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[Re]Visiting the Rime: A Case Study of Adaptation as Process and Product with The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

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[Re]Visiting the Rime: A Case Study of Adaptation as Process and Product with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in English

by

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This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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Abstract

This thesis combines adaptation theory with ecology to examine Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) and its adaptations; it argues further combinations of adaptation with evolutionary theory and ecological ideas could allow for a better interpretation of many texts. The adaptation *Rime of the Modern Mariner* (2011) by Nick Hayes and the appropriation *Perelandra* (1943) by C.S. Lewis will also be present in individual chapters to examine the texts' interactions with each other as they evolve and how each work represents the combined theory.

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Introduction

A man is trapped within an ocean amidst a great journey, unable to obtain peace. His lack of rest torments him, and the presence of death is a constant burden. He overcomes these agonies only when he relinquishes any prejudice he nurtured towards a creature because of its distasteful appearance. The pinnacle moment is an essential device in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), as the blessing of the water snakes and his subsequent rest initiates the sailor's return to land. The sympathetic turn is one of the key ingredients for adaptations of the Gothic poem, and Nick Hayes in his graphic novel *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* (2012) reworks the moment so that a passenger on a vessel surrounded by the dead crew, stranded amidst a junk island, is overwhelmed when a jellyfish's heartbeat ceases. Hayes transforms the entire poem so the reader experiences an eco-fable set in our current period. In a time rife with terms such as "global warming" and "climate change" and "carbon footprint," the journey from Coleridge's to Hayes's pen is a natural – practically evolutionary – growth that reflects the circumstances in which the narrative was written.

Another more distant adaptation has branched out rapidly, growing in a similar pattern, yet the author guides the narrative in a separate direction. In 1943, C.S. Lewis published the second novel in his science-fiction trilogy, *Perelandra*, which contains its own sympathetic turn in a story featuring a singular mariner journeying across an oceanic planet before he returns to earth as a prophet to warn the populous of an impending spiritual battle. Hayes opts to address ecological concerns with panels of plastic spread throughout the water, mimicking actual photographs, while Lewis's own novel was written in an era with Orwellian fears concerning warfare and environmental destruction. At the same time, Coleridge's own poem reflects the period's obsession with death and Romantic notions of the conflict between industrialism and

nature, and a reader can also pair certain passages with portions of the travel logs published by Captain James Cook. *All* authors have produced texts indicative of their own environment, and in doing so we now have an interesting model of adaptation. In this project, I examine these three works as natural extensions of their environment while considering how the adjustments to the narrative in Hayes's and Lewis's adaptations tie closely with current adaptation theory, which proposes that the term “adaptation” should be considered both a process and product.

The version of adaptation I am describing is best explained in Linda Hutcheon's and Bortolotti's “On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success' – Biologically” (2007). Hutcheon and Bortolotti re-examine the critical thought which uses fidelity as the ultimate goal and thus creates a hierarchical system where a work’s perceived worth is forever compare to and limited by the “original” (443). The two opt to approach the subject by combining adaptation with evolutionary theory, particularly Richard Dawkin's work on memes and repetition. Using a biological framework, where change is sometimes anticipated and other times necessary for survival, they offer fresh insight in their study:

Our principal aim has been to use biological concepts in a heuristic manner to help free narrative adaptation theory from the conceptual restrictions of a misleading evaluative fidelity discourse and thus to open up a new way of thinking about the human desire to tell and retell certain stories, resetting them in wildly different times and places, and using a wide diversity of media to do so. (454)

Adaptations are thus capable of producing rich and varied works, such as a graphic novel – using the “wide diversity of media” - which leaps forward about two hundred years to reposition the mariner as a materialist to address the problems arising from a consumer culture rather than an industrial invasion. Hutcheon and Bortolotti believe that the diversity narratives produce as they are reshaped by adapters is something to be celebrated, as they clearly point out that “...biology does not judge adaptations in terms of fidelity to the 'original'; indeed, that is not the point at all.

Biology can celebrate the diversity of life forms, yet at the same time recognize that they come from a common origin” (445). The connections I expound upon between Lewis's and Hayes's works and Coleridge's poem follow this thought. Also, while tracking the movement from Coleridge to his adaptations is enjoyable, examining how the environment shaped Coleridge's work is equally as rewarding and encapsulates Hutcheon's and Bortolotti's sentiment that “By their very existence, adaptations remind us there is not such a thing as an autonomous text or an original genius that can transcend history, either public or private. They also affirm, however, that this fact is not to be lamented.” (111)

Part of their theorizing process is to pair adaptation with Darwinian evolution. For instance, identifying a successful adaptation should be similar to the qualities needed for survival in the animal kingdom. Re-purposing those qualities for adaptation, they write, “The first is clearly longevity, though it is the least important; what is more important is fecundity. For adaptations, the sheer number of them or the proven appeal across cultures might qualify as evidence of this quality” (167). The final is “copying-fidelity”, which is not connected to fidelity criticism as you might initially think, but for an adaptation to succeed it must be “experienced *as an adaptation*” (167, emphasis in the original). An awareness of the relationship between the adapted text and the text it is reworking is necessary, even if the reader encounters the adaptation *first*, perhaps with no intention of seeking out the original text. Unlike the silent citations of intertextuality or appropriations, an adaptation – to be considered an adaptation – must be upfront. Pairing literature with nature with environmental development is not new; ecology painstakingly considers the relationship of texts with the environment. But, Hutcheon and Bortolotti by carefully highlighting the relationship between adaptations and originals while pairing it biological success transform an abstract concept into a scientific process:

Stories, in a manner parallel to genes, replicate; the adaptations of both evolve with changing environments. Our hope is that biological thinking may help move us beyond the theoretical impasse in narrative adaptation studies represented by the continuing dominance of what is usually referred to as “fidelity discourse.” (444)

Here, phenotypes and genotypes are respective analogues to adaptations and originals in genetic/adaptation evolution. Knowing that “replication is not repetition without change,” a genotype is the model which the phenotype mimics, but the two are clearly separate specimens. “Another way to think of this is: genotype + environment = the phenotype we see and experience. So the parallel structure for a narrative phenotype would be: narrative idea + cultural environment = adaptation” (448). That evolution will be key to each of my chapters as I examine how the “cultural environment” influenced each narrative.

The relationship between biology and adaptation is not a perfect relationship. The homology does not encompass the purposeful changes an adapter makes in reworking a text. Adaptation in an evolutionary sense does not mean an organism encounters a problematic circumstance whereupon its genes magically alter for future generations. Rather, the environment changes, and whichever animal was *already* prepared for the drop in temperature/lack of particular camouflage/loss in diet is the one that survives and successfully passes on its genes. The mutation is often random and unprecedented. While an adapted text will certainly be different from the original due to the fact that another person (or persons) is reworking it, adaptation as a process also involves conscious decisions and changes. As I move from author to adapters, investigating the changes made includes looking at the (aforementioned) culture and social circumstances, yet it also means determining what an adapter was hoping to achieve with his alterations. For instance, one can quickly infer that Hayes's decision to set the mariner in a junk island was partly influenced by the current problem we have the piles of garbage floating in the North Pacific Gyre and was likely written to motivate the reader to

address negative interactions with the environment. Such movements away from the text are, according to Hutcheon in her *Theory of Adaptation* (2013), necessary for a successful adaptation. While one can still identify variant members as part of the same species, there is clear difference among them; as seen in natural selection, the variation has been necessary for survival. Therefore, the conscious changes for the “survival” of a text that an adapter makes creates a successful adaptation, whereas an unsuccessful adaptation is marked by its inability to be clearly distinct. “Perhaps one way to think about unsuccessful adaptations,” she writes, “is not in terms of infidelity to a prior text, but in terms of a lack of the creativity and skill to make the text one's own and thus autonomous” (21).

Julie Grossman is one scholar who has recently examined this autonomous adaptation and reckons it a monstrosity, a la Frankenstein's monster, that has been stitched together from various bits and pieces into a whole specimen. Her *Literature, Film, and Their Hideous Progeny: Adaptation and ElasmTEXTity* (2015) describes the discomfiting relationship between creator and creature. The latter is puzzle box of countless sources and influences, and the unknown variables threaten to aggravate the reader who sees every tweak as a direct violation to the earlier (supposedly pristine) body. However, the discomfort remains with complete loyalty to only one source.

The importance of conceiving of adaptation in terms of multiple relations...can be traced back to Shelley's novel, in which Frankenstein's transgressions can be understood as over-reliance on one other being...Like Jacobus's notion of the creature's restricted relations, adaptations tethered to one source are limited in their purview and, in popular and critical writing, can be treated narcissistically, as projections of the critic's or viewer's own “home text.” (16)

The “home text” is what Grossman defines as the idealized conception a reader has formed of any text – not the original, but his idea of it – beside which all other adaptations are judged.

Movement away from the original source text is absolutely necessary to create a viable work, as

seen with my third chapter featuring C.S. Lewis's *Perelandra*. While I am arguing that this science-fiction novel is an appropriation of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, there are many wonderful connections with the Creation and Garden in Genesis, Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), the idea of the Byronic hero, and the Greek *kósmos*. The multitude of relationships texts are capable of producing is something that Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes both addressed as they launched the theory of intertextuality and brought about the death of the author.

In the 1960s, both Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes published works concerning the influences among texts. Julia Kristeva coined “intertextuality” in “World, Dialogue, and Novel” (1966) and later in “The Bounded Text” (1966), whereas Roland Barthes proclaimed that texts are not created *de novo* or *ex nihilo* and trumpeted the “death of the author” in his essay of the same name in 1967. Maria Alfara, in “Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept” (1996), describes Kristeva's theory as requiring that we gain a deeper understanding of texts and their functions:

...texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures. Rejecting the New Critical principle of textual autonomy, the theory of intertextuality insists that a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole, and so, that it does not function as a closed system. (268)

Intertextuality or interplay – the relationships between texts – not only alters the meaning of the texts, it *creates* the meaning so that a full understanding of any work can only be grasped by acknowledging the various influences which banded together. On the other hand, Barthes argued that the power of interpretation should be relegated to the role of the reader.

In this way is revealed the whole being of writing: a text consists of multiple writings, issuing from several cultures and entering into dialogue with each other, into parody, into contestation; but there is one place where this multiplicity is collected, united, and this place is not the author, as we have hitherto said it was, but the reader...he is only that someone who holds gathered into a single field all the paths of which the text is constituted. (148)

Barthes differs from Kristeva in the acknowledgment of the “multiplicity,” yet we see the shared notion that a text is birthed from many sources which can be interpreted multiple ways rather than developing a concrete meaning, with a multitude of intertexts.

The ideas of intertextuality are present in modern adaptation theory with scholars such as Thomas Leitch, Julie Sanders, and Linda Hutcheon, who are arguably the dominant voices in the field. Among other things, adaptation theory now focuses on the reception, the meaning, the interpretation, and, if applicable, the medium and possible transitions. Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* is perhaps one of the more referenced works in adaptation studies. Hutcheon's work is, among other things, a challenge to two ideas rooted in fidelity criticism - first, the perception of adaptation as a secondary form of creation or interpretation, and second, the superiority of the original. Hutcheon explicitly states that “to be first is not to be originary or authoritative” (xv) and acknowledges the presence of intertextuality as a dialogical process within any reading. What sets adaptations apart is the “added proviso that they are also acknowledged as adaptations *of specific texts*” (21 – emphasis not mine). Because of the interplay present within any text, any remaining negativity towards adaptations must therefore be a bias against the process itself. Citing Barthes's and Kristeva's influences upon the field in challenging the idea of originality, Hutcheon describes the intertextual view of texts as “mosaics of citations that are visible and invisible, heard and silent; they are always already written and read” (21). Hutcheon breaks her book down into “What? Who? Why? How? Where? When?” to approach a working theory of adaptation, and she frequently highlights that adaptation is a dynamic process regardless of any drastic changes an adapter makes. Consider her statement in the beginning of the chapter “Where? When?” where she examines context, presentation, and reception:

Not only what is (re)accentuated but more importantly how a story can be (re)interpreted can alter radically. An adaptation, like the work it adapts, is always framed in context – a time and a place, a society and a culture; it does not exist in a vacuum. Fashions, not to mention value systems, are context-dependent. Many adapters deal with this reality of reception by updating the time of the story in an attempt to find contemporary resonance for their audiences... (142)

I can best illustrate this within my own thesis by using Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, which features a group of corpses briefly coming back to life to steer the ship a distance. The dead moving among the living may reflect a series of paintings and drawings known as *danse macabre*, which itself represents equality in death or perhaps a gruesome *memento mori*. While not an adaptation, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is indicative of the culture in which Coleridge wrote it. More to the point of reception and resonance, the gloss published with the revised poem in 1817 clearly marks that the dead are not the reawakened souls of the deceased but a “blessed troop of angelic spirits.” I argue that it is part of Coleridge's response to the negative feedback about the poem's obscurity, as he also removed much of the archaic language published in the 1798 edition. A more upfront morality is also offered with the gloss. As Coleridge reworks his own text, he is “updating” for the “contemporary resonance” that Hutcheon writes about.

As mentioned before, these types of changes in adaptations are deliberately meant to pull away from the original and create an independent work. Hutcheon describes this as both a stabilizing and mutative process. “In short, it is all about propagating genes into future generations, identical in part, yet different. So too with cultural selection in the form of narrative adaptation – defined as theme and variation, repetition with modification...But each adapts to its new environment and exploits it, and the story lives on, through its 'offspring' – the same and yet not” (167). That repetition and variation enables a reader to experience the text with a sense of doubling, perhaps with enough knowledge to recognize multiple texts at play rather than just the

declared source. Yet, there is joy *not* knowing how many intertexts are at work. “From one perspective, this is a loss. From another, it is simply experiencing the work for itself, and all agree that even adaptations must stand on their own” (126). Her statement again pulls us back to the idea that adaptations are works which must have a certain degree of separation. In some cases, that separation grows to the point that a work can no longer be thought of as an adaptation but is what Julie Sanders describes as an “appropriation.”

Julie Sanders's *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2006) first examines the basic definition that comes to mind for adaptation, such as “reinterpretations of established texts in new generic contexts” or “relocations of an 'original' or source text's cultural and/or temporal settings” (19). These definitions allow for quite a large terminology in the field, including “version, variation, interpretation, continuation, transformation, imitation, pastiche, parody, forgery, travesty, transposition, revaluation, revision, rewriting, echo” (18). Sanders sees adaptations sometimes existing to reinterpret their sources, perhaps providing retrospective social commentary, yet she also writes (alongside John Ellis) that adaptations prolong the memory or experience of an original. Furthermore, the adaptive process does not need to monstrously consume the previous text to achieve either of these things. “It is the very endurance and survival of the source text that enables the ongoing process of juxtaposed readings that are crucial to the cultural operations of adaptation, and the ongoing experiences of pleasure for the reader or spectator in tracing the intertextual relationships” (25). Like Hutcheon, part of the joy of adaptations is reading the reworking in tandem with others of its ilk and drawing multiple connections. That pleasure is also found in the theory of intertextuality, and Sanders openly acknowledges the scholarship shared with Kristeva and Barthes. Concerning adaptation as a process, whereas Hutcheon links it to evolution and biology, Sanders cites Barthes's imagery of a tree, where “...the tree is 'adapted

to a certain type of consumption' (109), as, indeed, are myths. This form of adaptation, relocation, and recontextualization proves an expansive rather than reductive mode for Barthes; he argues that myths 'ripen' as they spread (149)" (63). The branching form of adaptation is what I intend to use while examining C.S. Lewis's *Perelandra*, which, though written far before Nick Hayes's *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, has spread into different ideas and directions one might expect to occur only after Hayes's had updated the narrative. In fact, Lewis branched away so far that his novel cannot truly be considered an adaptation but an appropriation – the other half of Sanders's title.

Sanders divides appropriation into two basic categories (embedded texts and sustained appropriations), but she ultimately defines the term as a reworking that “does not always make its founding relationships and interrelationships as clear as these plays with named, embedded texts” (32). While a reader can benefit from an awareness of the relationship, which we also read with Hutcheon, the distance between the original and the new is so vast that “...rather than the movements of proximation or cross-generic interpretation that we identified as central to adaptation, here we have a wholesale rethinking of the terms of the original” (28). Additionally, any awareness of the original (or many other texts, as Kristeva and Barthes have communicated before) results in an enjoyable experience of forming connections and gleefully examining the basic similarities and possible reasons for any changes. “Encouraged interplay with between appropriations and their sources begins to emerge, then, as a fundamental, even vital, aspect of the reading or spectating experience, one productive of new meanings, applications, and resonance” (32). The distinction she makes is clear here: an adaptation is a clear reworking, whereas an appropriation is more muddled and often includes multiple “originals” from which it gleams inspiration. However, that does not limit the abilities of an adapter to comment on or

critique prior texts, and it certainly does not limit the reader in “interplay.”

Previously, I dedicated a portion of this introduction to highlighting the beneficial relationship between intertextuality and adaptation studies; film studies is another field worth bringing into the conversation to further define the various types of adaptations present within the theory. Thomas Leitch, author of *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ* (2007), proposes ten categories for adaptations on a branching spectrum, as follows: celebration, adjustment, neoclassic imitation, revision, colonization, deconstruction, analogue, parody, secondary (or tertiary or quaternary) imitation, and allusion. Some of these, as we see in evolution, contain variations. The further the text drifts from an identifiable adaptation (the announced relationship Sanders wrote of), the closer it drifts towards “allusions,” something which every work contains. As Leitch correctly notes, “It is impossible to imagine a movie devoid of quotations from or references to any earlier text” (121). Attempting to define Lewis's work is especially important for my use of Leitch's work; I argue that it is an analogue, in part because Leitch notes that this type of adaptation may not always be intentional or immediately spotted. Analogues may repeatedly invoke a work or have several “points of analogy” (113) but never fully adapt a work in narrative or spirit. Returning to phenotypes and genotypes, the work has replicated to the extent that, while the basic blueprints for reproduction are still identifiable, the connection has become even more tenuous.

For Leitch, the great mixture of adaptation theories and definitions prompts him to write that “the slippery slope away from adaptation studies to intertextual studies seems dangerous indeed” (302). If there is no clear distinction between adaptations and non-adaptations (and no clear way to define adaptation and its variations), then he writes, “...it would seem that anything can be made to assume textual authority, even if it is not a source, not a text, not true, and

nonexistent outside the imagination of filmmakers” (302). Like Hutcheon and Sanders before him, Leitch is insistent that future scholars focus on the process rather than solely the product portion of adaptation, “less on texts and more on textualizing” (302). That approach allows students and scholars alike to examine every text as being constantly reread and rewritten rather than focusing attentions only on works that present themselves as adaptations. As he indicated with his range of adaptations, the latter endeavor would not produce much fruit as multiple films do not outright attach themselves to a singular source. Echoing Hutcheon, he pushes for focus on the dynamic process of reworking texts. “The study of adaptations offers a matchless opportunity to treat every text, whether or not it is canonical, true, or even physically extant, as the work-in-progress of institutional practices of rewriting” (303).

This dynamic theory is worth pursuing in examining Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and its adaptations, and further combinations of adaptation with evolutionary theory and ecological ideas could allow for a better interpretation of many texts. This case study will involve combining adaptation with ecology, examining texts' interactions with each other as they evolve, and an investigation into how the work itself represents the combined theory. As there are multiple fields in the theory of evolution, I will be focusing on natural selection and mutation. Ecology is concerned with relationships between organisms, and as a literary theory focuses on a text's presentation of the natural environment and characters' interactions with the environment. Both theories are necessary in reading the original and adaptations – particularly Hayes's work – since environmental destruction and harmony are present within all works. To fully focus my thesis on the mutation of the text, I am especially focusing on one specific moment of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (both the 1798 and the 1817 publications) – the instant where the ancient mariner beholds the beauty of the sea serpents

and is loosed from his fowl burden. I will compare all three sympathetic turns, as I believe these best represent the core of my study – an evolutionary movement of an ecological adaptation.

My first chapter focuses on Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (both the 1798 and the 1817 publications). For this chapter, I bring in the idea of the Mesh from ecologist Timothy Morton, author of *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (2007) and *The Ecological Thought* (2010), to pair with adaptation as a study in originality. Some of Morton's primary ideas about the Mesh are that it does not permit isolation and that, as a formless expanse, it does not allow for hierarchies or centers. To more fully connect this idea, I will examine the cultural history of Coleridge's era and will include examples from Captain James Cook's accounts of his voyages and the metaphor of the ship of fools, which began with Plato. Furthermore, as Jerome McGann and James McKusick argue in “The Meaning of the Ancient Mariner” (1981) and “Coleridge and the Economy of Nature” (1996) respectively, the spirituality of the poem is deeply tied to Coleridge's own beliefs and the changes in his religious thought that took place from 1798 to 1817. Ultimately, I intend to show how the poem should not be considered “original,” a term which implies the author created the work without any influence from other sources. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* features philosophical ideas and religious turmoil from Coleridge's experiences and, textually speaking, is closely linked to passages from Captain James Cook's travelogues. The intertextuality is further shown in the poem itself as the mariner loses his boundaries between man and animal and arrives at a greater acceptance of all living creatures; as with adaptation, acknowledging textual relationships can potentially provide a greater reading experience.

Chapter two uses both Darwinian and modern natural selection to examine evolution as both a mutation and a gradual process in Nick Hayes's adaptation *The Rime of the Modern*

Mariner (2012), where we see the metamorphosis of skeletal ships and angry elemental spirits to junk islands and Mother Gaia. Mutation in evolution is an unexpected genetic change which may or may not be helpful for an equally unexpected environmental change; likewise, repetition of the *Ancient Mariner* has provided a multitude of changes in narrative and characters which may help with the survival of the story. However, the adapter also has the ability to alter the text at will, which Hayes has done by updating the text for the modern eco-friendly era. By examining specific changes as responses to the environment, I show (as I did with Coleridge) how interplay will always take place with the work and other texts and its culture. In Hayes's case, photographs were also involved. Additionally, the medium Hayes has selected for his work is that of the graphic novel, which itself has had an interesting evolutionary history from simple newspaper strips to a heated censorship debate in the United States. For this section, I will use Scott McCloud's *Reinventing Comics* (2000). I intend to show with this chapter the mutation of the environment and medium has resulted in an ever changing narrative that, recalling Hutcheon, occurs with every reworking.

Chapter three involves C.S. Lewis's *Perelandra*, which I read as an appropriation of Coleridge's narrative. This third chapter will include the idea of evolutionary branching as being a non-linear process, which Barthes and Sanders have previously illustrated with the metaphor of the tree for mythical metamorphosis. While Hayes is focused on reinterpreting the ecological elements of *Ancient Mariner*, reading *Perelandra* as an appropriation shows that Lewis includes both the ecological and spiritual ideas that are present with Coleridge. To better examine this, I must include the historical situation Lewis was in while penning the science-fiction trilogy, which includes a war, and show the intertextuality with his other works that show that these concerns present in *Perelandra* were reoccurring. David C. Downing's *Into the Region of Awe:*

Mysticism in C.S. Lewis (2005), Sanford Schwartz's *C. S. Lewis on the Final Frontier: Science and the Supernatural in the Space Trilogy* (2009), and Matthew Dickerson's and David O'Hara's *Narnia and the Fields of Arbol: The Environmental Vision of C. S. Lewis* (2009), inform the examination, all of which address Lewis's environmental and religious beliefs and the connections between the two. With this chapter, I will show how these various relationships combine with Barthes's metamorphosis and how that evolutionary-esque process further reflects the sometimes unexpected connections formed in the process of (re)working.

Chapter 1: The “Original” Mariner

“How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own country” (Coleridge). The 1798 edition of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* opens with a brief summary of the very narrative the reader is about to encounter – the journey of a singular mariner and his crew into the wilds of the ocean and his eventual return as a singular sailor. The more popular incarnation of the poem, however, does not feature the Argument above but a more straightforward rendition. “How a Ship, having first sailed to the Equator, was driven by Storms, to the cold Country towards the South Pole; how the Ancient Mariner cruelly, and in contempt of the laws of hospitality, killed a Seabird; and how he was followed by many and strange Judgements; and in what manner he came back to his own country” (Coleridge). The latter is the opening to the 1817 edition of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and is narratively quite similar to the 1798 and 1800 editions if you are only looking at the narrative. All three are divided into seven parts and feature the journey of a mariner and the death of an albatross. Yet, the archaic language Coleridge elected to use in his first vision was replaced with a more favorable modern vocabulary, a gloss was added to provide further clarity, and the prologue openly condemns the Mariner for his actions. The alterations and additions are clearly signs of a reworked text and here occurred at the author’s own hand.

For this chapter, I am examining the environment that gave birth to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* to show how other texts and ideas heavily influenced the poem. By revising and then publishing later editions of the same work, Coleridge showed he was responsive to critiques from his friend and fellow poet William Wordsworth and to complaints about the poem’s

ambiguity. Likewise, he did not completely isolate himself while first penning *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* without any thought to current events or his own beliefs; for instance, the first edition of the poem was a collaborative project with Wordsworth for *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). In this, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is not original – written solely from the author’s mind without incorporating any other texts. I also show how the idea of existing without influence in a bordered state is present within the poem itself; the moments leading up to the sympathetic turn where the mariner crosses boundaries and connects with nature is most indicative of this.

Originality is the concern of how faithful an adaptation is to the source text or how well the spirit of the original source is represented within the adaptation. Yet, as *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* shows, even the source undergoes multiple revisions (and possible publications) while responding to the current era’s concerns and fashions. Due to the number of outside influences and sources, existing as a romanticized original is impossible; no author can fully remove himself from his surroundings and their contribution to his psyche or work. Adapters best display these connections among texts and influences, openly acknowledging these devices when reinterpreting a narrative or idea to best suit their designs. Linda Hutcheon’s and Gary Bortolotti’s “On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success' – Biologically” (2007) explains this, and I return to their work here. Furthermore, I expand on the authors’ discussion with Timothy Morton’s *The Ecological Thought* (2010). Morton describes a system where no one thing or person is able to exist without connections; thereby, a central source cannot exist. Ultimately, examining *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* via ecology and adaptation studies further reduces the focus of “originality” and highlights the moments in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* showing unavoidable interconnectivity.

The Critical Environment of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

The 1798 publication, as the prologue reads, uses archaic language before shifting to a more modern vernacular in 1800 and 1817. James McKusick, in “Coleridge and the Economy of Nature” (1996), argues Coleridge’s reason for this stylistic decision was to represent the actual language. He writes, “For Coleridge, the historical development of language is deeply conditioned by its relation to the natural environment, and the aesthetic principle of organicism likewise entails reference to the linguistic habitat of a poem as an essential determinant of its meaning” (391). The interaction between language and poetry is an idea quickly recognized from Wordsworth, who in “Preface to Lyrical Ballads” (1802) expresses his desire as a poet to return to everyday subjects and a common tongue. “...there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him [the Poet], must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life.” Even if the language Wordsworth hoped for could not fully be obtained, the decisions made in this poem are meant to create an *ecolect* – a dialect that reflects the interaction between people and their environments while standing betwixt the shifting linguistic forms. *Organicism* references a system in motion as well; the scientific term indicates an “autonomous, cyclical, and self-regulating entity” which McKusick states Coleridge would have been quite familiar in the late 1700s (377). The format of the line “It is an ancyeut Marinere, / And he stoppeth one of three:” (1-2) represents “the culmination of an eighteenth-century tradition of speculation about the nature of poetic form” (McKusick 377) and also reflects the chosen subject matter, pairing a dead bird with equally dead or dying terms. The content of the poem is closely tied to the upheaval of language “since the extinction of an archaic word can have unforeseen repercussions upon the integrity of a language” (389), yet the same shift is mirrored in the more invasive actions of the Industrial Era.

Coleridge's interest in the unity of language and poetic form extended to imagining a more harmonious ecological unity between man and nature. Many scientific discoveries lent themselves to forming an image of a world with an intricate ecosystem whose success was directly tied to the continued prosperity of the natural climate, and the Romantic writers "drew attention to the environmental pollution resulting from industrialization" (Goodboy 63). Coleridge made himself familiar with scientific publications and even mimicked the style when recording the flora and fauna in his walks near the Lake District; he also noted the species while reflecting a "holistic awareness of the plant and animal communities native to that region" (McKusick 381). His careful notations of the habitat extended to his approach to poetry. Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria* (1817) describes the unification of the poetic form as though he is carefully describing a variant of a species; in fact, he deliberately notes prose and poetry, while sharing similar features, are markedly different.

A poem is that species of composition which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species (having this object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the whole as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component part. For, in a legitimate poem, the parts must mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of, metrical arrangement.

Coleridge's egalitarianism, not to be confined to poetic form and language, also emerged in his interest in both crafting and living in a Pantisocracy, a utopian community. While his plans ultimately failed, his desires echo the Romantic disdain for the "losses incurred in the Enlightenment project of the conquest of nature" (63) and the belief that only a return to a pure state of nature would cure the imbalance. Dissolving any structures creating division between men – and by extension between men and nature – was necessary for Coleridge as a man and as a poet.

Further dissolution of boundaries takes place in a narrative featuring the disintegration of the veil between the natural and the uncanny for one sailor; the moments leading up to the sympathetic turn in Part III of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is the best example of this. In line 240, after the crew has died, the mariner wails over his lonely state while weeping at the loss of the beauty of human life. Here is the first reference to slimy things existing as he does – simply living on.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.
The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I. (233-240)

The gloss also mentions “[h]e despiseth the creatures of the calm” (Coleridge). In the next stanza, he compares the rotting sea to the rotting plank, looking at the dead bodies surrounding him and the hideous creatures within the waters. In his valley, his attempt at prayer is lost. Even closing his eyes does not spare him from the scene; “the balls like pulses beat” is our description of the pounding grief he is experiencing while looking from the sky (where he cannot go) to the sea (where he is trapped). He is cursed to look upon the preserved bodies with their accusatory expressions while wearing a decomposing albatross.

The mariner’s inability to separate himself from an (often grotesque) natural world is symbolic of the cultural transmission in textual adaptation and, according to Richard Dawkins, in

memes. Coleridge's desire for more homogenous relationships among humanity (and going so far as to begin building a utopian community to achieve that goal) bleeds into the text as the mariner cannot escape his world of vast consequences. Likewise, memes are "units of imitation" subject to "continuous mutation, and also to blending" (Dawkins qtd. in Hutcheon 32) as they continually adjust to suit their given environments according to the person responsible for altering them. Adaptations as well are stories retold to better fit an environment and thus are subject to the same influences surrounding their authors, so that the mariner's lack of space mimics Coleridge's political and social beliefs.

Cultural transmission is continually present within the sympathetic turn as Coleridge revises the text and adds a gloss in response to his reviewers. The turn begins as he describes the "moving Moon" which "nowhere did abide" (264-265). Without the addition of the gloss, the stanza continues to a description of the moon light shining beyond the floating tomb the mariner is confined to and onto the serpents writhing in the ocean. The reflection off of the creatures' skins transforms the formerly ugly beings into a rainbow of "blue, glossy, green, and velvet black" (279); upon seeing the multitude of colors rather than what was previously described as a "still and awful red" (271), the mariner is able to bless the creatures. The blessing, without the gloss, is quickly followed by the loss of the albatross. However, when including the additional notes Coleridge provides the turn alters somewhat. Beginning with the moon, the gloss further describes the mariner's isolation:

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

In the previous stanza, the mariner bemoans the fact that he cannot die; this unfortunate immortality causes him to envy the moon's movement. The moon and stars both retain their ability to traverse across the skies as he is unable to move beyond the boundaries of his ship. Like the moon, the mariner also has an endless space surrounding him, yet he is clearly unwelcome to any of it. The ancient mariner's discomfort with a well-received being is more apparent with the inclusion of the gloss, yet Coleridge only added the gloss after the poor reception to his original - and apparently confusing - poem. Here, cultural transmission takes place perhaps in subtle commentary on ill-received works and the resulting turmoil produced in existing in a world of another's apparent success.

The gloss does confirm the moonlight shines upon the serpents. "By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm" (Coleridge). The blessing is still tied to his renewed ability to pray, yet now the benediction possibly references the curse of Life-in-Death placed upon him when "The spell begins to break" (Coleridge). The prayer itself already involves the supernatural, and the gloss further reinforces the continued interactions with a spiritual presence controlling some elements of the mariner's experience. The notes and details Coleridge provides for the 1817 edition of the poem achieve the same style of integration the Romantic poets sought between language and poetry; by providing a gloss, Coleridge also provides multiple layers to read – the 1817 text itself, the 1817 text and gloss in comparison with the 1798 edition, the 1798 contrasted with the gloss, etc. – and they lead to the publications and gloss reflecting the adaptive process of revision and critique. As Jerome McGann argues in "The Meaning of the Ancient Mariner" (1981), the layering also opens the poem to different interpretations.

The changes seen in later editions of the poem partially occurred because of the criticisms focused on its ambiguity. The addition of the gloss and the removal of the archaic terminology attest to this and is observed in the third stanza. In the 1798 publication, the scene of the mariner seizing a wedding guest and opening with his tale reads as follows:

But he holds still the wedding guest –

There was a Ship, quoth he –

“Nay, if thou’st got a laughsome tale,

“Marinere! come with me.” (9-12)

The 1817 edition is an interesting contrast, as it does not feature this stanza at all and instead provides an appropriate gloss stating that “An ancient Mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding feast, and detaineth one” (Coleridge). Rather, when the mariner holds the guest, the poem immediately shifts to the guest’s denunciation of the man restraining him. ““Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!”” (12).

The metamorphosis of the poem reflects an essential feature of adaptation; a text does not exist in a solitary state – much like the mariner is temporarily trapped in – but reacts to the various surrounding influences to produce a new offering, no matter how similar to its previous incarnations. The surrounding influences are most noticeable in the responses to the gloss-less 1798 offering. Critics such as Francis Wrangham praised Coleridge's “imitation of 'elder poets”” (qtd. in McGann 35); however, he also wrote it was “a kind of confusion of images, which loses all effect, from not being quite intelligible” (qtd. in Haven 365). Dr. Charles Burney dubbed the poem the “strangest story of a cock and a bull that we ever saw on paper” (qtd. in McGann 36) and “a rhapsody of unintelligible wildness and incoherence (of which we do not perceive the drift, unless the joke lies in depriving the wedding guest of his share of the feast)” (qtd. in Haven

365). Wordsworth was not pleased with the feedback; in a later edition of *Lyrical Ballads* the poem's position was removed from its honorary place in the front and “its archaic style was drastically modernized” (McGann 36). The version of the poem readers are most familiar with is in fact the product of an evolution over the course of a decade.

The relationship between the text and its environment cannot be ignored in adaptation theory or in any study of the historical context of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. McGann writes, “...for meaning, in a literary event, is a function not of 'the poem itself' but of the poem's historical relations with its readers and interpreters” (38). If meaning is produced from every reading, then the responses accompanying those readings necessarily changes a text's meaning, so any reader becomes an adapter in his own right. The response begins with what Julie Grossman deems the “home text” until the reader extrapolates the original source he is acquainted with is in fact built upon other texts and sources and will likely serve as a source for other “home texts.”

Adaptations ask us to reorient ourselves to our knowledge base and our relationship with previous texts – our “home texts” - and imagine that “home” is a construct that may disguise an extensive series of previous works that build upon a set of ideas and textual productions. Adaptations are thus “hideous progeny” in their potential to be perceived, beheld, as “monstrous” for violating their source text when in fact they catapult sources into new eras and new media. (21)

The three editions of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* were all published within two decades; contemporary readers consistently had to reorient themselves and grasp a new possible meaning of the text according to the revisions and gloss Coleridge added. Though adaptations often involve authors reworking texts they had no hand in creating, Coleridge's revisions imitate Grossman's proposition that adaptations ask a reader first to accommodate new material and second to acknowledge the intertextuality present in the text. The gloss particularly accomplishes

the latter half by introducing a new voice offering its own insights into the text and possibly contradicting previous readings.

Much like the original publication, Coleridge's "adaptations" also received negative reviews. David Pirie took particular offense to the addition of the gloss, which he refers to as "the ageing Coleridge's own interpretation of his poem" and something interfering with a reader's own attempt to create meaning.

Partly just a feeble literary joke, this must have always been intended to confuse the unwary as indeed it continues to do. Whether Coleridge was optimistic enough to hope that the marginalia would be regarded as much a part of the poem proper as they now are is debatable. But the marginalia are by their very nature *perverting*...The marginalia turn the speaker into a specimen. Worse, they lie. (qtd. in McGann 39 - emphasis mine)

Quickly inferred from Pirie's commentary is the belief that corrections or additions, even at the author's own hand, are errors as well corruptions of a text, in the same way readers might view adaptations as unnecessary for either a lack of contribution or for unwelcome alterations. As Grossman noted earlier, adaptations are perceived as "hideous progeny" in that they are warping the source in some fashion; however, their births are necessary for the continued survival of the text (21) as the continued popularity of the 1817 version with its gloss has shown.

Historical Influences and Contemporary Thought

Romanticized notions of individual creativity or 'genius' fail to take into account the importance of historical context, collaborative authorship, and textual influence, all of which are present within the incarnations of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. *Danse macabre*, the Platonic metaphor of "A Ship of Fools," James Cook's *First Voyage Around the World* (1773) and *A Voyage Towards the South Pole* (1777), George Shelvocke's *A Voyage Round the World* (1726), a reformation in Christianity, and multiple other influences too numerous to list are all present

within *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. If Coleridge is considered the original creator for exerting a certain amount of influence over the narrative, then by the same thought William Wordsworth and Francis Wrangham also hold some portion of authority over the work since their comments ultimately lead to more publications. The combination of sources undoubtedly bearing weight on the production of any text lead Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* to argue the “process of adapting should make us reconsider our sense of literary critical embarrassment about intention and the more personal and aesthetic dimensions of the creative process” (111). For Aristotle, mimicry was essential to personal enjoyment and the ability to recreate forms was indicative of man's higher status in nature. Returning to the idea of adaptation as a necessary step in the growth and improvement of any text would encourage creativity rather than hinder possible advancement, as the idea is not simply to repeat *ad nauseam* the highlights of a work. Rather, “like classical imitation, adaptation also is not slavish copying; it is a process of making the adapted material one's own. In both, the novelty is in what one *does with* the other text” (Hutcheon 20 – emphasis not mine).

Hutcheon also insists alongside Bortolotti that examining the historical lineage of a text is something necessary for a greater appreciation for the narrative; expanding the discourse to include previous works does not taint the work but allows for a deeper understanding of changes made, thereby removing any one work from a central position of authority. Hutcheon and Bortolotti argue that “It is obviously important to the understanding of an adaptation as an adaptation that we investigate where it has come from...When we shift from ‘fidelity’ concerns to undertaking this related but different kind of study, new analytic opportunities present themselves” (445). Part of their investigation involves using biological evolution and reproduction to better describe the movements made in the adaptive process; both “replicate and

change” (446). A species producing greater amounts of variants through mutation is more likely to survive any changes in its environment; however, change does not occur on demand. The greater variation only ensures success if the mutations managed to meet the unknown and threatening challenges to survival, and, as both authors note, adaptation would benefit from approaching the replicator with the same attention evolution must give. As they write, a mutation exists to benefit its vehicle; the longevity of the species is a byproduct of self-interest. “They are to ensure not the survival of the group or the individual organisms, but instead the ‘relevant replicators themselves.’ This is why it is important to define the replicator as a distinct and discrete entity, for this is the unit of selection by which we can understand change over time” (447).

If a work produces a great variety of adaptations, as evident even with Coleridge’s revisions, it has a larger chance of continued reproduction/adaptation. Darwin describes this same process in *On the Origin of Species* (1859), in line with Hutcheon’s and Bortolotti’s aforementioned argument:

Throughout a great and open area, not only will there be a better chance of favorable variations, arising from the large number of individuals of the same species there supported, but the conditions of life are much more complex from the large number of already existing species; and if some of these many species become modified and improved, others will have to be improved in a corresponding degree, or they will be exterminated. (105)

Furthermore, remaining aware of the history of any replications – and every work replicates something from other texts – also removes the importance of chronological order. The idea of defining an entity by its connections rather than attempting to understand it within a vacuum is shared by ecologist Timothy Morton in his *The Ecological Thought* (2010), where he describes his concept of the “Mesh,” an interconnected web bound neither by time nor space. The Mesh is somewhat modeled after the Darwinian notions about the relations between species, particularly

how variants, families, classes, and other groups are clustered together. “It is a truly wonderful fact – the wonder of which we are apt to look through familiarity – that all animals and all plants throughout all time and space should be related to each other in group subordinate to group” (qtd. in Morton 29). The difference between this branching system and Morton’s Mesh is the lack of center; Darwin’s structure implies a more essential middle enabling the growth of other clusters while the Mesh does not contain a “clear starting point.” Instead, “Each point of the mesh is both the center and edge of a system of points, so there is no absolute center or edge” (29). With *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, examining the poem in light of contemporary thought and accounts of voyages reveals the lack of center.

In 1494, Sebastian Brandt published a series of wood cuts alongside a moralistic poem about various follies and vices – *Ship of Fools* or *Das Narrenschiff*. The various images, including work from Albrecht Durer, often show an assembly of men on a ship or in several boats, fumbling about with no clear leader, an incorrect course, and non-existent organization. Brandt's work was published as a criticism of his own era, and the influence manifests in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The ship trope originates in Plato's *Republic* in “Book VI”, and the allegory is one for the utter failure of democracy. The only capable man on board is rebelled against and abused, while the crew spends its time alternating between mutinying against and carousing with its newly elected leaders (who soon become the dearly departed when they do not satisfy the crew's demands). Both Brandt and Plato then are critical of a society disillusioned with the capability of its citizens.



Figure 1: *Association of Fools*. Haintz-Nar-Meister. University of Houston Digital Libraries Collection.

The ancient mariner in comparison attempts to wrest control away from the fates because of a poor situation the ship finds itself in; while his dilemma relates to Brandt's *Ship of Fools*, Coleridge's conflict with his reviewers arises in the addition of a gloss. Surrounded by fog and ice, the mariner shoots the bird whose appearance accompanied the unfavorable elements. Initially, the crew condemns him for his action when the breeze ceases to flow. "Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay, / That made the breeze to blow!" (95-96). Their attitude changes within the next stanza as the breeze resumes pushing the boat along its course.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,

The glorious Sun uprist:

Then all averred, I had killed the bird

That brought the fog and mist.

'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,

That bring the fog and mist. (97-102)

The mariner's crew is the group initially weighing his actions, and even before Death and Life-in-Death gamble for the souls on board, the crew condemns the albatross's unwarranted death and hangs the bird 'round the mariner's neck.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks

Had I from old and young!

Instead of the cross, the Albatross

About my neck was hung. (139-142)

The gloss offers further insight into the men's minds. "The shipmates in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck" (Coleridge). The revelation that an angered elemental spirit is punishing them for the shooting motivates the crew to eagerly allot blame to one member despite earlier unanimous appreciation for the albatross's death. The crew's fickleness is a manifestation of foolishness. More interesting is the stanzas from 1798 remaining in the publication of 1817. Only the gloss is new here, and its purpose is to firmly show the albatross's shooting to be a sin. Ironically, text added to appease readers dissatisfied with the poem's ambiguity is next to a stanza focused on disharmony.

As the poem continues, the gloss appears in stranger places, such as the ending where the mariner is describing his penance in a situation similar to Plato's ship of fools. The extended metaphor is designed to describe the harassment of philosophers, who Plato perceives as bearing the brunt of society's criticism for either speaking or abiding by unpopular truths. In becoming

an enlightened exile by the poem's end, the mariner is doomed to a life of imparting warnings. The retaliation against the sea of influences surrounding the mariner awarded him a penance from the spirits, as they force the mariner to relate his tale whenever necessary.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns. (583-586)

The stanza in the 1798 publication is only slightly different from its 1817 offspring, opening with the same line yet expressing the mariner's predicament as "Now oftimes and now fewer, / That anguish comes and makes me tell / My ghastly adventure" (617-619). In 1817, there is also yet another gloss dictating that this penance will last for his "future life" and, like the previous note concerning the crew's reasoning, assures the reader that the mariner's action was undoubtedly sinful. As Coleridge continues to explain his text to his readers, it becomes far more legalistic in its morality. The sailor must now be fully conscious of his actions of their consequences, constantly being pulled between the natural and supernatural realms.

The gloss and text both present a fractured truth of the supernatural, much like adaptations pull in multiple sources and sometimes reinvent the text from a minor character's perspective to reveal not the whole, harmonious truth but another angle of it. The imbalance between the natural and supernatural in the poem appears in the relationship between the text and the gloss, and an argument exists the gloss in turn represents the discomfort with the Reformation of Christianity. By the time the final edition was published, Coleridge had converted to Anglicanism, and a few argue the explicit moral within the gloss is a result of this. McGann sees the gloss as a "culturally redacted literary work" which results in the "special

function of the poem was to illustrate a significant continuity of meaning between cultural phenomena that seemed as diverse as pagan superstitions, Catholic theology, Aristotelian science, and contemporary philological theory...” (51). Joseph McQueen in “‘Old faith is often modern heresy’: Re-enchanted orthodoxy in Coleridge’s ‘The Eolian Harp’ and The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (2014) also believes the supernatural elements the poem call back to a mystical Christianity while the later gloss attempts to impose more structure on the fantastical situations as did the Reform. The movement within the Church shifted the focus “of Christian devotion away from spiritually charged objects such as relics and the Host, and toward private prayer and contemplation...” (McQueen 22), restricting religious interactions to the personal while limiting any morally ambiguous beliefs or practices. For instance, the Eucharist’s main purpose is to extend righteousness to the partaker, yet it was also used to hasten death or as a love charm. The demand for clarity in purpose, McQueen argues, manifested as a resistance to an enchanted world “because the line between subjects and objects blurs and because humans remain open, even vulnerable, to mysterious forces” (22).

The mariner is irrevocably changed by the experience, not the least because he must speak to certain individuals whenever a spiritual force prompts him, and the wedding guest’s reaction to a man permanently imbued with the supernatural indicates there may be a physical manifestation of the change:

I fear thee, ancient Mariner!

I fear thy skinny hand!

And thou art long, and lank, and brown,

As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,

And thy skinny hand, so brown.' (225-230)

The “glittering eye” is what previously spellbound the wedding guest, and the mariner possesses just enough of an inhuman appearance that his description of the crew’s spirits fleeing their bodies prompts the guest’s outburst. The mysticism of pre-Reformation Christianity McQueen illustrates is connected with this scene; the mariner, straddling the natural and supernatural, is a mystical representative marring the logical order of a wedding feast and subsequently altering the guest’s behavior, who is first unable to join in the celebration (621-622) and second rises as a “sadder and wiser man” (625). The experience does not produce harmony, and for McQueen the presence of the gloss – Dr. Charles Burney accused it of outright lying in the text – does not impose order but is a metaphor for the uncomfortable relationship established by a more black-and-white Christianity between religious order and mysticism, like the divine encounters found within nature present in Coleridge’s poetry. In *Specimens of the Table Talk* (1835) under “Mr. Coleridge’s System of Philosophy,” he describes the union of fragmentary truths into a harmonious whole truth, gathered from multiple points of view and experiences until “the fragment of truth is not only acknowledged, but explained” (Coleridge).

The process of using fractured pieces to create a whole picture is what Grossman calls zooming in and out on the same subject in adaptation studies:

Adaptations disorient us, but also compel us, the way Hitchcock or Martin Scorsese have used the dolly zoom technique, or “*Vertigo* zoom” - zooming in a zoom lens while the camera dollies away from the subject – to suggest an idea of paradoxical movement. So, too, adaptations travel toward and away from a source text, creating a new “slanted” perspective, an *unheimlich* or uncanny re-viewing of a work, that, happily, appears to be dynamic. (11)

Any discomfort arises not from encountering a new subject but from seeing another perspective of the same picture, thus altering or even breaking your previous understanding – as seen with the shaken wedding guest. Morton relates a similar experience within ecology he calls the

uncanny. The Mesh eliminates “here” or “there” for an individual because a lack of center results in a level of interconnectivity made even more stranger when an individual becomes aware of his relationships with others and how those encounters have shaped him. Explaining Morton’s thoughts, Samantha Clark writes that “In the mesh, ‘large’ and ‘small’, ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ and ‘near’ and ‘far’ lose their meaning as relative terms. ‘Environment’, understood as something surrounding something else, becomes a meaningless term; the world looks as it does because it has been shaped by life forms every bit as much as life forms have been shaped by their environmental conditions.”

Ecology and adaptation theory merge here, as both concentrate on the human element of duplication in an effort to sustain pleasurable experiences. Both also recognize the “vertigo” that takes place in returning to the familiar only to encounter (or deliberately explore) the unknown. The interconnectivity present in a Mesh or in intertextuality removes any distinction from the self while at the same time heightening differences in previously familiar subjects or texts. Morton believes the “strange stranger” exists not because of a diminished awareness but is a result of encountering new sides or perspectives to a person or an object previously understood. Patterns quickly become obvious when a person begins paying attention, and the “uncanny is a function of repetition, because it brings to light our compulsion to repeat, a feature of our psyche” (53).

The unknown is the supernatural of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, but the “strange stranger” also occurs when you begin reading bibliographic accounts of voyages published in the 1700s. Understanding what texts Coleridge gleaned for inspiration or information is uncanny in the sense that previously unknown patterns come to light. George Shelvocke published *A Voyage Round the World* in 1726 after the journey took place in the years 1719-1722. When Shelvocke

explains one particular albatross has been following the ship, the scene bears a close resemblance to Coleridge's death of the albatross:

...who accompanied us for several days, hovering about us as if he had lost himself, till Hatley (my second Captain) observing, in one of his melancholy fits, that this bird was always hovering near us, imagin'd, from his colour, that it might be some ill omen...he, after some fruitless attempts, at length, shot the Albatross, not doubting (perhaps) that we should have a fair wind after it. (73)

The albatross for the crew in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is both a good luck and an ill omen after its death results in a fruitful breeze, and Coleridge describes the bird as a constant companion for the ship.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;

The Albatross did follow,

And every day, for food or play,

Came to the mariner's hollo! (71-74)

Likewise, many descriptions of the ice and fog appear in James Cook's passages about his journey in *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World: Volume I* (1777). The most relevant portion is Cook's account of the ice encountered by the travelers in Chapter VI, which took place in January of 1774.

It was happy for us that the weather was clear when we fell in with this ice, and that we discovered it so soon as we did; for we had no sooner tacked than we were involved in a thick fog. The wind was at east, and blew a fresh breeze, so that we were enabled to return back over that space we had already made ourselves acquainted with...The thick fog continuing with showers of snow, gave a coat of ice to our rigging of near an inch thick. In the afternoon of the next day the fog cleared away at intervals; but the weather was cloudy and gloomy, and the air excessively cold; however, the sea within our horizon was clear of ice. (251)

The parallels between the harsh sailing of the men and the mariner's suffering are clear. As Cook's ship repeatedly meets large floes of ice, the men must also contend against the fog. The

ship must alternate between sailing south when the weather is poor, and north when the conditions are favorable. The mariner's ship does the same.

The ice was here, the ice was there,

The ice was all around:

It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,

Like noises in a swound! (59-62)

After the fog departs from them, following the unfortunate demise of the albatross, a strong south wind blows and pushes them to northern waters. Cook repeatedly describes the perils of the fog and dryly notes at one point that had the wrong course been chosen or had they not avoided the multitude of ice floes, his accounts never would have been published. A great fever also overcomes the crew, and Cook asserts their survival was mostly due to the proper navigation of Mr. Kendal. In direct contrast to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Platonic submission to a proper authority worked well for Cook's crew. Additionally, as Coleridge explores the boundary between the spiritual and the natural, so too does Cook gaze upon the icebergs and envision the towering cupola of St. Paul's church (264).

Awareness of these intertextualities does not mean a reader will then exclusively rely on other texts to evaluate a work; rather, as Leitch notes, we treat the source "as an intertext designed to be looked through, like a window on the source text" (17). Acknowledging the various patterns that exist allows a main source to function as an intertext itself, and bringing the author's interpretations of other works to a reading do not undervalue the work but treat it as something "to be looked *into* and *through* as well as *at*" (17). Like Coleridge's gloss, the reader can choose to make more meaning by adding to the text and considering it from other

perspectives. Revisions and intertextuality function much like adaptations by alternatively approaching and pulling away from the text and offer “dynamic” readings (Grossman 11).

The Impact of Intertextuality

The many instances of intertextuality within *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* are reflected in the final moral the mariner imparts to the wedding guest. His killing of the albatross can be taken many ways, and one thought offered here is the mariner did not shoot the bird in an impulse of cruelty but out of a desire to control the situation. Only the addition of the gloss directly marks the actions as a thoughtless sin. With the various interpretations in mind, I read the mariner's final words being spoken by a man who has seen the grand scheme of the universe and witnessed his own small portion of it. Having seen what is best described as Morton's Mesh, the mariner now encourages the wedding guest he is forced to speak with to achieve the same awareness of interconnectivity he is now forced to constantly maintain:

O Wedding-Guest! This soul hath been

Alone on a wide, wide, sea:

So lonely 'twas, that God Himself

Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,

'Tis sweeter far to me,

To walk together to the kirk

With a goodly company! (603-610)

First, the guest's isolation mitigates his ability to have an awareness of relationships or the supernatural; second, the isolated state does not occur because of a lack of relationships – the

guest is surrounded by friends and acquaintances at the feast – but is due to that lack of awareness. Furthermore, closer relationships with a more complex communication produces better awareness. The guest must become mindful of these things, and for Hutcheon and Bortolotti, conscious choice and change is the main piece of adaptation studies not truly present within biology.

Biological discourse provides many useful insights into adaptation studies, including the necessity of replication and mutual appreciation for both the genotype containing the blueprints for reproduction and the phenotype carrying the genetic code forward. What ultimately sets adaptation apart from biology is the human element that provides surprising creative choices in order to better serve the needs of an adaptor or simply to experiment with storytelling, perspectives, or an alternate medium. As seen with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, the basic “genetic code” was maintained throughout its publications, though the changes were mindful reactions to Coleridge’s environment rather than random mutations, giving the audience a multitude of layers to parse for meaning. Hutcheon and Bortolotti recognize the difference between involuntary mutation and creative decisions made when viewing adaptation studies in light of biology:

The natural environment cannot induce the changes necessary for biological adaptation: mutations are random with respect to the direction of adaptation required for the environment. Some fail and some succeed. But culture, on the contrary, at least potentially, directs changes. This fact introduces a level of complexity in identifying causality that clearly has no parallel in biology: in a cultural context, adaptations influence culture and culture influences the nature of adaptations. (453)

The limitations certainly do not detract from the understanding the study provides and indeed allow for even more interesting avenues of investigation and possible combinations with other fields. The study also offers alternative ways to approach adaptations other than measuring the success of an adaptation by its fidelity; reasons why an author made particular changes, the

differing motivations in creating the text for both the “phenotype and genotype,” and how the environment contributed to any alterations made. Most importantly, Hutcheon and Bortolotti believe a new approach “gives us a way to think anew about the broader questions of *why* and *how* certain stories are told and retold in our culture” (445).

Chapter 2: The Mariner is Made New

The introduction to the modern mariner is quite similar to how the reader first meets Coleridge's ancient counterpart; both sailors approach a man and launch into their respective tales of woe. However, Nick Hayes's graphic novel, *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, opens with the modern mariner confronting a divorcee on a park bench: "I had a hankering for dominoes...made of whalebone. A rarified accessory to decorate my home." Contrast the encounter with Coleridge's poem, as the ancient mariner accosts a wedding guest and says, "'There was a ship'" (10). The modern mariner is immediately marked as a worldly gentleman and promptly introduces the reader to the main theme of humanity's waste and its impact upon the environment. Nick Hayes's *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* (2011) is a response to the destructive nature of artificial waste in a natural environment, transforming a sailor on a doomed ship into a "modern mariner" stranded on a junk island in the Pacific.

The struggle to survive while maintaining harmony with the environment is the same struggle adaptations face as they navigate cultural preferences and the sticky process of reinterpreting a work. Linda Hutcheon in a *Theory of Adaptation* calls it "evolving by cultural selection" wherein "traveling stories adapt to local cultures, just as populations of organisms adapt to local environments" (177). As Hayes retells a narrative, he creates a new story, and this chapter will examine the surroundings that influenced the metamorphosis. Like Coleridge's own narrative, Hayes's adaptation grows out of situations relevant to the author's creative decisions, and examining the culture alongside the literal environment provides a better understanding. I will also examine adaptation theory alongside Timothy Morton's ecology while looking at Hayes's narrative choices. Additionally, Julie Sanders – *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2005) – explains the necessity of change in a work of time, a thought echoed by both Hutcheon and

Morton. All three will provide further clarity in an adaptation that has drastically altered the purpose to suit its society.

Junk Islands and Rock Epics

Nick Hayes grew up submerged in a culture that has fused *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* into its history and language. Of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Hayes writes: "It is taught in schools, it's mentioned in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Iron Maiden even wrote a 13-minute rock epic which shares the poem's title. It's everywhere." The poem had enough presence in Hayes's formative years that when he stumbled upon an image of a dead albatross he instantaneously thought of the mariner's own albatross corpse. He encountered the photograph of an albatross whose stomach was filled with plastic - a clear indication of the cause of death - while "trawling through Captain Charles Moore's blog, entirely by accident." Given his background, writing his own version of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* was "a knee-jerk reaction." The image he references is much like Chris Jordan's photographs of dead albatross chicks on Midway Atoll (Fig. 1), an ongoing series the photograph began in 2009.



Figure 1: Untitled Dead Albatross Chick. Chris Jordan, photograph. Midway: Message from the Gyre.

In a description of the project, Jordan explains that the albatrosses mistake trash such as plastic for food and feed the chicks who cannot digest the foreign substances. What is left behind, he argues, is a result of our own hubris:

For me, kneeling over their carcasses is like looking into a macabre mirror. These birds reflect back an appallingly emblematic result of the collective trance of our consumerism and runaway industrial growth. Like the albatross, we first-world humans find ourselves lacking the ability to discern anymore what is nourishing from what is toxic to our lives and our spirits. Choked to death on our waste, the mythical albatross calls upon us to recognize that our greatest challenge lies not out there, but *in here*.

The “here” and “there” echoes the same dissonance within Timothy Morton’s Mesh where no center destroys all manner of distance, and the resulting awareness allows an individual to see the limitless connections between his actions and unending consequences. Hayes’s Mesh we witness in the graphic novel is strongly tied to images of albatrosses fallen prey to bits of plastic; one whole page (Fig. 2) is dedicated to the modern mariner’s growing awareness of environmental destruction as the sympathetic turn begins.

The unfortunate realization occurs shortly after Mother Gaia confronts the modern mariner; she is Hayes’s reinvented Life-in-Death. Rather than a “Spectre-Woman” with white skin and blood-red lips who gambles for the lives of the crew (Coleridge *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*), Gaia is a “ghoulish apparition” crying acid tears and trailing fumes (Hayes *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*). She directly confronts the modern mariner for his sins, proclaiming she is the “real repercussion of your hubristic human boast” (Hayes); she is a much more active part of the mariner’s transformation and appears on two other occasions as the mariner continues to evolve.



Figure 2: *Decomposing Albatross*. Nick Hayes, comic panel. *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*.

Mother Gaia’s intrusion in the modern mariner’s actions reflect the active involvement an *auteur* takes in creating a work. Thomas Leitch in *Film Adaptations and Its Discontents* explains *auteur* and *metteur-en-scene* according to Francois Truffaut’s essay, “A Certain Tendency of French Cinema” (1954), who labels the first as a creative master over his work and the second as a scene-setter simply arranging different sets around the same narrative. The *auteur* is a visionary, and audiences may more readily identify filmmakers or authors with original creations as *auteurs*. Adapters, however, are capable of more than shuffling scenery; creators such as

Disney and Hitchcock based multiple films on books and arose to *auteur* status by maintaining a “public persona” (256). Hayes has attracted positive attention from many readers, yet his work is still too young to attain the reputation of Hitchcock or the trademark of Disney. However, the transformation of a Gothic narrative to a modern eco-fable is not “scene shuffling” but a recreation of intent, character, and moral. Mother Gaia’s intervention is parallel to the active role Hayes plays in adapting the text for a new age. One major task of the *auteur*, Leitch notes, is to be sensitive to broad appeal (256), and that appeal manifests in recognizing the international concern over environmental health as put forth by Captain Moore’s blog.

Captain Moore and his crew continue to feature several posts on plastic pollution within the ocean as part of his project, Algalita Marine Research and Education. His crew has made multiple trips since 1999 to the Garbage Patch, the largest trash vortex within the Pacific. Moore actually discovered the Garbage Patch, and they continue to document the area. Algalita states its mission is “dedicated to the protection and improvement of the marine environment and its watersheds through research and education on the impacts of plastic pollution” (algalita.org), and their concentrated research for this goal is what jolt-started Hayes’s creative response. We are quick to see the connection when the modern mariner is stranded for many panels amidst one of the junk islands in the water, yet another instance shows the more pervasive effect of the nigh-indestructible plastic.

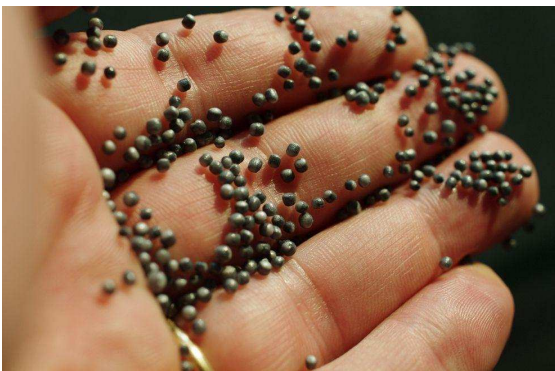


Figure 3: Untitled Plastic Flecks. Stephen Woolverton, photograph. National Geographic Encyclopedic Entry: Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

Plastic, Hayes writes, is the true danger, never degrading but shrinking down into indigestible flecks. Unable to degrade, the plastics begin “cracking under the sun and salt to smaller and smaller pieces” (*Huffington Post*). The end results are tiny particles (Fig. 3) bobbing about in the sea and infecting the life therein. In the graphic novel, Hayes uses these pellets to damage the modern mariner. A storm washes him off the boat and plunges him into the depths of the ocean where he beholds “titanic feats of pride...gilded glory sunk in rust, beneath the rampant tide.” (Hayes) When the mariner finally emerges, he is “tangled in a fishing net...trawling from a boat...and solid specks of plastic flecks were gritted in my throat.” He has become something like the dead and dying creatures in the floating junk yard as he is very obviously wrapped in garbage and choking on plastic (Fig. 4).



Figure 4: Solid Specks of Plastic Flecks. Nick Hayes, comic panel. The Rime of the Modern Mariner.

As Hayes began working on *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, his perspective of his childhood landscape adapted to the purpose he wrote for his text. As the forests evolved in his eyes, they gained complexity, much like adaptations offer more meaning based on new ideas. The woods served his adventurous boyhood well, but Hayes began to visit his countryside as a reborn Coleridge roaming the Lake District and jotting down the appropriate names. “When I learnt for myself the names of trees, the wood became not just one entity, a green slush at the end of the fields, but a myriad network of individual stories and characters, whose fractal complexity was beguiling. I felt instantly that I had been missing out” (*Huffington Post*). This breakdown between subject and surroundings further develops that relationship; the coexistence does not lack complexity or individual identity. Familiarity, as discussed in the previous chapter, heightens intimacy and reveals unknown patterns; as the individual applies this new information in other circumstances, he repeatedly learns to view common subjects from new angles. As Grossman states, he is forced again and again to reorient his “home-text”; that is, he must shift away from an original understanding and propel himself forward. By relearning his childhood haunts, Hayes does not replace his experiences but adds another layer to his understanding, and the same process is witnessed in adaptation as the adapter offers new perspectives not to overshadow the previous text but to encourage the reader to approach it from another direction, adding meanings as a gloss does.

The direct engagement with a text so valued in an adapter manifests strongly in the transformation of the hermit, who is now an old fisherman. In Coleridge, the hermit is a spiritual man who lives in close proximity to nature. The ancient mariner primarily seeks the hermit out because he is a good man who “singeth loud his godly hymns” and might be able to cleanse the mariner of his sins (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* 510-514). The “hermit of the wood,” as the

gloss specifics, may have achieved this level of spirituality because of his respect for nature; directly following the ancient mariner's praise, he describes him as kneeling at the soft mossy cushion of an old stump for prayer three times a day. After his brief appearance and apparent failure to "shrieve" the mariner's soul, the hermit vanishes. The old fisherman, however, emulates Hayes's own active role in the text by plucking the modern mariner off the beach when the mariner washes up, identifying and solving the problems in his well-being, before clothing the mariner for the return to civilization. The old fisherman's spirituality is not derived from praying at a stump but his level of engagement with nature and compassion. He creates the leafy bower the mariner heals in, he bathes in an outdoor tub while reading Robert McFarlane's *The Wild Places* (2008) (Fig. 5), and he voluntarily brings a lost man into his sanctuary. His involvement is parallel to the additional layers an adapter such as Hayes provides in approaching texts and becoming deeply involved with them.

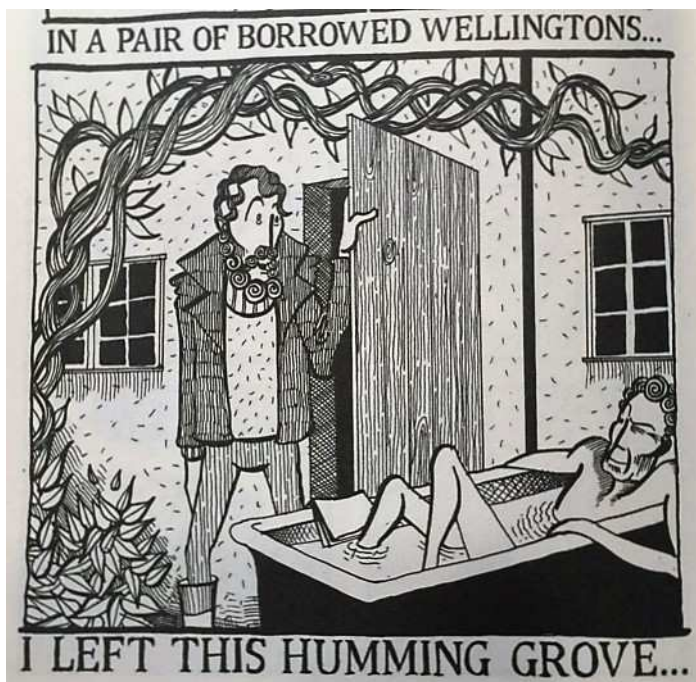


Figure 5: An Outdoor Tub and Wellingtons. Nick Hayes, comic panel. *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*.

The (re)approach to nature characterizes Hayes's *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, even involving an episode where he opted to camp on the summit of a small mountain after a meeting was unexpectedly cancelled. "Through the course of the night, the mountain had turned from a cold, haunting place outside of human comfort, to a warm home. That transformation was, for me, the greatest blessing from the book, the gift I most value" (*Huffington Post*). In the previous chapter, I described how Coleridge's shift from Unitarianism to Anglicanism likely influenced later versions of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Here, an author is adapting a work – an evolutionary process in and of itself – and is transforming his own interactions with nature while reflecting these personal changes in the text. Hutcheon correctly argues that "It is obvious that adapters must have their own personal reasons for deciding first to do an adaptation and then choosing which adapted work and what medium to do it in. They not only interpret that work but in so doing they also take a position on it" (92). Hayes's article in *Huffington Post* clearly shows his reasons for adapting the text. By presenting the plastic pollution and decomposing albatross directly in his panels, Hayes focuses on the communion with nature Coleridge addressed within *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, in addition to the themes of responsibility and harmony Coleridge engaged in with his politics.

The text presents evolution as a necessity for survival, mirroring the necessary repetition of narratives. Adaptations continue because we find the (re)experiences pleasurable or intriguing; Hutcheon deems these experiences not simple replications but "the comfort of ritual and recognition with the delight of surprise and novelty" (173). The repetitions adapters such as Hayes produce give enough variation that an original narrative successfully survives, a la Darwinian evolution's natural selection. The text also encourages harmonious relationships with the environment for the continuation of a species; Hayes extends the same thought to writing by

envisioning a text “as an entity of the landscape, as simply another expression of the natural world” (*Huffington Post*). As shown, removing boundaries between environment and product increases complexity and understanding, and “there is a comfort in this connectivity that breeds a hope for the future.”

Awareness and Response

Adaptation is an unique expression of creativity or critique resulting in an altered texts; if the adapter is faithfully imitating the text or even remaining in the same medium, change always occurs because the adapter has taken a stance on his reinterpretation. Hence, we can see many evolutionary analogues to adaptation, where the process of growth results in a mutated variant the surroundings may or may not exterminate in natural selection. In the case of adaptation, the gambit is often cultural acceptance. Regardless, evolution is a naturally occurring process that takes place in both ecology and adaptation. Because these are two different fields of study, ecology and adaptation approach the term *evolution* from different directions.

Within ecology, evolution is a passive force. If a mischief of mice is placed within a frigid environment, we must reason that the mice with thicker coats and hardier stamina will survive and be able to reproduce, passing their fluffy coats to the next generation. The mice do not spontaneously sprout more fur. In biological evolution, you do not adapt to the environment; your body is suited to live with a change or you die. Darwin in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) also posited that large, populous areas were also more suitable for evolution:

Throughout a great and open area, not only will there be a better chance of favorable variations, arising from the large number of individuals of the same species there supported, but the conditions of life are much more complex from the large number of already existing species; and if some of these many species become modified and improved, others will have to be improved in a corresponding degree, or they will be exterminated. (105)

Development for a species depends on greater interactions, as it produces a greater number of variations, meaning the species is better prepared to “adapt.” Additionally, survival involves different environments with a multitude of variations (even with the same species), so the variant most suited to survive is in a unique present state because of the past circumstances. “Hence we can see that when a plant or animal is placed in a new country, among new competitors, the conditions of its life will generally be changed in an essential manner, although the climate may be exactly the same as in its former home” (97). Recent additions to the theory also include mutations - “jumps” in the cycle that randomly occur in genetics without precedent or warning which either help or hinder survival.

In contrast, within the theory of adaptation concerning texts, we see the self-conscious appropriation of art. Grossman provides a prime example for this as she compares Frankenstein's monster to adaptation, in that both are composed of various, mismatched pieces stitched together to form a whole. The adaptation is a monstrous *creation* put together by an *auteur* (or group of them). The flexibility of texts and sources “implies a process of change...and not an alignment of two fixed objects” (Booker qtd. in Grossman 18), so adapting a work is a conscious process with decisions which amusingly enough do not lead to an expected outcome. As Hutcheon and Bortolotti described earlier, the addition of conscious change is what ultimately separates biology from adaptation. Regardless of attempts to change the medium or purpose, any adaptation is an effort to remake a source even when remaining as close to the original source as possible. As Hutcheon notes, “Stories do get retold in different ways in new material and cultural environments” (*A Theory of Adaptation* 32). The current influences affect the text in same way biological evolution results in natural selection, except it is the audience who decides what text is popular enough to warrant further “propagation.”

To fully unite biological and textual models of adaptation, consider the production of genotypes and phenotypes. A genotype produces a phenotype; that phenotype is birthed from the genotype's environment AND from the genotype's interactions with the environment (and the results of those interactions). The phenotype is also able to alter forms as it maintains the genotype's basic structure. As Hutcheon and Bortolotti note, in biology "the phenotype of the replicator can exist beyond the body of the vehicle" (453). Therefore, in textual adaptation the genotype is the source for future narratives, and the phenotype as an adaptation is capable of shifting the medium in addition to the "blueprint" of the narrative. In this way, a textual adaptation can become a genotype or main source in its own right, since many narratives can originate from an adaptation. Hutcheon and Bortolotti are most interested in redeeming what is defined as the *success* of an adaptation from fidelity to longevity and variety, two things necessary for survival. Thus, an adaptation that produces even more adaptations obtains both qualities and is a successful "phenotype."

The Rime of the Modern Mariner changes its "genotype's" structure in multiple ways, and the most obvious change shifts the Coleridge's intended moral from religious inquiry and harmony to a critique of wasteful materialism. Coleridge refers to his poem's moral as heavy-handed and scattered, and the principle in question is largely concerned with spiritual matters. In a comment Henry Nelson Coleridge dates May 31, 1830 in *Specimens of the Table Talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1836), Samuel Taylor Coleridge describes his response to Mrs. Barbauld whose two complaints were the improbability and the lack of moral. He replied to the latter, "...that the only, or chief fault, if I might say so, was the obtrusion of the moral sentiment so openly on the reader as a principle or cause of action in a work of such pure imagination" (82). As a Romantic poet, Coleridge believed his duty was to unite the senses and the fragments

of truth into a harmonious whole; imagination's role in the product was recreating or idealizing the form already spoken into being by the greatest act of imagination – the Creation of Genesis. For our own era, Hayes has his sights set on a critique of materialism and its negative impact upon the environment, as the previous section shows. His focus provides the various panels with clear references to environmental destruction (the plastic flecks, the decaying albatross, heaps of garbage in the water, etc.) and makes the greatest changes to the emotional reactions within the narrative, the amount of detachment the reader witnesses in the characters, and the sympathetic turn.

A major change is the scope of emotion in the narrative; compared to Coleridge, Hayes limits the number of characters that are able to fully express themselves. Coleridge showed us the strong emotional responses of the mariner, sailors, spirits, and even the hermit. The wedding guest, for instance, exclaims, “I fear thee, Ancient Mariner! / I fear thy skinny hand!” (225-226) and repeats the sentiment soon after the first outburst. The hermit is scarcely able to stand after he sees the ancient mariner is, in fact, not a lifeless corpse when the mariner rows the company back to shore (573-574). The beginning and end of the poem also display a boisterous wedding



Figure 6: The Irritated Divorcee. Nick Hayes, comic panel. The Rime of the Modern Mariner.

feast, but in Hayes’s reworking the changes are immediately witnessed in the characters’ reactions. The most obvious example is the divorcee, who responds with irritation to the mariner's appearance and subsequent “nursery rhyme” in contrast to the wedding guest's repeated

exclamations of terror. Only at one point do we see him enthralled with the mariner's story (Fig. 6), and the expression occurs only after the modern mariner provokes him. The hermit (here an old fisherman) who rescues the mariner calmly scoops the stranded man up from the beach and transports him to a bower, where the modern mariner experiences Hayes's night on the mountain summit. More violent reactions (horror, outrage, unbounded joy, sorrow) are typically expressed by the mariner himself and also by Gaia, the manifestation of Mother Earth.

The reader sees Gaia and the modern mariner showcasing the polar opposites of the emotional spectrum, though the mariner's transition is slightly more noteworthy. Gaia is outraged at humanity's hubris and, as mentioned previously, emerges from the fog to condemn the modern mariner. "And now...you lose," she gloats at the mariner as she comes to his boat, her body dripping oil and hacking smog from the brunt of pollution. However, we witness the versatility of her feelings as the mariner resides within the earth (in the leafy bower) and Gaia calmly ushers along the earth's transmogrification. The mariner experiences a reverse process, as he is moving from a blinded state to complete awareness. He initially scowls as he puffs away on cigarettes, before the close encounter with Gaia and a leviathan of the deep produces a man who gazes in awe at his surroundings and takes simple pleasure in breathing (Fig. 7)¹. The implication is the blasé attitude concerning *everything* is the result of humanity's materialistic attitude.

Content with only counting the whale bone dice within hoards, the species is not bothered to

¹Figure 7 shows what occurs as the mariner begins to rest in the earth's embrace. In the panels before, we watch him cough up fragments of plastic he has inhaled in the ocean. However, we can also infer that the garbage his body begins to spew is a result of his mindless consumption of material goods – whale dice and cigarettes; the cicely and aniseed he is in communion with permit him to inhale life and expunge the corruptive materials. Additionally, it is analogous to Gaia's breath manifesting as wind at the end of the novel which gently blows humanity from the cycle.

react until calamity is nearby. The mariner's emotions come full circle in the final panels as he can only gape in horror as he witnesses the species slowly fading away. The mariner's continuous passion is a vibrant contrast to the divorcee's trudging wariness and resistance.

Within *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, disconnect from reality ultimately hampers humanity's ability to survive. Hayes describes the divorcee returning to “a world of detached consequence...where he would not live for long”; the destruction humanity produces is a by-product of intense self-focus, an echo of the mariner's inability to express love for the sea serpents, trapping him in this ship's boundaries. The next few panels show Adam's kin rising as little gods before vanishing in the end, silently fading out of the panel in ignorance (Fig. 8 and 9). Humanity, Hayes appears to argue, willfully resists any attempts by Gaia to change them, shrugging off interventions permitting the species to survive. If we are reading Gaia as a symbol of the earth rather than an actual metaphysical manifestation, our species' elimination at the end of Hayes's narrative is a direct result of our inactive state that does not produce the variation and hardiness necessary for survival in evolution. The only thing the species seems capable of here is materialist reproduction; though our production of non-perishable goods is intended to meet particular needs, the junk becomes invasive and infringes our survival by corroding our surroundings, dulling our senses, and simply taking up too much space (hence, junk islands). The

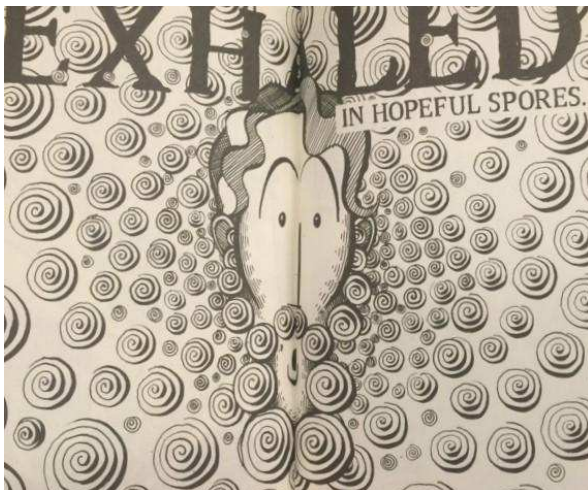


Figure 7: *Exhaled in Hopeful Spores.* Nick Hayes, comic panel. *The Rime of the Modern Mariner.*

garbage is not Hutcheon's and Bortolotti's adaptive repetition - products changing with each incarnation - but simple replication. Detachment is not isolation, however; an essential moment for the modern mariner is recovering within the leafy bower where the old fisherman places him where he rests and witnesses eons roll before his eyes. Complete isolation is not witnessed in textual adaptation theory, yet Hutcheon and Christian Metz consider a period of reflection necessary to a reader's experience of a text.

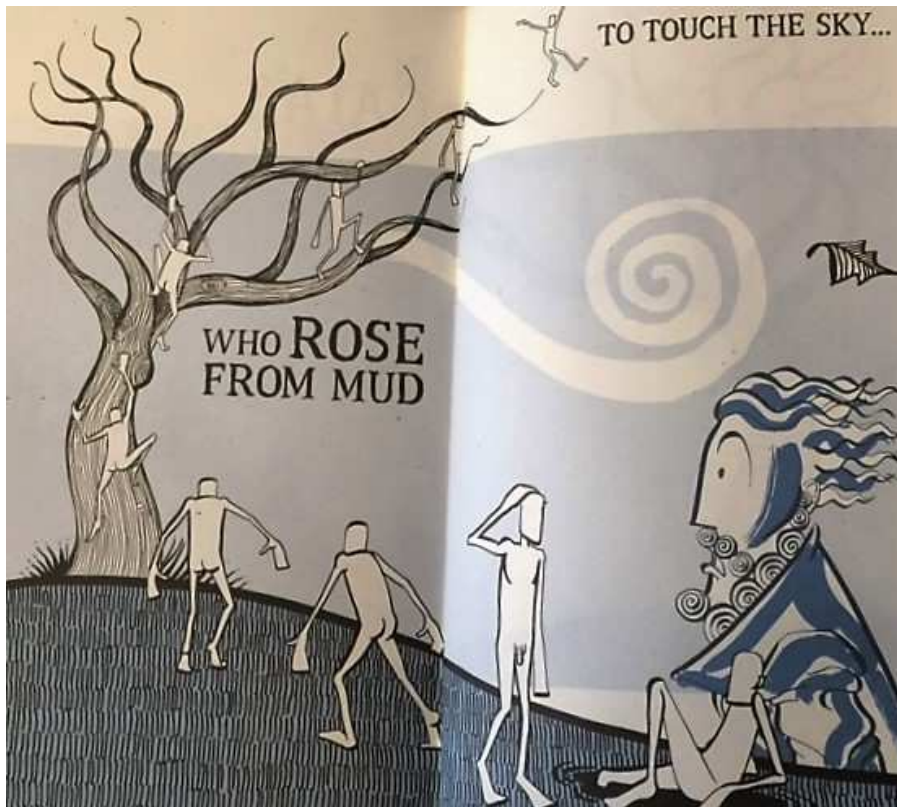


Figure 8: Adam's Kin. Nick Hayes, comic panel. The Rime of the Modern Mariner.

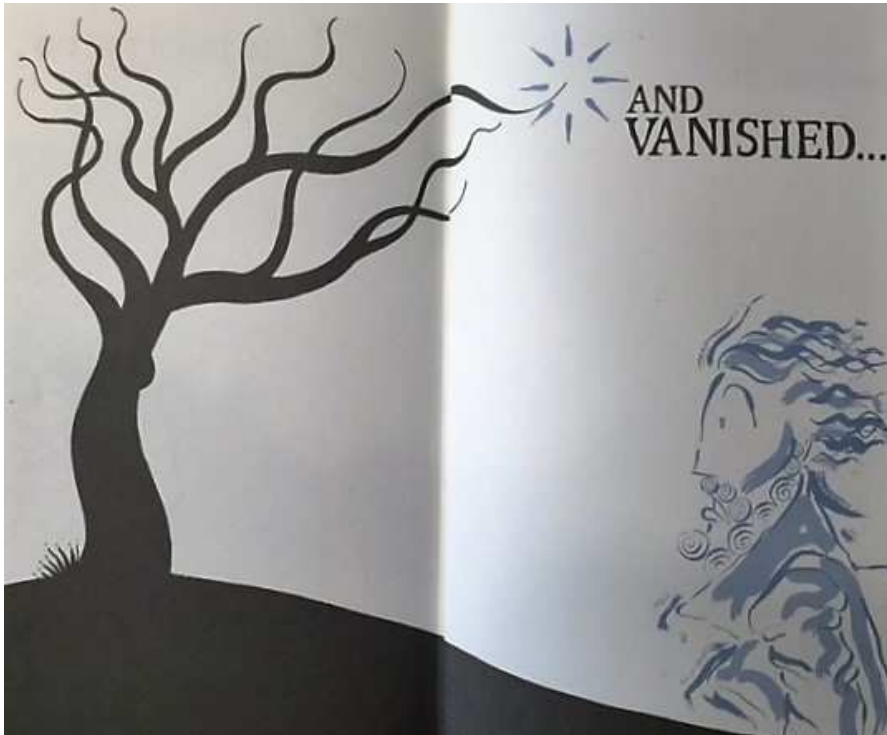


Figure 9: And Vanished in the Wind. Nick Hayes, comic panel. The Rime of the Modern Mariner.

Complete isolation cannot produce adaptations, yet the immersion of a singular reader within a text can form a response and make a unique meaning. When we consume a narrative - game, film, novel, television, etc. - from within our personal space, “we can control how much we experience and when” (Hutcheon 133). How we become immersed in an adapted story is something Hutcheon ponders in her chapter “How?” of *A Theory of Adaptation*. Perhaps an audience is, as Christian Metz states, “an isolated and distanced voyeur” (qtd. in Hutcheon 132), who observes activity before forming opinions and willfully interacting. Regardless of medium, “adaptation as adaptation involves for its knowing audience an interpretive doubling, a conceptual flipping back and forth between the work we know and the work we are experiencing” (139). The “flipping” is part of the pleasure of adaptation for a viewer aware of the original who can establish sympathy and later employ the emotional repetition of sensibility.

That pleasure can occur regardless of order, as when a reader views an adaptation first before seeking out the original. While Hutcheon notes that the experience arises from an “ongoing dialogue with the past,” what I stress is the communication taking place when “more than one text is experienced – and knowingly so” (116). If the mariner must be separate from his community before he engages in communion, the same period of reflection in adaptation theory is the reader's response to adaptation; one first contemplates the text's relationship with its source (or adaptation, depending on what order the reader encountered them) before immersing himself to make more meaning.

In the same way, the modern mariner dwells inside an arbor bowl before he returns to civilization, a previously familiar world now strange and no longer comforting because of his



Figure 10: The Earth was Breathing Through Its Trees. Nick Hayes, comic panel. The Rime of the Modern Mariner.

new experiences. Now, the paradigm shift we witness is not an instantaneous development, but was first initiated with the sympathetic turn before coming to completion within the bower. The process is continuous. The old fisherman takes him to a “leafy dome” he has planted and trimmed. “A hedge of ashes wrought by man and nature over time...twenty trunks which rose alone, and met as one, entwined. ‘Forty years these trees have grown...I sowed the seeds myself... this bower now will cradle you...and nurse you back to health’” (Hayes). Time is stressed in this scene frequently; first, the fisherman has observed the trees for over forty years (I am including the time taken choose the appropriate spot for planting). Second, as the mariner heals, he is taken through humanity's history. “I raised myself upon a bed...of pyroclastic stone... and felt four hundred million years compacted in my bones.” As the images of earth's age pass before his eyes, he interweaves with nature, and Mother Gaia herself appears to embrace his figure and breathe life into him (Fig. 10). Coleridge and Hayes both mark a passage of time so long it cannot be tracked while also removing their mariners *from* time. Part of the process of growth, shown in the evolution of the mariner and the maturity of the old fisherman, is removing oneself from the thought of time as inevitable progress and re-entering the stream with a developing awareness. Full awareness involves flipping back and forth from activity to sympathy, yet, like a reader, the mariner is always engaged on some level.

Timothy Morton, in *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (2007), writes about being “out” of time, or the ability to observe long spans of time, creating an uncanny awareness of our space:

The ultimate uncanny experience is recognizing the strange as a familiar feature of the familiar...In ambient poetics, the uncanny works such that the space-time of the text turns out to have changed, almost imperceptibly. We become attuned to this quality *before* the text is read, before it begins. So the sense is that change *will have occurred*. This quality of future anteriority is built into the work – an uncannily proleptic backward glance. We

get the uncanny sense that at some time in the unfolding of the text, we will look back and all will have changed. (73 - emphasis not mine)

Three movements are at work here: 1) awareness of time before immersion in a text, 2) suspension of time while engaged in the text, and 3) the loss of time upon stepping away from the text. All the while the uncomfortable “unfolding” is part of the experience. The modern mariner experiences this loss of time when he is discovered and cleansed by the old fisherman; however, for him it is a positive revelation rather than a sense of loss. To contrast, the ancient mariner experiences the loss of time in his sympathetic moment. He is first painfully aware of his inability to pray before temporarily granted relief in sleep after an agonizing period; he finally awakes in such a sublime state he believes he is a ghost (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* 293 – 309). Since the ancient mariner is wandering the earth at the end of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, it is highly unlikely the hermit successfully absolved the mariner of his sins and freed him from his penance. However, he still engages with the environment as an outsider, longing to re-engage with the now strange surroundings in the same manner as the modern mariner warning the divorcee before retreating.

Applying the idea to textual adaptation, Hutcheon and Bortolotti provide a better union of time and change. The relationship between the two must be considered neutral to avoid a hierarchy, which either acknowledges the original as a supreme work from which all others are derived OR permits each new adaptation to supplant previous works on the basis of “newer = better.” As Hutcheon and Bortolotti write, the elimination of a hierarchy (no matter what it favors) demands a reworking of the idea of a successful adaptation. Sole dependence upon time or longevity leads to an obsession with time's flow and assured loss and does not adequately measure success. In *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, the divorcee constantly checks his phone and watch, unable to sit still for the duration of the mariner's narrative. The mariner himself

begins shooting plastic bottles out of sheer boredom, marking the time. Therefore, time, even as we acknowledge its passage as productive, need not become a linear system to establish the value of a work, nor should we perceive “improvement” as inevitable. As Hutcheon states, “Because adaptation is a form of repetition without replication, change is inevitable, even without any conscious updating or alteration of setting” (*A Theory of Adaptation* xviii). However, change does not indicate progress or move us closer towards harmony.

Time is also a necessary ingredient for when and where an adaptation occurs and how the *auteur* uses the social concerns at his disposal; in modern adaptations of classical novels, for example, an adapter may focus on those social themes that are pertinent to a contemporary audience. The following creative decisions select what issues are most relevant and how to best present them. Thomas Leitch considers the tenuous balance that sometimes appears between a past and a present culture and how *auteurs* address their own social situations through that balance. “Adaptation is for them...less a matter of honoring past literary tradition than of finding earlier works that address contemporary problems within a decorum of manners, visuals, and music that will make them palatable, even seductive...” (171). Leitch is specifically addressing adaptations of earlier works featuring contemporary problems that are transferred to the modern setting; the question that arises is *what* to remain faithful to in adapting the work and *how* any issues within the text are relevant to the modern and, if so, how an adapter ought to present them. Examining the various adaptations of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), Leitch explains the 1995 miniseries presents an appealing period romance, and at the same time “Austen’s more sociological observations on the rise of the English middle class, a cultural conflict played out in generational time...are subordinated to the psychology of her romantic leads” (177). Adapters select appropriate problems, and Hayes does this in placing environmental destruction at the

forefront of the graphic novel. Hayes as an adapter chooses one major cultural conflict of Coleridge's era, the discomfort in industrialization and the resulting questions on social progress and harmony, and recreates the issue for his own time of green politics and global warming. The process in question is specifically deemed "updating" by Leitch, who writes how it transposes "the setting of a canonical classic to the present in order to show its universality while guaranteeing its relevance to the more immediate concerns of the target audience" (100). Captain Charles Moore's blog and ecological endeavors and Chris Jordan's photography project are both influences upon the adaptation and the intended receivers of a statement joining their chorus on pollution and environmental change.

Relevant to Hayes's audience is the union between man and nature on a level a bit deeper than the ancient mariner's moral to "teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth" (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*). As in Coleridge's work, the relationship is explored in the sympathetic turn. Unlike the ancient mariner who stares upon the waters and then the moon, the modern mariner focuses on the piles of garbage and gradually intensifies that focus. He experiences release when he looks into the flotsam surrounding the ship and connects with the lives of "a myriad of jellyfish of krill and salp" that are struggling to survive in the current bogged down with plastic. He ties this suffering directly to his own evolutionary history and is finally able to appreciate the infinitesimal heartbeat "of a two inch salp" (Fig. 11).

This thing was like my brother's son...

A kin through evolution

A progenitor of mankind

Poisoned by pollution.

I held my breath in love and awe

Its beating heart then stopped;

It died...

I cried...

And felt my cross, liked a leaden weight, then drop. (Fig. 12)

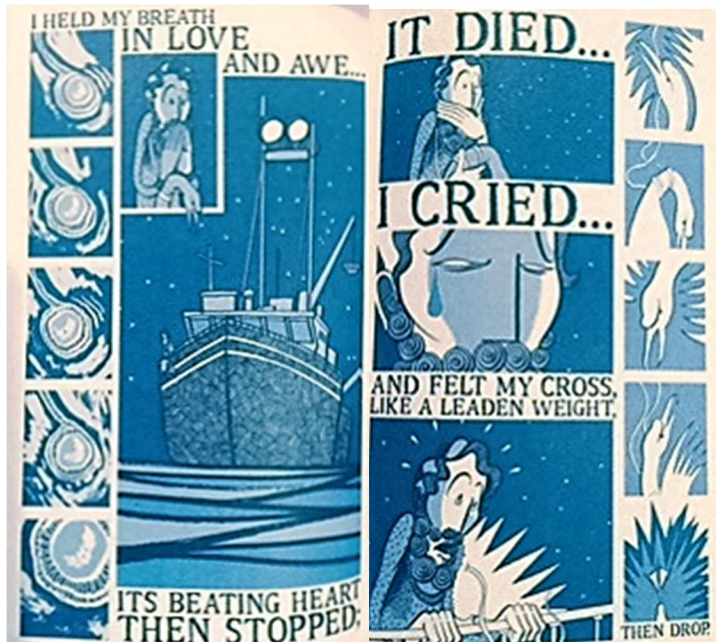


Figure 11 (left): *I Held My Breath*. Figure 12 (right): *It Died*. Nick Hayes, comic panel. *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*.

Hayes makes the text his own, even focusing more on the environment to successfully communicate with his readers who respond appropriately. Rachel Cooke's 2011 review of *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* in *The Guardian* indicates Hayes is successful in garnering reactions. She writes that "the mariner comes face to face with the consequences of our unthinking consumption" and emphasizes how in the final panels "our mariner listens to the melodies of the breeze, and wonders again at mankind's blithe disregard for the planet. The expression on his face combines horror and sagacity quite brilliantly. Those who know their Old Testament will think nervously of the prophets and tingle pleasantly with guilt." Hayes's purpose sang out clearly to the readers.

Furthermore, Cooke fully acknowledges the work as an adaptation, insisting that simply holding the beautiful volume is akin to a “sacramental act.” While not every adaptation may be beheld as a sacrament to its readers, the open relationship with the original source is key. Hutcheon says on the topic, “What sets adaptations apart is the “added proviso that they are also acknowledged as adaptations of *specific* texts” (*A Theory of Adaptation* 21). Hayes makes the relationship between his text and Coleridge obvious, even more so with his article featured in the *Huffington Post*. The porous relationship and the resulting comparison and contrast – seeing one text in light of the other, especially if you experience an adaptation before an original – is something that Julie Sanders, in her *Adaptation and Appropriation* also comments on. “It is this inherent sense of play, produced in part by the activation of our informed sense of similarity and difference between the texts being invoked, and the connected interplay of expectation and surprise, that for me lies at the heart of the experience of adaptation and appropriation” (11). Given Cooke’s eager review comparing the “nylon fishing nets” to “death-fires,” the work succeeds as an adaptation for upholding an experience that enjoys comparison between the original and the adaptation and does not degrade the differences.

Evolution of Form

Perhaps the most interesting change is the transition from epic poem to graphic novel, a medium experiencing its own transformation in the public eye. Hayes has first altered the actual lyrics to suit his purpose and includes modern terminology, but he has also turned the poem into a beautiful graphic novel. Part of the pleasure of reading *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* is observing the minute details (the divorcee checking his watch, the glow of screens in a dark, confining room, the “Closing Down Sale” sign posted in a shop called Humankind) and the shift

in the shadows at the end, steadily going from blue to white as mankind fades away. For this project, Hayes selected a form that is much like adaptation, both gradually achieving respect as an art form and recognition for unique contributions. Fidelity, as Hutcheon and Bortolotti make clear, was often the measurement for an adaptation's success; comic books and graphic novels, on the other hand, faced rejection because of the beliefs that they were only appropriate for children, unable to successfully adapt other works, and worthy of censorship for inappropriate themes.

A brief overview of the comic book's history in the United States is necessary to understand the pushback, as the resistance was connected to the stereotypes tied to the comic and its earlier uses. The 1700s contains the forerunner to what we know as comics with gag cartooning, which "probably began in the eighteenth century with the publishing of broadsides, single-sheet publications displaying caricatures or vignettes of moral import..." (Harvey 26). Comics in the United States began as cheap vaudeville within newspaper, confined in both content and form. Typically, an illustration was either "political or purely comic" with an illustration containing a few lines of text; for many, the comic lacked complexity in its subject matter. As the comic grew in popularity in the 1940s, it found a target audience in children, and the association with that demographic firmly tied the form to childish content. Scott McCloud in *Reinventing Comics: How Imagination and Technology are Revolutionizing an Art Form* (2000) explains the effect on the industry, writing that "Plenty of great work was produced during these years – but almost always in the form of humble entertainment. Never too serious, never too daring, and often aimed at the young and uneducated" (27). The perception that comics were artistically bankrupt and suitable only for children or light entertainment was fertile ground for

Fredric Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954), a novel accusing comics of moral corruption.

The novel attracted enough negative attention that a government intervention occurred; soon, even more limitations were in place for the comic book. After Wertham's allegation was published, “public response to Wertham's book prompted the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency to being their investigation of the mass media with the comic book industry” (Nyberg 59). The primary target for the investigation was the burgeoning industry of horror comics; thus, William Gaines, the head of Educational Comics, a company producing lines of “kiddie” comics in addition to crime and horror, volunteered to testify on behalf of the industry (59). Regardless of the committee's ruling, a number of publishers attempted to smooth the damage brought upon the industry by the investigation and voluntarily drafted a code of ethics – The Comics Code Authority – which publishers would only fully abandon in the early 2000s. If the ultimate goal for any species is to survive, limitations on interactions and propagation can hamper that goal. The self-inflicted restrictions of narrative (rejecting a story because a robot has gained sentience) and appearance (rejecting yet another story because a black man's brow showed perspiration) threatened to greatly reduce the amount of variation creators were able to produce.

The perception of comics as a demeaning form fully came to light with Wertham's novel and reflects similar difficulties in transitioning forms when adapting works (most commonly seen in a book-to-movie adaptation). Wertham's *Seduction* includes an essential passage to understanding the negative viewpoint. Detailing how a comic for children included Superboy with Washington and the troops as they crossed the Delaware, Wertham argued that part of the immorality of comics was its destruction of history and *classical* books.

Comic books adapted from classical literature are reportedly used in 25,000 schools in the United States. If this is true, then I have never heard a more serious indictment of American education, for they emasculate the classics, condense them (leaving out everything that makes the book great), are just as badly printed and inartistically drawn as other comic books and, as I have often found, do not reveal to children the world of good literature which has at all times been the mainstay of liberal and humanistic education. They conceal it. (55)

Part of the resentment was that comics, as a lower form of storytelling, bastardized the original source. The idea certainly was not new; comic authors such as Will Eisner had begun arguing in the 40s that comics ought to be accepted as both art and literature, yet in 1978 he would “publish *A Contract with God* as a graphic novel rather than a 'book' to avoid 'degrading the work'” (McCloud 28). If part of the difficulty of adapting any text for an *auteur* is anticipating the subsequent backlash to any changes in plot, structure, or character (to name a few), then the process is further complicated when a hierarchy of forms is established. Groensteen, in “Why Are Comics Still in Search of Cultural Legitimization?” (2000), observes the difficulty in placing comics on any type of scale since they are a hybrid genre, since “Comic art is an autonomous and original medium. The only things it has in common with literature are: that it is printed and sold in bookshops, and that it contains linguistic statements. But why should it be systematically lowered to the level of para- or sub-literature?” (10). For transitional movements in general, Hutcheon observes, “When a change of medium does occur in an adaptation, it inevitably invokes that long history of debate about the formal specificity of the arts – and thus of media” (34). However, with Rachel Cooke’s praiseworthy review, the shift in medium here has happily only benefitted *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*.

Ultimately, a species must contain a number of variations to increase the likelihood of survival, and one of McCloud's greatest concern is the lack of diversity in genre, an issue going back to the controversies of the 1940s. The superhero genre for comics is popular in the US and,

though it began by mimicking the detective structure in the 1940s, has evolved into its own style that subdues experimentation and growth. “After 60 years of mutations, the superhero genre currently incorporates hundreds of embedded stylistics 'rules' governing story structure, page composition and drawing style – and when the creative community trained in that field ventures into other genres, it tends to take many of those rule along for the ride” (115). For McCloud, only conscious change will result in the industry opening to additional forms or narratives to recreate the variety with comics that are present in countries such as Japan. “Comics can no longer afford to put all its eggs in one basket,” he remarks, “and a growing number of creators and business people now recognize this” (119). Audiences “naturally selected” the superhero genre, yet creators publishing independently (and often digitally) has already pushed the active change an *auteur* employs in forming adaptations. Given how adaptation theory has gradually parted from fidelity criticism, it is fascinating that Hayes selected a medium that has undergone its own problems concerning form and false perceptions.

Different Mariner, New Problems

Evolution is necessary to the continuance of any being; adaptations offer a unique experience in each repetition that, because of the nature of adaptation, reflects authorial intent and cultural conflicts. Nick Hayes’s response to Coleridge’s environmental themes updates the poem for a contemporary audience and demonstrates the human ingredient in adaptation not quite present in biological evolution. The new perspectives provided in *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* enable readers to (re)experience Coleridge’s text, much as his own gloss and publications made new meanings, and add dimensions unique to the experience of reading a graphic novel, a medium that has faced its own struggles in evolution and acceptance. Hayes

also uses his unique position as an *auteur* to highlight the consequences of detachment in a world mapped by Morton's Mesh where, such as in intertextuality, interconnectivity shapes new surroundings and forms regardless of whether or not it is acknowledged. For the ancient and modern mariner, their next stages of growth occur in part because, rather than maintaining their buffered selves, they are porous and open themselves to move beyond boundaries they have established to connect with others; so, relief comes as pleasure does – “the tension between the familiar and the new, the recognition both of similarity and difference, between ourselves and between the texts” (14).

Chapter 3: Appropriation Through Time and Space

Thomas Leitch believes that the future of adaptation studies offers “a matchless opportunity to treat every text, whether or not it is canonical, true, or even physically extant, as the work-in-progress of institutional practices or rewriting” (303). The rewriting – the process by which some texts become canonical adaptations – is what interests Leitch. The same observation of the evolution of every text - “the work-in-progress” - is what Julie Sanders stresses within intertextuality, or the various relationships and influences among texts. She emphasizes not limiting a work’s connection solely to the original, as it is important “...to acknowledge that to tie an adaptive and appropriative text to one sole intertext may in fact close down the opportunity to read it in relationship with others” (35). Interplay is lost with detachment from your surroundings, as *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* shows, yet the question remains for Sanders how “appropriative texts” - texts not outright stating a relationship with a source - function within adaptation theory. Carefully perceiving the distinctions between adaptation and appropriation, she writes one difference between the two is whenever reinterpretation takes place an adaptation ostensibly remains the original text - the connection is clear. Appropriation, however, “frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain” (26). I argue that a science-fiction novel set on Venus is a “new domain” for the ancient mariner.

The Ransom Series or *The Space Trilogy* is C.S. Lewis's science-fiction trilogy published between 1938 and 1945. The second book in the series, *Perelandra* (1943), is what is what Sanders describes as an appropriation – something close enough to “play” though far enough to not clearly signal the relation between texts (26). For Leitch, the text would likely represent an “analogue,” an adaptation with tenuous connections that is not always intentional;

“commentators can make a case for them years after the fact” (115). Both *Perelandra* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* show harmful effects on the environment, though Lewis removes us from the effects upon our own planet and shifts our attention to a similar set of circumstances on Venus. Lewis’s descriptions of the flourishing life on Venus and the protagonist’s encounters with the only native is the uncanny experience Grossman and Morton describe, creating discomfort by first removing you from home text (and planet) and then reexamining your knowledge and familiarity with ecology and spirituality by inspecting them apart from daily or usual circumstances. Morton’s “strange stranger” heightens intimacy, even as we realize our lack of knowledge about a previously understood subject, while Grossman’s *unheimlich* gives us an “uncanny re-viewing of a work, that, happily, appears to be dynamic” (11).

This chapter first examines the historical environment of the science-fiction trilogy and how cultural conflicts contributed to Lewis’s writing. Additionally, the reader also encounters the dynamic process of appropriation representing the branching of myth that Richard Barthes writes of in his *Mythologies* (1957), where he pens, “Thus every myth can have its history and its geography; each is in fact the sign of the other: a myth ripens because it spreads” (149). The “spreading” is Coleridge’s own tree of narrative branching out to influence other stories, and the process occurs in a creative area regardless of time. Time does not dictate the progress of a narrative but only guarantees change will occur; how *much* the narrative changes or *what* changes the adapter makes cannot be determined. Therefore, the chapter shows the similarities exhibiting Sanders’s appropriation qualities and the differences marking the division between Lewis and Coleridge which assure Lewis’s work can never be an adaptation. For Sanders, the joy in adapting texts also involves “text play,” an experience “produced in part by the activation of our informed sense of similarity and difference between the texts being invoked” (25). By

examining *Perelandra* as an appropriation of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, this study shows how “activating” our awareness of intertextuality represents the interesting nature of appropriation, where a connection is never formally announced but remains for the reader to discover.

An Intertextual Nature

First, a brief summary of *Perelandra* can assist with the following information. *Perelandra* is what we call the planet Venus and within the novel is represented as an oceanic planet with undulating islands. The only two inhabitants are a humanoid man and woman, the protagonist, Ransom, spends the majority of his time with the woman, known as the Green Lady or the Queen. Ransom in this novel has been summoned from earth based on his experience on Mars – called Malacandra by its inhabitants – in the previous novel. He is asked by Maleldil, this universe's God, to prevent the destruction of harmony on *Perelandra*. The same event occurred on earth in Eden; the resulting loss of contact with all other planets is why it is now known as Thulcandra – the Silent Planet. The majority of the novel is Ransom communicating the Green Lady as she fully develops wisdom of her own accord; he eventually works against the temptation presented by an imperialist – almost genocidal – scientist from the previous novel, called the Un-man when it is revealed he is a mere puppet being controlled by Satan. Ransom is the character that we follow throughout this novel, and I argue he is our interplanetary mariner.

One of Lewis's influences was the political climate of the day, including an Orwellian leeriness of systematic imperialism and the resulting monstrous, scientific dreams. Sanford Schwartz in *C.S. Lewis on the Final Frontier: Science and the Supernatural in the Space Trilogy* believes it is part of the pushback to the dying era of “guns and gospel.” Many of the ideals

lingered, however, and authors such as George Orwell preceded Lewis in “attacking the heritage and enduring realities of Empire” (167). The imperialistic dogma manifests in the first novel, *Out of the Silent Planet* (1939), when two scientists, Weston and Devine, kidnap Ransom in lieu of the mentally disabled child they had been previously planning to abduct to sacrifice to a (self-projected and fictitious) monstrous Other. Devine, trained within the English public school system Lewis loathed, “makes no pretense about his motives” and plans his conquest as a mission unhampered by “the white man’s burden” as it is on earth (Schwartz 27). Weston, on the other hand, “is impelled by a seemingly impersonal ideal of human progress and regards his venture into space as a necessary step in the development of the species,” (27) and his character continues to develop these ideas, acting on them when possible, on the peaceful planet of Perelandra.

Weston’s utter disregard for the “other” and encouragement for their elimination in the name of progress does not represent the racial cleansing witnessed during World War II. His contempt is much closer to home:

...we should remember for several decades prior to Hitler’s accession to power in 1933, the “science” of eugenics was promoted vigorously by many intellectuals, conservatives and progressives alike...Indeed, Weston’s reference to the propagation of “idiocy” calls to mind the one legislative success of the British eugenics movement, the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913, which limited the rights of the “feebleminded” by permitting (under certain conditions) their detainment and segregation from the rest of the population. Thus the modern development paradigm...finds its fulfillment in the noxious mix of racism and eugenics that sanctions, in the name of progress, the most savage treatment of those we have deemed less human than ourselves. (30)

By the end of *Out of the Silent Planet*, Ransom has fully grasped the concept of a rational soul; he defines “man” as fully sentient being regardless of appearance and in the beginning of *Perelandra*, before he has found the humanoid Green Lady, courteously greets a lizard like creature (which is actually more akin to earth’s dogs). To contrast, the Un-man (a possessed

Weston) regularly vivisects frogs and birds when he arrives. Upon waking one day, Ransom encounters a trail of “mutilated frogs” that he follows to discover and hopefully end whatever is causing the creatures harm. He discovers Weston “tearing a frog – quietly and almost surgically inserting his forefinger, with its long sharp nail, under the skin behind the creature’s head and ripping it open. . . Then he finished the operation, threw the bleeding ruin away, and looked up” (*Perelandra* 95). Schwartz elucidates Weston’s beliefs as representing the “modern rationalizations for discarding other living beings in the name of progress,” (Schwartz 167) as Weston admits in the first novel he desire’s man’s immortality and later, in *Perelandra*, expresses his desire to spread spirituality for a greatness that “always transcends mere moralism” (*Perelandra* 83).

Beyond eugenics and imperialism, after Lewis’s conversion to Christianity his relationship with “nature” changed so that he referred to it as “creation.” Matthew Dickerson and David O’Hara in *Narnia and the Fields of Arbol* write that after Lewis began to fully believe in the supernatural he “began to see the sacredness” that manifested in nature; it was no longer merely a creature for humanity’s benefit (41). *Perelandra* in exploring a different creation allows us to reexamine ecological concerns, and Lewis uses the novel to present not a hierarchy of beings but a “continuum of beings” where “all rational beings participate in creation by affirming their place in creations, and all beings have natures that longs to grow into perfection” (184). Morton’s Mesh then appears within the deep ecology of the planet whose author stresses the value of nature and a necessary moral responsibility for it and the lower creatures inhabiting it. Unlike deep ecology, Lewis, while still concerned with an “examination of worldviews and philosophies of nature,” maintains an ontological gap between humanity and nature (185). Within his investigation of ecological philosophies (paired with a similar investigation into the

Fall of Eden), Lewis moves to Venus precisely because “there he may ask to what degree our extant worldviews, affected by time, culture, and sin, have obscured nature’s ‘secrets’” (187). Respect is carefully maintained in this new world, and one of the primary benefits in the organized system of ontology is curiosity.

Complete immersion in nature, wherein no difference exists between an individual and the surroundings, brings matter *too* close and effectively destroys the individual’s sanity, as witnessed when Weston professes total union with the universe and binds himself to a demonic force, unable to differentiate between the spiritual presences on the planet. Additionally, “By ignoring the apparent differences in things, the things themselves vanish from his horizon... The uniqueness and beauty of the world he has just entered have no effect on him” (191). The balance in Lewis’s ecology is a proper respect for all creation, not detaching yourself until life is divided into the useful and meaningless nor losing your being entirely so all ethics have been scrubbed away. The Great Dance best illuminates this relationship.

At the end of his journey, Ransom bears witness to the Great Dance, referencing the medieval mechanism of the universe Lewis would have been quite familiar with as a scholar. The Dance is an interlocking plan where everything – “peoples, institutions, climates” to “flowers and insects... a wave of the sea” (187) – has a place within the center.

...“each movement becomes in its season the breaking into flower of the whole design to which all else had been directed. Thus each is equally at the center and none are there by being equals, but some by giving place and some by receiving it, the small things by their smallness and the great by their greatness, and all the patterns linked and looped together by the unions of a kneeling with a sceptred love.” (186)

When Ransom views the Dance, every ribbon or figure briefly becomes the main focus before shifting into different colors and splendors, different from each other while working to unite as a whole. Lewis's Dance contains Maleldil as the center, encompassing all things and forming a

universe where everything is essential by performing its part. Dickerson and O'Hara stress that Perelandra is not simply a "calling together of its constituent parts to create a physical mass... It is, ultimately, the establishment of a set of relationships between the world and its inhabitants and their creator" (206).

The importance of multiple bits and pieces coming together to form a whole is essential within intertextuality and even adaptation theory, the latter of which requires a text to announce its connection. Julie Grossman, in contrasting the physicality of Frankenstein's Creature with the theory of adaptation as process and product, writes on basing a reworking on solely on one text (or depending too much on fidelity without innovation):

The importance of conceiving of adaptation in terms of multiple relations – McFarlane's observation, for example, that an adaptation's "anterior novel or play or poem is only one element of the film's intertextuality" (27) – can be traced back to Shelley's novel, in which Frankenstein's transgressions can be understood as over-reliance on one other being. (16)

As with ecological concerns, a pristine nature is a romanticized thought. You cannot revert to that which never existed, and dwelling within that existence limits what Grossman calls "elastextity," a reworking which pulls in multiple sources and perspectives to enhance a reader's understanding, awareness, or sheer pleasurable enjoyment of the text. Grossman writes, "Textuality that is stretched across time and media gives birth to what often appear to be misshapen works of art. These adaptations, however, force us to reconsider preconceived notions about sources and their afterlives and the value of difficult artwork" (16). Though Grossman is referring to experimental adaptations here, the focus of a porous text is applicable to appropriations. Furthermore, the thought is akin to Thomas Leitch's sliding spectrum with more faithful imitations on one end and vague allusions on the other; the variety of intertextuality at

work allows “analogues” such as *Perelandra* to be read through the lens of sources not readily tied to the work.

This chapter opens the intertextuality of *Perelandra* to those other possible sources; however, and as Julie Sanders comments, the desire is not to “reduce the act of reading to a game of ‘spot the appropriation’” (35). Yet, we must balance this avoidance to ensure we do not “close down the opportunity to read it [an adaptive or appropriative text] in relationship with others.” Therefore, it is important to see the variety of influences within Lewis’s work, as previous chapters focused on the history manifesting in each text (and in Coleridge’s case, each additional publication). To continue, the larger influence is the Bible and Lewis’s Christian faith, providing Ransom with a purpose in his conflict – preventing another fall.

Like Coleridge, Lewis is deeply involved in spirituality, and both men use their creative works to examine their faith. Ransom is an interplanetary mariner in the sense that he errs, is isolated, and must change to bring about the novel’s resolution. But, the overarching purpose is spiritual; he must protect the new Eden and its inhabitants with self-sacrifice and complete the instructions given to him by God/Maleldil. Yet, as Judith Wolfe notes in her Introduction to *C.S. Lewis’s Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos* (2013), neither the religious nor ecological elements are permitted to swallow the story. “This commitment both to an originary image and to the disparate sets of traditions that accrue to it – modern and medieval cosmology, classical mythology, and Christianity – propels Lewis to rethink both the contents and the functions of all four traditions” (ix). The coexistence required to function on *Perelandra* is part of the “unique blend of charisma and clarity” David Downing discusses in *Into the Region of Awe* (2005) where Lewis’s own logical outlook and interest in mysticism kept a healthy interest in “explaining what can be known, while exploring the unknown and the unknowable” (14).

Perhaps the most obvious Biblical metaphor in *Perelandra* is the Garden of Eden, where the serpent tempted Adam and Eve into sin, yet Ransom is also a Christ-like figure in the novel. He undergoes a series of temptations before sacrificing himself to the will of Maleldil, whereupon he descends into the caverns of the planet in a Dante-esque movement in pursuit of the evil plaguing the Green Lady. He crushes the Un-man's head, who in turn injures his heel; the wound remains open like the injuries in Christ's side and hands. Ultimately, the connections between Ransom and Christ can become allegorical, yet Lewis had a more literal idea in mind, where "in reality every real Christian is really called upon in some measure to *enact* Christ" (qtd. in Downing 100).

The narrative of *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* has a presence within *Perelandra*, yet these familiar instances are not the only time we encounter a reference to Coleridge in Lewis's fiction. Lucy in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1950) petitions Aslan for help as her boat and its crew are trapped in the shadowy fog of the Dark Island, a place where dreams and nightmares come true:

Lucy looked along the beam and presently saw something in it. At first it looked like a cross, then it looked like an aeroplane, then it looked like a kite, and at last with a whirring of wings it was right overhead and was an albatross. It circled three times round the mast and then perched for an instant on the crest of the gilded dragon at the prow. It called out in a strong sweet voice what seemed to be words though no one understood them. (129)

There are actually two references here: the image of salvation from a distance, and the arrival of the albatross as a good omen. The hope approaching from a distance is Coleridge's skeletal ship of Death and Life-in-Death, which the Ancient Mariner believes is the crew's salvation and wets his mouth with blood so that he may alert the others. (Additionally, the individual in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* who is stranded begs to be taken aboard if only to die; he has, like the Ancient Mariner, dwelt between the veil in a nightmare.) The albatross is purely a good omen

here and brings courage to the sailors, as the bird in *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* was initially a good luck charm. The literal albatross within *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is far easier to identify than the albatross in *Perelandra* that ties the story to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*; the differences that arise between the two texts – in addition to the unspoken relations – create an appropriation rather than an adaptation and need to be examined in this study.

Harmonious Reinforcement

The albatross we encounter in *Perelandra* is Weston, who arrives on the planet after Ransom has already formed a friendship with the Green Lady. Ransom has begun to mentor the Green Lady as she “grows” or matures in thought, and Weston's purpose, as mentioned above, is to cause the fall of another planet to throw another system into disharmony. Death and penance follow the albatross in both *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*. Weston is given free reign of the area and to Ransom's horror begins terrorizing the lower creatures; Weston does not limit himself to vivisection but also rips feathers out of birds (while they are very much alive) to create two cloaks for himself and the Lady. Ransom's inability to prevent Weston's trail of destruction mirrors the death of the crews for the previous mariners. The modern and ancient mariners are forced to abide on a boat surrounded by death, while Ransom on three occasions tracks Weston by the trail of broken bodies he has left behind. His death coincides with Ransom's ability to have a sympathetic encounter, which heralds our interplanetary mariner's long return and eventual penance. Weston is not a helpless bystander falling victim to Ransom, but defining the albatross as a symbol of hubris make the analogue clearer.

Coleridge's poem is told in seven stages: 1) The Beginning of the Voyage and Death of the Albatross, 2) The Repercussions for the Death, 3) Gambling for Souls/Death of a Crew, 4) Blessing the Slimy Things, 5) *Danse Macabre* and the Promise of Continued Penance, 6) The Mariner's Supernatural Return, and 7) The Punishment of Life-in-Death. The poem is focused on the death of the albatross and its never-ending consequences, and I identify the sympathetic encounter as the turn. For the ancient mariner, the hubris is taking control of the ship – even if it was a decision made by a capable man – and attempting to wrestle the success of the voyage from fate, a detached action which offends the elemental spirit. By the poem's end, he has been ordained as a mad prophet who must preach on the interwoven lives we ought to live. The modern mariner is at first a materialistic, apathetic man; like his ancient counterpart, he is detached. Boredom results in the sin of killing the albatross, and he must integrate himself into the flowing passage of infinite time in the leafy bower if he is to recover. By the end, he is an outcast in a world of material gain.

Our interplanetary mariner's hubris is also a form of detachment, though it is a loss of Maleldil's will and a resistance to obedience which causes inaction. His refusal to submit to the logical order of the planet (and as later seen on a larger scale, the Great Dance) is what causes his pain. The dead weight of Weston hangs around the planet's neck and harasses the delicate ecosystem until Ransom aligns himself with the will of Maleldil and intervenes. Like his brethren mariners, Ransom will also become a "prophet" in his world after he is free of his albatross, and he must suffer injury in the process (a bleeding heel as opposed to the ancient mariner's burning heart).

To focus on the sympathetic turn in *Perelandra*, Ransom is isolated and physically and emotionally drained. The ancient and modern mariners were also incapable of sleeping. He has

repeatedly battled Perelandra's tempter and is now stranded in a series of tunnels. Ransom is unnerved because he is now on fixed land, a sharp contrast to the undulating islands he was previously on; so, too, are the previous mariners trapped in a listless ship. As he wanders, he eventually encounters the hideous creature in the shape of a beetle that casts a shadows on the walls before the body slowly appears with “angular, many jointed legs, and presently, when the thought the whole body was in sight, a second body came following it and after that a third - a huge, many legged, quivering deformity” (154-155).

For the two mariners, the release comes in part because they are porous rather than buffered selves and open themselves to move beyond boundaries. The opposite occurs here. Ransom’s mind is being plagued by the Un-man, who is using the beetle to traumatize Ransom. “‘They want to frighten me,’ said something in Ransom’s brain, and at that same moment he became convinced both that the Un-man had summoned this great crawler also that the evil thoughts which had preceded the appearance of the enemy had been poured into his own mind by the enemy’s will” (155). Ransom in this moment must reestablish boundaries and create a buffer zone between his mind and the demonic presence of the Un-man. Ransom incapacitates the Un-man through one final blow and is only then able to accept the creature, successfully cutting the burden of the albatross away from his neck:

Ransom...turned to face the other horror. But where had the horror gone? The creature was there, a curiously shaped creature no doubt, but all loathing had vanished clean out of his mind, so that neither then nor at any other time could he remember it, nor ever understand again why one should quarrel with an animal for having more legs or eyes than oneself. (155)

At first reading, the turn is markedly different from the open blessings of the ancient and modern mariners. Yet, Ransom does not close himself off from all influences but only removes one. The action is not intended to detach himself but to return to an open state, and he spends the rest of

the novel in this frame of mind. He also directs his attention to a human shell – the Un-man is not a man – rather than to the beetle which, as described here, is initially seen as the greater threat because of its fearsome appearance and Ransom’s childhood fear of insects. If the ancient mariner is preoccupied with the beauty of the corpses rather than the living water snakes, Ransom nearly makes the same mistake in associating outward appearance with value. He does not, and that is his benediction. The encounter marks one of the last milestones for Ransom in his understanding of the rational soul. Human form is no longer an issue; we witness it later in *That Hideous Strength* (1945), where a respected member of Ransom's retinue on earth is a bear.

Similar occurrences in both adaptation and appropriation is an interesting extension of Hutcheon’s dialogical process and Barthes’s branching tree. “For the reader, spectator, or listener, adaptation as adaptation is unavoidably a kind of intertextuality *if the receiver is acquainted with the adapted text*” (*A Theory of Adaptation* 21 – emphasis not mine). Here, the adapted text has built upon the ancient mariner’s ecological experience in a way remarkably similar to Lewis’s appropriation many years earlier. For instance, critiquing something for its appearance is something we behold throughout the mariner narrative. The ancient mariner blesses the water snakes, the modern mariner a two inch salp, and the interplanetary mariner a giant beetle. All must overcome hubris and lose an albatross, a process which involves a sympathetic encounter wherein man and nature lose their division, and in losing their division, they all also experience massive time loss. However, unique to Ransom and the modern mariner is the complete union with creation they experience shortly after the sympathetic turn. The modern mariner sees the creation of the world and feels “four hundred million years compacted in my bones” (Hayes). The interplanetary mariner beholds the Great Dance. In a way, each becomes one with his own Mesh. While Hayes may have some knowledge of Lewis or the Great

Dance, I believe this is more in line with Sanders's "encouraged interplay" between all sources which is fundamental in experiencing a text and crafting new meanings and applications (32).

Further connections manifest themselves in both texts and lend credence to the interconnectivity of textual relations rather than a rigid progression. Immensity renders both Ransom and the modern mariner speechless, overcome by the sheer majesty of nature and their own insignificance in light of it. Ransom is initially overwhelmed by the lack of humanity upon the open waters of Venus and species he has not encountered before, which have flourished long before the Green Lady was placed there. The reaction is rooted in fear of the unknown and the beginning of an awareness of a universe - with more planets, some with no peoples and some with vast populations - too overwhelming to comprehend. "It was not hostile: if it had been, its wildness and strangeness would have been the less, for hostility is a relation and an enemy is not a total stranger. It came into his head that he knew nothing at all about this world" (135). We see the same diminished state of awe when the modern mariner is thrown overboard in a violent storm. While submerged, he encounters a gargantuan whale and can only gape at the "Two hundred tonnes of living flesh, the Queen of all creation..." (*The Rime of the Modern Mariner*). As Ransom is unable to comprehend the vastness of the universe and is disturbed by the lack of humanity's presence in deep space, the modern mariner is unable to compare the being to any man-made organization of power, such as religion. He shrinks before the supremacy of nature and sees himself as "this mote within its eyes...too long above my station."

Both men must experience their own insignificance before moving forward; like adaptation theory, constant motion is integral to (re)creation so that "...the road from sources to adaptations is a haunted landscape, full of creation and destruction" (Grossman 11). The unpleasant uncanny arises from the limitless growth that Ransom sees, and the landscape he was

formerly comfortable in becomes a beastly thing. In *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*, Hayes steadily erases humanity from his final pages, destroying a species to the awe of the modern mariner who beholds the disastrous future before slipping away. With adaptation and appropriation alike, endless sources and influences need not form a hierarchy based on recollection or anticipation. The massive system is best reflected in Coleridge's own Romantic Period, which McKusick explores as a chaotic system and "a vibrant community in which competition and synergy, exchange of ideas and flow of information, predators and prey, hosts and parasites, all coexist in the turbulent vortex of a shared intellectual environment" (18).

Adaptations are not mechanical copies that repeat the same experience; they involve "both memory and change, persistence and variation" and fulfill a consumer's desire for both comfort and variation (*A Theory of Adaptation* 173). The "variation" is key as we retell stories, a process similar to what Lewis described as losing ideas and then discovering them anew. Like memes, adaptations will always change, and considering the undulating ripples of *Perelandra*'s surface brings the idea into focus. There is only one fixed, non-moving place, and Maleldil has forbidden the Lady from sleeping on its surface. The inhabitants are unable to remain still, even being washed away by the current when resting. The Lady is not permitted to sleep on the fixed land because it is first a test of obedience, but it is a sign of the *becoming* which Lewis so frequently references. There are two different experiences that relate to this that we see just in *Perelandra* – the growth of the Lady and the process of becoming.

As Ransom is speaking to the Lady, he utters a lie in an attempt to avoid an unpleasant explanation. "It was a small lie; but there it would not do. It tore him as he uttered it, like a vomit. It became of infinite importance. The silver meadow and the golden sky seemed to fling it back at him. As if stunned by some measureless anger in the very air he stammered an

emendation” (61). There is constant force or pressure within this world guiding behavior. Lewis offers more detail on the next page, writing how that presence, “...became not a load but a medium...Taken the wrong way, it suffocated; taken the right way, it made terrestrial life seem, by comparison, a vacuum” (62). If evolution is a necessity, and if adaptation results in a different product from the original, then the process is parallel to a state of being, where change simply *happens*. But the development is even more evident when we repeatedly witness the Lady change as she learns in an unbent manner, something Ransom often compares to the warped development in his own world.

Growing presses most upon Ransom when attempts to detach himself from his surroundings and slink off for a few moments of aloof peace. “...he discovered that it was intolerable only at certain moments – at just those moments in fact (symbolized by his own impulse to smoke and to put his hands in his pockets) when a man asserts his independence and feels that now at last he's on his own” (62). Becoming never ends, and the most extreme form of detachment appears in *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*. What hinges on this is our decision to be aware, a concept similar to Morton's Mesh, where the “here” and “there” exist whether you wish them to or not but can only affect you if permitted. Morton describes the “strange stranger” as increasing intimacy results in increasing confusion; we therefore have gaps in knowledge and time. So, Ransom's surreal, uncomfortable sensations occur as he attempts to return to familiar habits which he can no longer access. Removed from his original surroundings, he must continually move and accept and question to seek peace. The process approaches completion towards the end of the novel, after the “albatross” has fallen, when Ransom wanders from the caverns to the surface and begins journeying across the planet, eventually climbing a mountain which Maleldil directs him to. “He was not lonely nor afraid. He had no desires and did not even

think about reaching the top nor why he should reach it. To be always climbing this was not, in his present mood, a process but a state, and in that state of life he was content. It did once cross his mind that he had died and felt no weariness because he had no body” (166). So too does the ancient mariner believe he is a ghost when first roused from his supernatural slumber.

Additionally, the Green Lady “grows” throughout *Perelandra* and at one point reveals that she had been “young” yesterday; Ransom, confused, thinks of age as a measurement of time and questions her. The Lady refers to youth as inexperience or lack of wisdom; as she “grows” she becomes older. It is Ransom who reveals the idea of time. “I see it now,' she said. 'You think times have lengths...I suppose that is true in a way. But the waves do not always come at equal distances. I see that you come from a wise world...if this is wise. I have never done it before – stepping out of life into the Alongside and looking at oneself living as if one were not alive” (52). Here the lady has her first encounter with the uncanny, stepping away from a traditional place – the home – and seeing herself removed from previous habits to form her identity. Most of the novel is based on the Lady's journey as she forms her self-identity and contemplates further obedience to Maleldil. Severance must take place when the Lady establishes herself and decides what her relationship with Maleldil and the King (her husband) will be; readers as well must “flip” back and forth between texts as they immerse themselves in a world before pulling away for reflection.

As she continues to consider her identity in “the waves,” what follows is one of the most important comments on time as a fixed series of sequential events that create value. When she learns of Malacandra and its inhabitants from the previous novel, Ransom mourns that those races will never again be recreated and be swept away as garbage. They are a previous form, now unattainable, and the inability to return combined with hierarchy's connection to time means

that those species – or those past sources or past environments – are worthless since they have been replaced. The Lady responds: “I do not know what *rubbish* means,' she answered, 'nor what you are saying. You do not mean they are worse because they come early in the history and do not come again? They are their own part of the history and not another. We are on this side of the wave and they on the far side. All is new” (53). When considered in an infinite scale, time renders every perspective essential. The novel culminates with the Great Dance and offers the greatest explanation for the type of equality the Lady speaks of here.

Our separation from a modern conception of progression and time is further reflected as both Ransom and the islands resist a static state. In light of adaption, we see this as resisting utter dependency upon one source material, as Grossman discusses. Repetition does not necessarily permit growth. Lewis's own philosophy was to deny anthropological theory and to consider each thing as something that had become a portion of the whole; you cannot separate parts in order to make meaning. Likewise, you cannot desperately seek out an enjoyable experience identical to a previous one. From this thought, we have the title of his autobiography, *Surprised By Joy* (1955). It also appears in *Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950), when we witness Edmund stuffing his face with Turkish Delight – delicious sweets powered with sugar – without the benefit of the White Witch's knowledge “that this was enchanted Turkish Delight and that anyone who had once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would even, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves” (57). On Perelandra, Ransom also encounters it before meeting the Lady when he eats a delicious fruit.

...he thought how easy it would be to get up and plunge oneself through the whole lot of them and to feel, all at once, that magical refreshment multiplied tenfold...But this now appeared to him as a principle of a far wider application and deeper moment. This itch to have things over again, as if life were a film that could be unrolled twice or even made to work backwards...was it possibly the root of all evil? No: of course the love of money was called that. But money itself – perhaps one valued it chiefly as a defence against

chance, a security for being able to have things over again, a means of arresting the unrolling of the film. (43)

The easiest application of this thought is comparing it to early adaptation studies, which concentrated on fidelity and criticized a reworking which strayed from the original source and later antagonized the Romantic period for the interconnections at play. Complete and utter focus on the home text, however, (and all it represents as the “here”, immediate surroundings, the Original, and Nature) harms an adaptation’s ability to propel a narrative forward.

The question remains how to unite ecology and adaptation if we are not concerning ourselves with the progression of time. An unhealthy relationship between source and adaptation potentially develops when time does not unfold properly, so that independent growth (and severance from the source) is a necessary part of adaptation. Returning to the Lady's concept of time, we see that it is measured in waves of maturity rather than a temporal state of “what ifs” that require loss and disappointment. If Perelandra is parallel to Eden, then humanity must attain self-identity in a way that does not involve the collapse into the same system infecting earth. “The awakening of self-consciousness entails no necessary rupture of the primordial unity with the will of Maleldil, suggesting that it is our own fallen state that leads us to associate the passage from innocence to experience with a lapse from an original state of purity” (Schwartz 71). In the same way, the awakening of an adaptation is much like our uncanny nature, where progression requires separation but growth does not demand an inextricable dependence upon time. Furthermore, the idea of time alters from a steadily stacking progression to a branching sequence producing mutations in a text, much like the undulating waves of Perelandra. “From this vantage point, cosmic progression entails no loss. Untouched by our impulse to transform the qualitative into the quantitative and measure one moment against another, the Green Lady rejoices in the distinctive character of each phase of the creation as it unfolds in time” (Schwartz

70). Therefore, a flux system of growth displaces an original source's or older adaptation's authority previously granted because of age.

An Uncanny Ecology

The similarities between *Perelandra* and *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* are often more surprising than those connections between the science-fiction novel and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*; desiccated corpses of frogs and birds replace the rotting garbage in junk islands. Both mariners experience a deep rest before becoming one with their respective environments, and both eventually return to their worlds to fight corruption and environmental destruction. The narrative of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* evolved from travelogues, a gothic culture obsessed with death and pirates, and as a reworked text. As a spring board for other artists, the narrative has branched over time, quickly spreading out to form appropriations and establishing roots in modern culture. The idea of the universe as a mesh lacks a center or starting point, yet both images convey a limitless expansion of narratives not bound by time or space, a theme explored in full in *Perelandra*.

Despite the similarities between all three texts, the authors present works able to function independently; though part of the joy in adaptation theory is experiencing adaptations *as* adaptations, the shared ecological and spiritual themes are approached from different angles and presented in a manner unique to the creator, not requiring interplay for the reader to understand. The changes are what truly make Hayes's and Lewis's works beneficial to rereading *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. As Lewis writes, a state of constant evolution is essential to proper growth, a process the Un-man is not able to achieve to produce any variation or even repetition. The ideas he spouts are not new but merely rephrased over and over again; he does not mean to win a

true debate but to wear down defenses. The critique of meaningless replication is also present in *The Screwtape Letters* (1942); soon, the Un-man is no longer relevant and eventually eliminated.

Like repetition and replication, the uncanny found in both adaptation and ecology repeatedly appears within *Perelandra*. For adaptation, it is the recognition of a work that has zoomed in closely on its source material while pulling us out of scope so that we review the work from a dynamic perspective. Considering ecology, there is also the strange stranger, where increased intimacy with an object or being only exposes us to the myriad of possibilities and relations. Morton refers to the supernatural encounters as “super natural” - more nature than you bargained for – and as Ransom’s knowledge of the universe increases, he is temporarily paralyzed by the amount of possibilities and unexplored depths he as an individual is unlikely to ever touch. Complete inter-connectivity, then, activates the delightful uncanny.

This study’s primary interest has been the development of Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and how the work has been remade according to Coleridge’s pen and those of the *auteurs* Nick Hayes and C.S. Lewis. The research here and confirmed within Hutcheon’s and Bortolotti’s own work reveals the organic development a text takes in its formation and subsequent reworking, so that an author cannot separate his text from outside influences any more than he can his own person. That same work is bound to change with each replication; furthermore, time is not solely limited to a linear development. Each of the texts discussed here showcases all of these elements while also offering a complete portrait of an individual segment.

Coleridge’s revisions indicate how a story is retold, even when that story has already been told by the exact same author. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, as Coleridge adapts it over three publications, repeatedly responds to an environment full of negative reviews; the convergence of biographic, religious, and artistic influences – to name a few – continually shape

the narrative in a Darwinian fashion. While strictly biological evolution does not consider human initiative, the theory does represent the contributions an environment makes to any changes; simultaneously, viewing the original narrative as a genotype rather than as an idealized form also gives equal attention to the eventual phenotypes that maintain a genotype's basic code while altering according to the surroundings. The rewritten stanzas and added gloss, when interpreted as Coleridge's own adaptations of his work, hold the same narrative and medium but have additional meanings their "genotype" does not hold.

The Rime of the Modern Mariner is a holistic representation of the evolution necessary for survival. Hayes's active involvement in recreating the narrative for a modern era is a response to the cultural conflicts of his day; thus, the adaptation the audience receives, while a conglomeration of influences like any other text, is crafted to address environmental waste (specifically plastic). The illustrated consequences of ruining an ecosystem are Hayes's motivation for rewriting *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* in his image, and this shift in intention is a necessary portion of adaptation. With each retelling, a narrative survives; while the motives of an *auteur* are certainly worth examining, the essential portion of both textual and biological evolution present here is continuation (of a story and a species, respectively). Additionally, the narrative inhabits another medium, thus creating more variation and increasing the chances of a mariner's survival in future generations.

Finally, *Perelandra* branches out as an appropriation of Coleridge's narrative, showing the various avenues a text's development can take. While Hayes's graphic novel certainly exhibits one of these different directions, an important distinction to make is it does so as an *adaptation* and announces Hayes's connection to Coleridge's and his intentions for the sea yarn. To contrast, glimmers of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* appear in Lewis's science-fiction

novel, a writing more obviously reexamining the Garden of Eden and imperialist dogma than a mariner's tale of woe. However, though the ties between Lewis and Coleridge are slightly more ambiguous, they still exist and contribute to both author's ecological and spiritual themes.

Ultimately, aligning adaptation theory with biological evolution leads to interesting insights into the development of a text and the formation of any adaptations or appropriations. Biology shows change as necessary to the survival of a species, and change is most successful when there are a great number of variants available to compete in any given situation. Adaptations and appropriations create new meaning with every rebirth of a narrative, yet examining the culture a text grows in reveals strategic alterations made in reaction to those surroundings to better enable the narrative to survive. The eager way we seek familiar stories to (re)experience them with new perspectives and to deepen our understanding of a previously familiar text, however, is what separates the two theories. The active roles of both audience and *auteur* extend beyond passive evolution to provide new opportunities in renewing texts and allow us as readers to see "things come back to us in as many forms as possible" (Sanders 160).

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