. Ever since *Historia Regum Britanniae* (and very likely before it), "Arthur" had been shaped and reshaped by different writers into many different individuals in numerous different settings that suit their creator's goals. Arthur has been a Romano-Celtic war leader, an Anglo-Norman king, among others. Therefore, Arthurian texts have indeed been shaped and reshaped by different authors from different time periods into versions that either included their own worldviews or agendas. These adaptations have sought to accomplish some particular goal or purpose, or may have simply wished to dress the Arthurian legends up in a new and refreshing setting.

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