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## Fan fiction as world-building: transformative reception in crossover writing

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### ABSTRACT

This article contributes to the understanding of the mechanisms and functions of imaginary world-building in contemporary popular culture, introducing the perspective of active transformative reception, which is the perspective of fan fiction writers and readers. The author argues that contemporary fan fiction as a postmodern literary field and ‘fictional anthropology’ is much broader in its transformative capabilities than it is believed even in fan studies, in particular in relation to world-building. She takes as an example Russian *Harry Potter* fan fiction and pays special attention to the production and reception of such fan fiction genre as crossover. Analysis of texts of this genre and a survey conducted in the Russian *Harry Potter* online community let her come to the conclusion that this transformative activity of contemporary fandoms in virtual worlds blurs all the lines between different types of sub-creators and undermines the traditional preconceptions of how imaginary worlds can be built, inhabited and developed.

### 1. Why fan fiction and world-building?

From the perspective of an outsider, who has only heard about fan fiction or who has been acquainted with it from slightly outdated descriptions, the title of this text might seem to contain contradictions. World-building is an invention of new imaginary worlds. Mark J.P. Wolf calls it a ‘subcreation’ in his recent encyclopaedic book *Building Imaginary Worlds. The Theory and History of Subcreation* (Wolf 2012). Fan fiction, on the contrary, is quite often defined primarily by its opposition to originality: instead of coming up with his/her own, a fan fiction writer takes someone else’s worlds and characters. Wolf puts fan fiction in the furthest of the ‘circles of authorship’ and practically dismisses it in the context of the construction of imaginary universes (Wolf 2012, 268–287). Current system of copyright laws (and the concept of authorship, a product of modernity), allows fan fiction writers to play with the worlds of ‘others’ as long as they do not venture into the commercial zone. But even this compromise did not happen immediately: the boom in fans’ creative activity on the internet was accompanied by appreciable tensions in this area. Some episodes of this kind have been documented (Jenkins 2008; Tandy 2013; Tushnet 2007). Even after it had already become quite clear that the internet as a medium was conducive for fan communities to find countless creative forms for their engagement with virtual worlds, and media industries eagerly embraced communication with fans for promotional reasons (Pearson 2010), ‘true authors’ have sometimes been unable to contain their anger at fan fiction based on their works. Many of them would be happy to have a ban imposed on any intrusion into their ‘creative domains’.

'Textual poachers' and 'nomads' are common metaphors for fans, coined by Henry Jenkins in his book, which became a classic (Jenkins 1992). These metaphors remain an influential way to describe fan texts and activities in mass consciousness, and even, to a large extent, in the minds of fans themselves, as Juli J. Parrish demonstrates convincingly in a recent article on 'metaphors we read by' (Parrish 2013). Certainly, nomads do not build cities, and the common belief is that fans do not build worlds, but fill in the gaps in the existing ones or elaborate, as Wolf puts it, 'upon and extend the narratives and characters of a world' (Wolf, 279). As a whole, fan fiction continues to occupy a marginal position in the contemporary literary field, is often derided as derivative and disparagingly compared to pornography and romance fiction ('women's reading').

This article aims to demonstrate that contemporary fan fiction is much broader in its functions and transformative capabilities than it is believed even in fan studies, where fan fiction has often been conceived as a specific combination of porn and romance (see, e.g. in extreme form: Driscoll 2006). The article takes as an example contemporary Russian *Harry Potter* fan fiction, meticulously studied during long-term participant observation (2009–2015). But the results of this research, combining theoretical questions posed after years of participant observation in the biggest Russian fan fiction community (part 1) with analysis of a body of texts of a specific genre, crossover (part 2), and with a survey among Russian fan fiction writers and readers about their interest in this genre (part 3), have general consequences regarding the understanding of world-building in fan fiction. It does not seem that an impassable barrier exists between the 'original' literary world-building and 'poaching'. This article is going to argue that contemporary fan fiction writers build imaginary worlds themselves, in a sense, in a course of transformative reception of unprecedented proportions. That in itself tells us a lot about contemporary imagination, about ways of reading and writing currently undergoing changes in online communities, and about new ways of the development of the contemporary culture of literature, which fan fiction is now inseparable part of.

First of all, for those who often read fan fiction or who study it nowadays, fan fiction in 2014–2015 is something significantly different from the fan fiction of the pre-internet generations, as it is represented in the research of the 'first wave' of fan studies (see informative 'Introduction' to: Hellekson and Busse 2006, 17–24). Fan fiction today is extremely diverse and cannot be reduced to a single genre, such as romance, nor to typical practices, such as slash pornography, nor to a specific interest in one or two imaginary universes, because fan fiction is getting increasingly multifandom and influences the ways many people read (Caplan 2012; Hellekson and Busse 2006; Pugh 2005; Samutina 2016; Tosenberger 2014). With the development of the internet, the possibilities of being involved in fan fiction practices expanded significantly, encompassing a variety of ages and gender categories, and a variety of personal interests. Global fandoms coexist with micro-fandoms, fan fiction in many languages develops parallel with fan fiction in English, and these sub-branches of fandoms interrelate in complex online networks. The incredible ease with which participants of fan fiction communities cross the border between reading and writing in every act of transformative reception, exploring and/or co-creating imaginary worlds, would have made Roland Barthes happy, as he believed that 'we will never be able to liberate the act of reading, if we do not simultaneously liberate the act of writing' (Barthes [1976] 1995).

Addressing the issues of originality and authorship, a number of studies in recent years have conceptualized the characteristics of fan fiction as a postmodernist literary phenomenon par excellence (Stasi 2006; Stein and Busse 2009)<sup>1</sup>. Such strong concepts as 'archontic literature' (Derecho 2006) or 'recursive literature' (Tosenberger 2014) were invented in search of multiple parallels between fan fiction and different variants of published contemporary literature. The concentrated intertextuality in fan fiction, together with its recursive inventiveness, encourages the resurrection of the question of how to understand originality and innovation in contemporary literary practices in general. Additionally, it propels researchers to comprehend how these categories change with the rise of fan fiction communities: impatient and passionate co-producers of slightly (or significantly) changed narratives and alternative universes.

For those who become involved in fan fiction reading and writing, this involvement gradually changes the understanding of what is possible in the very configuration of literature as a cultural

practice. It is interesting to note that this reconfiguration of the field of reading and writing for many people takes place at the same time, and in accord with, the latest conceptualizations of the role of such genres as science fiction, fantasy, adventures and detective fiction in the creation of the modern 'public spheres of imagination' (Saler 2012). Michael Saler, a historian of popular literature, introduces the term 'public spheres of imagination' in his groundbreaking book *As if: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* (Saler 2012), convincingly demonstrating the gradual collective establishment of sets of rules for reading, writing and discussing these genres at the end of the XIX – at the beginning of the XX century<sup>2</sup>.

Saler suggests that writers and readers of these specifically modern genres create via new media, such as, for example, science fiction magazines' letters pages, a new collective mode of inhabiting imaginary worlds. He calls this mode 'ironic imagination' because it combines genuine pleasure of immersion into fictional worlds with high demand for rationality: 'This self-conscious strategy of embracing illusions while acknowledging their artificial status, of turning to the "as if," has become integral to modern enchantment <...> modernity remains enchanted in a disenchanted way, rendering the imagination compatible with reason' (Saler 2012, 13).

Contemporary, in many senses postmodern, fan fiction readers and writers are still driven by the same modern passion of inhabiting enchanting worlds: it should be mentioned that the predominant majority of worlds that become the objects for transformative reception, come from this exact literary tradition, though exceptions are always possible (thus, Russian fan fiction writers sometimes play with the worlds of classical novels in the same manner). But contemporary internet users no longer settle for the role of an observer, or even for the role of an ironic player who embodies the existing plots, as did the gentlemen from 'Sherlock Holmes Society of London', lovingly described by Michael Saler.

An internet user lands in Middle-earth or enters Hogwarts with a stock of sophisticated and unprecedentedly transformative questions (not only 'what if Cthulhu existed', but 'what if Lucius Malfoy was hunting him?') and with a group of friends eager to maintain this conversation from the very beginning. Fan fiction readers and writers today are not only the inhabitants of fictional worlds and interactive media environments, but the active transformers of their borders and the concerned co-builders of virtual civilizations and imaginary lives. We should look at fan fiction as a literary and cultural practice in the context of the history of the development of modern public spheres of imagination, asking ourselves about the functions and mechanisms of this development. Michael Saler argues that 'imaginary worlds, and the broader culture of Fictionalism of which they are a part of, help us to embrace contingency and difference and to question essentializing narratives' (Saler 2012, 200). Transformative communities of imagination in new media, partly taking the field and holding the tools in their own hands, even multiply these differences through the endless transformation of constructive elements of imaginary worlds, combined with the endless reflection on the consequences of every change by every reader/writer. The article aims to at least partly answer the question, how they do that.

Inasmuch as the article draws upon *Harry Potter* fan fiction as its main example, it is necessary to mention that fan fiction researchers have already agreed on the historical role of this particular global fandom in the changes in contemporary public spheres of imagination that are of interest to us. As Anne Jamison notices:

The cultural importance of *Harry Potter* slash in particular – of which there was plenty – should not be discounted, because in an enormous global fandom, even subcultures are giant. <...> Like it or not, this has become normal and public, a part of growing up for millions. If *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* have taught us anything, it is that authorial intent has nothing to do with the afterlives of characters. (Jamison 2013, 153)

A similar conclusion is made by Catherine Tosenberger:

Not only did *Potter* fandom upend previous fannish conventions, but it illuminated, to a degree never truly visible on this scale before, the myriad ways in which audiences respond to texts for young people – and how radically those responses can differ from the assumptions and desires of the publishing industry. (Tosenberger 2014, 9–10)

The quantity and diversity of *Harry Potter* fan fiction, together with its historical place in the reading of the first internet generations, makes it an extremely fertile ground for the study of fans' work with imaginary worlds.

A detailed characterization of the Russian *Harry Potter* fan fiction community can be found in recent research (Samutina 2013b, 21–28); only a brief overview will be given here. The community is still very active and large in 2015 (it has thousands of readers and hundreds of writers) and continues to develop dynamically, despite the fact that many prolific writers who ‘created’ fandom in the early 2000s have ceased to participate. This community is predominantly female, including women of: (a) all ages, from 15–16 to 50 and more; (b) different marital statuses; (c) different social statuses and occupations: students, housewives, editors of glossy magazines, theatre workers, doctors, accountants, IT specialists, etc. Two specific elements that exert considerable influence on the Russian-speaking *Harry Potter* fandom are a comparatively high level of education and literacy of the active participants (many Russian *Harry Potter* fandom writers have higher education, some of them in the humanities), and the so-called Multifandom Battles. These are large-scale contests/games for fandom writers, artists, crafters, etc., self-organized by fandoms on the Russian social network [www.diary.ru](http://www.diary.ru) twice annually since 2011. In these contests of anonymously submitted works, for which all users of the social network can vote, the *Harry Potter* fandom has traditionally placed high. In the summer Fandom Battle 2014, it placed first out of over 200 fandoms, in the Fandom Battle 2015 it placed second.

Fandoms and fan fiction communities are quite often studied in contemporary publications in their ‘purity’, as if their borders were impermeable, and a proper fan was obliged to stick only to his/her own beloved canon universe endlessly. On the one hand, it makes sense in general, because these cultural forms are rooted deeply in the practices of communities and the unique history of their writing and communication (see this Catherine Tosenberger’s convincing argument ‘on the unpublishability of fan fiction’<sup>3</sup>). But on the other hand, as we can see with the example of the Russian fandom networks and such forms of fandom activity as Multifandom Battles, contemporary online communication allows and even encourages participation in multiple fandoms simultaneously. Fandoms – and, accordingly, the works they produce – today are closer to each other than ever. Boundaries between fandoms blur, priorities of fan fiction writers and readers shift quickly, and sometimes even fans themselves find it difficult to identify their ‘fandom affiliation’ correctly.

Being asked ‘in which fandom do you write and/or read’, Russian fandom users on [www.diary.ru](http://www.diary.ru) give increasingly high numbers, from five fandoms to ‘thousands’ or ‘all which attract my attention’ (in fans’ own characteristic emotional generalizations). Moreover, some readers and writers simply follow fandom writers and activists they are fond of, starting from *Harry Potter* and then wandering from fandom to fandom, sometimes even without a proper acquaintance with the original universes (canons) or without deep immersion into their worlds. ‘I don’t like this book or series, but I read fanfics based on it, because there are good fandom writers there’ – this is another quite common fandom statement that can seriously influence our understanding of segments of the contemporary fan fiction universe.

In the course of such peripatetic, active transformative reception, which characterizes at least some part of the contemporary fandom reading and writing, the significance of fandom ‘sub-creators’ grows for the participants of communication, together with the growing importance of fan’s world-building. These ‘sub-creators’ sometimes even substitute for the ‘original creators’, still considered by the traditional system of authorship to be the only producers and proprietors of imaginary universes. Also, such a genre as the crossover genre, based on the combination of two or more imaginary worlds, is gaining in popularity in Russian fandoms because of the growing support of readers acquainted with many fandoms (even a separate ‘Team of Crossovers’ participated in the Summer Multifandom Battle 2015; hundreds of crossovers are written every year for Multifandom Battles, for crossover festivals or for no special occasion). This genre is not only unmistakably multifandom, but also more demanding in terms of world-building. In a sense, the crossover genre epitomizes the transformative nature of fandom reception and provides a perfect example of fans’ imaginary world-building (including everything that goes with world-building as a creative operation, i.e. creative inventiveness, fantasy, logic and the need to avoid contradictions, etc.).

But, before the crossover genre is addressed directly, it is necessary to emphasize that not only in crossovers, but in many contemporary transformative works of fan fiction, it is quite hard to decide exactly where – and by what means – one can draw the line between the construction of a new



**Figure 1.** Map of the land Somnia. Illustration for *Elysium, or In the Land of Lost Dreams* by Dver-v-zimu. The names of the locations do not contain any references to *Harry Potter*. The artist delivers the accurate picture of the land described in the text. She references Tolkien's map of Middle-earth as her inspiration. Artist Anastasia Mantihora.

imaginary world by a 'creator' or a 'sub-creator' and the 'elaboration' of an existing one by a fascinated user (the term 'elaboration' is used by Wolf and many others for the designation of a creative operation, secondary to the initial world-building). The problematic list of frequently used narratological concepts and presuppositions in this case is not confined to 'elaboration' or 'filling in the gaps' – the 'entity' of the imaginary world is no less suspicious. While generating and populating multiple and sometimes quite unexpected versions of imaginary worlds, fan fiction encourages researchers (of any field: cultural studies, cultural sociology, literary theory, narratology, etc.) to think of this borderline as less essential and more porous.

For example, one of the most popular and appraised fanfics in the 'Drarry' category (pairing Draco Malfoy/Harry Potter) in the Russian *Harry Potter* fandom is *Elysium, or In the Land of Lost Dreams* by Dver-v-zimu, a long fantasy story in four parts. Ninety percent of the action in this story takes place in a fictional land called Somnia, which – as Dver-v-zimu suggests – exists behind The Veil at the Department of Mysteries, i.e. technically it exists somewhere in the *Harry Potter* world. Those characters from *Harry Potter* whose death is uncertain – Mrs Lovegood, Luna's mother; Sirius Black, Severus Snape – rule there as kings; Harry and Draco Malfoy are the protagonists who travel across Somnia in order to find and save Draco's son, Scorpius. They are both adult family men, significantly changed. But the world itself, Somnia – its geography, civilization in its diversity, genesis and history, flora and fauna, architecture and imagery, etc. – is not only extremely elaborated, but totally independent of the *Harry Potter* world. Among other differences, one of the most important is the absence of magic (the key element of the

*Harry Potter* world) in Somnia. Dver-v-zimu invented for Somnia other – dreamlike – laws of existence. The imaginary land Somnia itself is so clearly described and saturated with details, that one of the Russian fandom artists drew, on her own initiative, an accurate map of this imaginary land, relying on the text of the fanfic (see Figure 1).

For the readers of this fanfic, the originality, entity and consistency of its own imaginary world is undeniable, as well as the fact that the purpose of its creation was not to fill in any gaps in the world of *Harry Potter* or to elaborate upon it. Its aim was the creation of a new imaginary universe within fan fiction as a particular tradition of reading and writing – a tradition that speaks to the fan fiction community and to that community's preferred strategies of dealing with literary texts ('reader's contract on correlation with the canon') (Samutina 2013a). This example (only one of hundreds containing the very popular *Harry Potter* fan fiction element 'journey behind The Veil' and of thousands inventing other types of connections between the *Harry Potter* world and other literary and non-literary worlds) can be sufficient to outline problems with the understanding of the construction and exploration of the imaginary worlds in the advanced virtual post-modern literary spaces. Transformative reception inevitably poses questions that are hard to avoid by simply dividing imaginary worlds into 'official' and 'unofficial' ones, or fully original and not-so-original by the criteria of the publishing industry. Looking at the questions posed above from the perspective of fan fiction communities will help to understand how the multiple imaginary worlds of fan fiction are built today; which needs of the contemporary communities of imagination they fulfil; and how the public spheres of imagination are transformed or at least affected by this redistribution of creative resources and competencies, emotions and time, between the cultural industries and the creativity of ordinary people, the results of which they share with each other.

## 2. Alternative universes and ... even more alternative universes

'Alternative Universe' (AU) is one of the key concepts in the reading and writing of any fan fiction. AU embraces almost any distortion of the canonic narrative and/or world; similar changes in the characters are abbreviated OOC (out of character). These two acronyms can often be found together. The flexible treatment of fictional universes allows fan fiction writers to realize an infinite number of imaginary scenarios, to develop or completely change the characters and to create and/or expand different versions of imaginary worlds. All this is done without losing connection with the community, united by the willingness to enjoy reading and implement other functions of fan fiction as a type of literature, while comparing pre-existing information (canon and fanon) with a unique set of meanings that is formed by the new configuration.

The 'alternativeness' of fan fiction universes varies from slight shifts in a series of related events, often made due to the desire to save some character from death or rotate the view on various characters and events, to the complete 'plowing' of the whole picture of the world, when even the laws of its existence change. In the first case, Draco Malfoy was kidnapped by elves from the cradle and grew up in the care of the Dursley family, so Harry thinks of Draco as his brother (fanfic *Up the Hills, Down the River* by Dver-v-zimu, in Russian). In the second case, Zombie Apocalypse happens in the Wizarding World (fanfic *Pass on the Good Round* by aqua-tofana, in Russian), or Severus Snape and Lucius Malfoy turn into giant spiders-demons and take control of Hogwarts, luring Harry to their side (fanfic *Delicatessen* by Vilissa, in Russian).

To illustrate the possibilities of world-building in fan fiction, two types (by the *Harry Potter* fandom standards) of AU were chosen, very similar to each other in the key point. They both imply the creation of a new world at the intersection of the *Harry Potter* universe with one or more other universes. If the second and subsequent universes come from a fictional source, the resulting text is called in fandom a crossover. If the world of *Harry Potter* is projected onto our 'non-magical' reality (current or historical), this kind of text is called 'non-magical AU'. In the case of non-magical AU, 'reality' takes the place of the second world, but of course, this 'reality' is constructed with the same fictional means. For readers and writers of the *Harry Potter* fan fiction, these are different types of texts; they are also different in the

way they are treated in the *Harry Potter* fandom (there are fans who are very fond of crossovers with other fictional universes and cannot stand non-magical AU, and vice versa). But both these types clearly demand crossover writing, if we judge them by the criteria of narratology. They both visibly contradict the notion of fan fiction as the elaboration of the world of the original text.

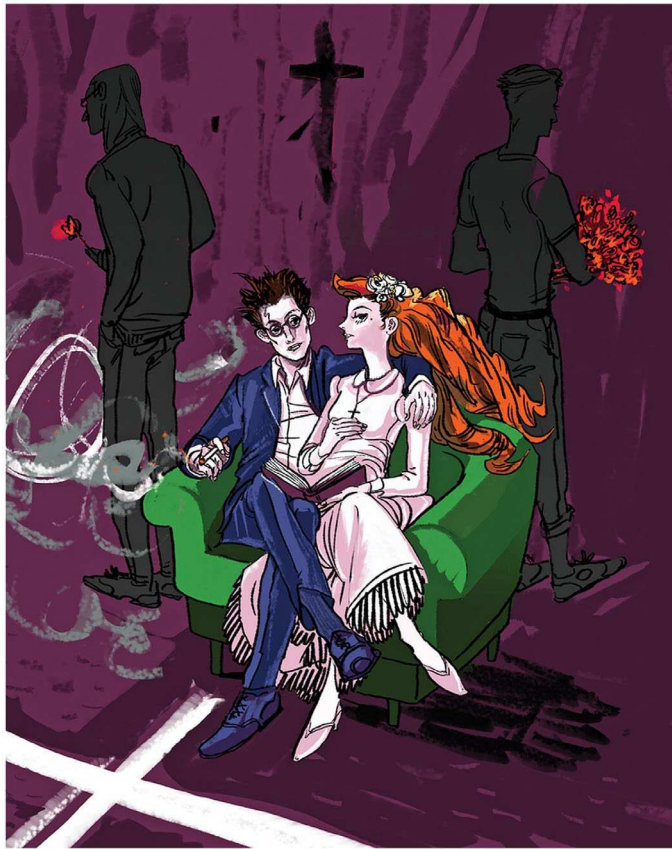
The research presented here has been grounded in the reading of hundreds of fan fiction texts, including about 100 crossovers. However, for a closer analysis, two exclusive groups of materials were selected: first, the texts and reader's comments at one of the recent fandom festivals, and second, the results of the survey conducted in the Russian *Harry Potter* (and inevitably partly multifandom) online community on [www.diary.ru](http://www.diary.ru) in spring 2014.

The first group of materials are the texts and readers' comments at the *Harry Potter* fandom festival called 'Drugie Vselennye' ('Alternative Universes' literally), which was held on the forum 'Polyjuice Potion': <http://hpfanfiction.borda.ru/?0-12-0> in March, 2014. This small festival was chosen for analysis as one of the latest fandom events dedicated specifically to crossovers and non-magical AU. Twenty-two works were presented there, including 10 original fanfics in Russian and 2 translations; the other 10 works were fan art. In response to these works, readers left more than 600 comments in total.

The most common type of texts at the festival was non-magical AU: seven works. Six of these seven texts included some abstract 'ordinary world' reality with *Harry Potter* characters, or characters called the *Harry Potter* character's names – but slightly or even very significantly changed, acquiring such uncharacteristic traits as obsessive compulsive disorder or being turned into Siamese twins (see Figure 2). All of them, however, actively fall in love, overcome misunderstandings and other life's obstacles, in accordance with their canonical abilities. The action of the seventh non-magical AU *Traffic Jams – Ten Points* by Doch Zmei takes place in contemporary Moscow, where the characters of *Harry Potter* work in a firm specializing in crisis management and save an old Moscow park from commercial development, while simultaneously falling in love and forming romantic pairs.

Three crossovers with other imaginary worlds were presented at the festival. One crossover, *The Tempest* by Svengaly, saves Severus Snape from his canonical death and takes him to an enchanted island, gives him a daughter named Miranda and prompts him to find out about his past, including a non-clarified relationship with Harry Potter; the traitor Peter Pettigrew from *Harry Potter* substitutes for Caliban; Ariel is also present (see Figure 3), as well as the lines such as 'We are such stuff as dreams are made on', 'sound and fury', and 'the earth has bubbles'. That is, on the plot level it is a crossover of *Harry Potter* with *The Tempest*, but on the whole, with much more widely sampled Shakespearian imagery and mood as they are present in the contemporary imagination. The second crossover, *A True Friend of a Theater* by Gavrussha, is an absurdist theatre piece (not the most typical text for fan fiction). The tricksters from the *Harry Potter* world, Fred and George Weasley, playing their phantasmagoric games in illusory reality, connect snippets of their original story with *Hamlet*, and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* by Tom Stoppard. The third crossover, *Galatea* by Ayliten, references the Greek myth, but it is set in a science fiction world where Severus Snape is a spaceship captain, and his beloved Lily Potter lies in anabiosis in the futuristic bio-engine of his spaceship, becoming, literally, the heart of all his endeavours. The outer space setting and adventurous plot of this text do not change the fact that it is a very accurate comment on the fate of the Snape character in the *Harry Potter* canon.

The translations presented at the festival were no less inventive. One of them, *Shadow of the Barbed Wire* by PurpleMally, was translated from Italian. Not every fandom reader dares to open a text of that kind. Its action takes place in historical reality, in the Dachau concentration camp, where Harry Potter is the prisoner, and Lucius Malfoy is the cruel overseer (the parallel between the supporters of the 'purity of blood' from the *Harry Potter* world and Nazi policy of extermination of the Jews is perhaps too obvious). The overseer's son, Draco Malfoy, tries to help Harry a little by giving him medicine and food. In this realistically written fanfic the 'romantic' part is limited to a few furtive glances, and the ending is tragic: both characters die ingloriously, crushed by the millstone of this historical period, and do not become heroes. It is interesting to note that this text – and its translator – received a large number of comments of appreciation from the readers, who appraised its serious (although traumatic) content. The second translated text, *Act of Faith* by Amanuensis (a translation from English) is a historical AU



**Figure 2.** Harry Potter and Hermione Granger are Siamese twins in non-magical reality. As if this was not enough in itself, they are devoted Catholics, Hermione is in love with a rich young man Draco Malfoy, and Harry is in love with his teacher, professor Snape. The artist also sees this picture as a stylistic crossover between *Harry Potter*, gothic manga and her own personal mannerist style (quite recognizable for those in the know). Artist Wandarer.

from the Spanish Inquisition, with a twisted plot where Isabella I of Castile is a kind of fanatical Bellatrix Lestrange and Torquemada is a historical variant of Voldemort.

Though this festival collection of texts and reactions to them is considered small by fandom standards, it is still quite an indicative corpus, providing materials for the observation of a genre. The impression from reading these texts and comments to them can be summarized in the following points. First, all the texts without exception, non-magical AU and crossovers equally, create a new fictional reality in the process of world-building: sometimes the world of the stories is not the world of *Harry Potter* at all (*Traffic Jams – Ten Points*, *Shadow of the Barbed Wire*, etc.), and sometimes the world of the stories is not the world of *Harry Potter* exclusively (*The Tempest*, *Galatea*, etc.). Second, the construction of a new world in the writing of such type of fanfic necessarily involves a significant set of intellectual operations, sometimes even research, in addition to the use of the creative imagination. Third, this construction presupposes resolving different narrative problems in new configurations of fictional realities. Nevertheless, every story has a logical development and a meaningful denouement, while immersing readers in its world and enchanting them as it unfolds. At the same time, the history of the active second and third and further layers of meanings, coming from the canons involved, attracts and keeps readers' attention. This makes the new story an interpretation of the canon or canons at the same time. The crossover genre allows the production of a complex intertextual interpretive statement in a fictional form (while not being reduced to this statement).



**Figure 3.** Severus Snape-Prospero and Ariel. Illustration for *The Tempest* by Svengaly (*Harry Potter* crossover with the play by William Shakespeare). Artist Suhona.

Besides, this statement can indeed be directed at all of the parties: the crossover of *Harry Potter* with *The Tempest* tells us something about *The Tempest* and the contexts of its existence in contemporary culture, no less than it tells us about *Harry Potter*. Fan fiction writers are indifferent to the official hierarchy; they speak freely about what interests them. This statement displays the 'horizons of expectations' (Jauss and Benzinger 1970) of contemporary readers. In fact, why would such a fascinating character as Prospero not be a little romantic, brooding and sexy 'up on Melancholy Hill'? A contamination with the 'fanon' variant of the Severus Snape character highlights these opportunities.

Likewise, 'reader's contract on correlation with the canon' in the non-magical AU helps to draw the readers' attention to such historical and cultural material, which in itself would be significantly less likely to become the subject of their interest. The projection of the *Harry Potter* story/characters on the reality of the historical Soviet period or on the traumatic reality of the concentration camp draws readers' attention to these realities. It makes these realities objects of interest, reflection and compassion in the process of construction and reception of a new imaginary world. There are many such fan fiction stories in the Russian *Harry Potter* fandom. One example is *A Soviet Tale* by Toma, where Severus Snape and Harry Potter are scientists in a secret Soviet laboratory and Voldemort is a powerful communist functionary at the Ministry of Atomic Energy. In commentaries on such texts readers often criticize the historical details or at least discuss them at length, while simultaneously expressing their compassion for

people who lived in other (tough) times. World-building in crossover writing becomes a sophisticated instrument of reflection, while often looking like a mere game, as in the case of Soviet Voldemort or Snape, the spaceship captain.

At the same time, that type of transformative works allows writers and readers to engage their own experience more directly, saturating the imaginary worlds they have created with a variety of details and cultural discourses that are of personal importance for them, but that do not feel out of place, like they could be in the process of expansion of the original *Harry Potter* universe. For example, the characters of *Indivisible* by Megumi, one of the non-magical AU stories from the festival, study neurochemistry. It is not merely a mention: the story is replete with neurochemical terms and with descriptions of laboratory experiments, which Harry and Hermione carry out, led by their professor of neurochemistry, Snape. This is a direct 'non-magical parallel' to the world of *Harry Potter* – but the amount of the discourse of neurochemistry in the text gives the impression that the author is an assiduous student, who allows readers to broaden their knowledge on this particular subject.

It also seems important to attract the attention of narratologists to the fact that crossovers create extremely flexible combinations of transfictional imaginary worlds. And transmedial worlds as well: even canonical worlds themselves are often shared across multiple media, and every element from them can be used or transformed. Fan fiction texts and fan art also have various relationships with each other and with different versions of canons (see Figures 4 and 5). Fan fiction crossovers in all their different forms are reluctant to fit into existent contemporary typologies of transfictionality (the rules of connection of one fictional world with another), even the sophisticated ones, such as the typology developed by Mary-Laure Ryan building on the work by Lubomir Dolezel for the description of relationships between more traditional types of texts.<sup>4</sup> The story of the death of Harry and Draco in Dachau should be classified as *transposition* (the most suitable category for non-magical AU as a sub-genre of *Harry Potter* fan fiction), but with such a substantial *modification*, that it is not easy to specify which elements have remained unchanged.

Finally, the questions about the writer's and reader's interest in such texts were addressed directly to the participants of the Russian *Harry Potter* fan fiction community. They were asked, what keeps their interest in crossovers and non-magical AU alive; how they render habitable imaginary worlds and what kind of problems they experience while writing and reading crossovers; what is the writers' main source of drive for writing such stories, and what attracts and repels readers the most while reading them.



**Figure 4.** 'Geroff, you raggy puss!' Not-so-warm meeting of two very territorial catwomen: Shihoin Yoruichi and Minerva McGonagall. *Harry Potter* crossover with manga *Bleach*. Artist john-n-mary.



**Figure 5.** 'This is not lupus vulgaris!' (a difficult case of the patient Remus Lupin). *Harry Potter* crossover with *Doctor House*, from the festival 'Alternative Universes'. Artist Anastasia Mantihora.

### 3. Vernacular deconstruction, fictional anthropology

The survey was conducted in the Russian *Harry Potter* fan fiction community within a week after the end of the festival 'Alternative Universes'. The questionnaire was filled in by 8 of 10 writers who participated in the festival with their texts and by many of the festival's readers, as well as by other writers and readers of non-magical AU and crossovers. The main questionnaire was addressed to the writers, and a slight modification of it was provided for the readers (questions like 'Describe your motivation for writing crossover/non-magical AU' were replaced by 'for reading crossover/non-magical AU'). Fan fiction writers and readers were invited to participate in the survey via the personal blog of the researcher on [www.diary.ru](http://www.diary.ru) and via the blogs of two fandom activists (one of them was from *Harry Potter* fandom and another one was a multifandom writer with big audience of multifandom followers and the 'glorious *Harry Potter* past'). As a result, two complementary data-sets were obtained in 51 questionnaires. Of those actively participating in the *Harry Potter* fandom, 30 questionnaires were obtained (19 from writers, 11 from readers, with 4 respondents completing both questionnaires); of the multi-fandom participants, 21 questionnaires were received (9 from writers, 12 from readers, with 6 people filling out both questionnaires).

Respondents were allowed to choose which one of the designated categories of fan fiction: crossovers or non-magical AU (or both) they would speak about, and were asked detailed questions about their interest in these genres. It is important to stress out that the answers presented here undoubtedly reflect the opinions of those who do love to write/read crossovers and/or non-magical AU. Those fans that are not interested in the genre mostly ignored the questionnaires. Those who responded to the questionnaire showed a very high degree of openness and articulation (characteristic of the participants of fan fiction communities), an eagerness to talk about their own work and details of their attitude towards the phenomenon. The participants in the *Harry Potter* fandom proved to be especially knowledgeable about each other's texts: many *Harry Potter* crossovers and non-magical AU are named in the questionnaires as good reading and positive examples of the genre.

The answers of this fandom group of writers and readers to most of the questions were highly uniform, suggesting common ways of thinking about crossovers as a genre and demonstrating dominant reception strategies among those who are interested in this type of fan fiction. Next, this material will

be summarized and these common strategies will be outlined with examples; additional strategies of reception and variations which appeared in more than three questionnaires will be discussed. Quotes from the questionnaires are given according to the degree of the disclosure of anonymity that the respondents themselves have chosen.

First of all, it is easy to recognize from the words of contemporary readers and writers of crossovers exactly those features of the modern public spheres of imagination which Michael Saler identified in his already discussed book. Most supporters of crossovers think of their writing as a fascinating intellectual game which sets challenging, but extremely rewarding tasks to *both* intellect and imagination. This transformative activity is perceived by crossover writers as a truly postmodernist action (even the word 'postmodernism' in one version or another is present in six questionnaires). It is ironic in its basis, in the Saler's sense of the term, assuming a large share of playfulness in relation to various fictional realities and to the rules of their connection, while still being quite serious about the rational logic and values of world-building and the interests and needs of the community which becomes the scene of this game.

Q: Could you characterize your motivation/ source of drive for writing crossovers/non-magical AU? Why did you not use the world of *Harry Potter* only? Were there some goals which could not be achieved otherwise?

A: This is a combination of analytic interest with synthetic interest! The canon is dissected, the magical stained-glass picture is smashed to smithereens, they are put into a kaleidoscope and then twirled. The resulting pattern is the main source of drive! ... That is to say, the interest lies in the research and knowledge ... or in consistent invention. Second, it is difficult to use the author's canon for the development of characters. You don't know its undercurrents, don't see its nuances. You feel much more confident in a world created in your head, one which is based on historical and political research, or on pure fantasy. (gavrussha, writer)

'A combination of analytic interest with synthetic interest' encourages writers to research and analyse different universes with the utmost attention to the structure of worlds, plots and characters, in order to then build from these elements. This combination is exactly what the moving mechanism of crossover is. The elements of different worlds are not taken dogmatically and unchanged, but are converted creatively into something new, but still with recognizable traits. All the steps in the creation – and reading – of crossovers are characterized by a high level of reflection, which many of the respondents describe with the word 'game'. The ironic and creative mode 'what if' persists continuously throughout the creation of a crossover, and the results are evaluated by the degree of logicity, consistency and overall meaningfulness of the links between two or more worlds. At the same time, the presence of gimmicks, the originality of details captivating readers' imagination, and writer's general breadth of fantasy is important as well.

What is a sign of a successful crossover? Worlds intersect beautifully. The mind of the writer sets reader's imagination on fire with its ability to see the intersection of completely different and distant canons (Svengaly can do it skillfully). Characters are canonical enough. I'm concerned about the logic of the plot and the behavior of the worlds and characters. I love the game of the mind, when the space link of close canons is beautifully realized in fanfic. For example, in the crossover of *The Emerald City* team with *Harry Potter* on The Multifandom Battle 2013, the crossover element was the idea of kinship of the half-giant Hagrid via his giant mother with the giant wizard named Hurricap who created the land of Oz ... (Burnaya Voda, writer)

In response to a question about the signs of a 'bad' crossover (not fulfilling the tasks of the genre, from readers' point of view), writers and readers most clearly dissected the terms of this game, criticizing rough and mechanistic moves, the lack of logical work with different components of imaginary worlds, as well as the violation of the 'reader's contract on correlation with the canon' (when the work loses common sets of references, especially the affective moments that attracted readers' attention).

Q: What is your sign of a 'bad' crossover/non-magical AU?

A: Fanfic in which the universe seems to be made from cardboard, because the author has devoted too much attention to the preservation of parts of the canon and has forgotten to work out the world of the AU. (Magnus Kervalen, writer)

A: When I write AU – it is always a game with the canon. 'But it would be fun all the same, but in a world where robots win!' That is fun for me and it's great if there are parallels with the canon. A lot of them or a little – there is already an option depending on the idea. But these parallels are always there. For example, if Ichigo's mother died

protecting her son from the enemy, it will be the same in any AU. ... In every canon there are things which get us hooked. I quote a Russian fan fiction writer Vetochka Sireni. She once said after reading a 'bad' AU fanfic in Weiss Kreuz fandom: 'Boys who had not lived through the war are not my favorite boys.' (Puhospinka, writer)

During the survey, Russian fandom writers and readers were asked to name their favorite crossovers or the most successful (answering all requirements of the genre) crossovers and non-magical AU they had read. They listed a huge number of crossover variants, thus confirming their arguments about the creative potential of this literary game. The world of *Harry Potter* was successfully (in the opinions of the respondents) connected with the worlds of *Alice in Wonderland*, *Stalker*, *Monday Begins on Saturday*, *Discworld*, *Dragonriders of Pern*, *Addams Family*, *Four Rooms*, *Doctor Who*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Supernatural*, as well as with the historical worlds and discourses of the Roman Empire, Middle Ages, cyberpunk, with the reality of the Soviet school, the Civil War in Russia, with the world of the Second World War, with the realities of the work of the hospital of 'Doctors without Borders' in Somalia, etc. It is only possible to read the multifandom respondents' answers for the questionnaire while having Google on hand: their competence and ability to navigate a colourful variety of contemporary popular culture exceeds any expectations.

It turned out that the rules of this game look more or less the same for the majority of the respondents, in spite of the diversity of tastes and fandoms represented in the survey materials. Of these responses, a clear hierarchy emerges of the textual elements, on which writers and readers of crossovers and non-magical AU impose strong requirements: they want them to be recognizable (connected to the pre-existing sets of references) but inventive, well thought out, fascinating and of the highest overall quality. This hierarchy of the elements can be represented in the form of a numbered list, in descending order of importance:

- (1) Characters are of fundamental importance. Even while developing intersections of worlds and universes, crossovers and non-magical AU do not present an exception from the general fan fiction writers' and readers' interest in characters, their desire to appropriate and develop characters that appeal to them. It is most important to keep characters canonical from the beginning; when changes are made to the characters under the influence of the new situation, the credibility of the changes is of extreme importance.
- (2) The world is very important, but not in relation to canonicity. The logic and reasoning of a new crossover or AU world is especially relevant, as well as its saturation with details, the feeling of its 'organic' coherence, and the 'brightness' and 'vividness' of the resulting image of reality.
- (3) The plot is only partly important. The new AU and/or crossover plot should be interesting in itself, but it can also be just an extremely romantic rapprochement between the characters. The use of fragments of the canon plot in the plot of a new story is welcomed, but not necessarily demanded; it is a need only insofar as it supports the credibility of the canonical characters.
- (4) A comparison of the genre of the new text in relation to the genre of the canon and of the style of writing with the style of the original is almost irrelevant. No special requirements are imposed on them; anything goes.

Sometimes very inventive and even phantasmagoric in relation to world-building and sometimes plain and clumsy, crossovers are in any case built primarily on characters and sealed with characters – that is, with the fan fiction readers' and writers' interest and love for fictional human subjectivity, for the testing of human capabilities, for the psychological development of personae and human relationships in different situations. It is a kind of fictional anthropology that seems to drive a significant part of contemporary fan fiction writing and reading, even in such a genre as the crossover, where world-building plays a crucial role. Fan fiction writers and readers in their answers talk about characters with tenderness, passion and pathos: 'our boys', 'beloved Professor', etc.; it is the emotional core of any fan-fictional reality. They explain in detail and with examples from real crossovers and non-magical AU the importance for the characters to behave 'naturally' in the new sets of relationships and in the new universes. Sometimes the universe is specifically constructed from different worlds in order to help the preferred character to reveal his/her inner hidden capabilities; sometimes an exquisite and sophisticated

world-building serves for the fan fiction writers as a pretext to prove that in any circumstances, 'in a world where robots win', the characters will remain true to themselves (a true friendship of Harry, Ron and Hermione, a deep tragedy of Severus Snape, etc.).

I am one of those readers and fan fiction writers who finds canon attractive primarily because of the characters and not the surroundings – there is a lot of fiction with an engaging entourage, but captivating individual characters and intriguing relations between them are rare. Crossover – in my case, the canon characters placed in different settings – is a challenge for myself and for my affection for the characters. Can they retain originality, relationships, positions, being put into a completely different context? (Rendonski, writer)

In the numerous worlds of crossovers we deal with transnarrative characters (compare Wolf 2012, 66–67) – but transnarrative characters of contemporary fan fiction are able to lead an independent existence with different objects and locations, to grow in the new environment with the general approval of the community. Their former existence in the canon reality, their worlds, their stories, and the network of relationships that they are connected to, fold into saturated intertext, and continue to be relevant to reader's expectations. As one of the fan fiction writers, nettle, said in her answers to the survey:

to raise the periscope above the surface marked 'glasses and green eyes' (Harry Potter as he is) is enough for the reader to see a huge submarine, stuffed with reader's own ideas about this character, his emotional luggage, appearance, and skills. This is a strong bond, which to some extent makes any reader your co-author.

This specific relationship between transfictional characters and their worlds contributes to making fan fiction an intensive and intertextually saturated fictional frame in the equally intensive and saturated space of contemporary culture.

In response to the question about the role of 'logicality, coherence and consistency' in building a world of crossover and non-magical AU, most writers and readers insisted on the extreme importance of these requirements. Many of them also stressed the importance of the overall saturation of a new world with new (self-invented and logically connected) details. After outlining the necessity of consistency in the world-building, many of them discussed in detail how they do work on this task.

I have a non-magical AU series situated in a school named after the cosmonaut-hero Yuri Hogwartov. At the moment there are five. I dearly love this series, even though it takes me a lot of effort: the action takes place in the late 1970s in the Soviet Union (I wasn't born until the 90s), so I am constantly collecting stories of older relatives or acquaintances about the time; working with readers, 'collecting' pieces of their memories; trying to saturate the text with the 'signs of the time' <...> It is interesting to 'play' with characters and events of *Harry Potter* during the Soviet period. Many of my readers have told me that the story would not have lost its appeal as an original story, but I think I would have never been inspired to write the original story about the USSR (this topic is simply not part of my interests), if I had not wanted to write about the characters of *Harry Potter*. (Magnus Kervalen, writer)

Why do I write non-magical AU fanfics when there is such an engaging world of *Harry Potter*, with magic, unicorns, and all that stuff? Maybe the answer is that I am not that much into the canon of the *Harry Potter* books and its universe. <...> Maybe, the answer is, that I always forget about the magic. For *Harry Potter* characters, the magic should be as natural as breathing. They should perform cleaning charms instead of removing a stain from a mirror; cast *aquamenti* into a cup, use a levitation spell, etc. But these are such pleasant actions, I enjoy describing them so much! I enjoy describing how tap water is filling a mug; how Snape, for example, prowls around the house looking for the Very Important Book, crawling under a bed, his gaunt ass sticking out while his head is somewhere under the bed cover, and we hear his grumpy sneezing from there, like out of a remote cave. Clothes should not be falling on the floor with a movement of a wand, no! The characters should remove it clumsily one button after another. (Treggi Di, writer)

And yet, apart from the serious requirements, there still is some stipulated space for manoeuvre in the transformative world-building: for writer/reader games, jokes, Easter Eggs and creative vandalism.

Of course, coherence, consistency, etc. is much welcomed in crossovers, as everywhere in fan fiction – but if it's banter, crack, absurd, then there is a special charm in the juxtaposition of the remotest things! (kasmunaut, writer)

'Logicality, coherence, consistency' are very important to me. And yet, while writing fanfics, I never refuse the things I like or are interested in. Easter eggs! These are little references to the canon, or to different canons, if the fanfic is a retelling or a crossover. It's a buzz to write a non-magical AU and then suddenly slip in a wandering spell there, or add some mystic elements. I leave hints, jokes, references here and there that are obvious for those in the know; I hope a reader will smile when she finds them. Of course, you can write original fiction, but what kind of Easter eggs should be left there? Who will find them? Who will be looking for them at all? (Treggi Di, writer)



**Figure 6.** Illustration for the non-magical AU fanfic *The World Ends Straight Behind Your Shoulder* by Treggi Di. The artist captures the writer's scrupulous interest in everydayness. For the Russian viewers many details are clearly recognizable as belonging to their own home reality (the central heating, the form of the bread, the frost outside, etc.). Artist Anastasia Mantihora.

In their answers to the questions about characters and the world of the story, the respondents were unanimous in their requirements. By contrast, when it comes to a plot, there is a variety of writers' and readers' interests. The plot correlates with the canon or canons much more loosely than characters and more loosely than the world: according to the respondents, successful crossovers and non-magical AU can replicate some parts of *Harry Potter* plot twists in a different reality, but also they can be significantly independent from the canon. In addition, in response to these questions about the plot, a clear subcategory emerges of the lovers of romance stories, whether in mass genre version, or in the more realistically grounded household version (see Figure 6). Readers in this subcategory favour non-magical AU over crossovers and prefer stories where a romantic pair is formed after overcoming some impediments. In the *Harry Potter* canon, this plot is minimized. Accordingly, those who favour fanon romantic or sexual relationships between characters give up huge blocks of the canon plot without much regret.

I especially love non-magical AU in contemporary reality, which describe the intimacy of two main characters, or some difficult period in their relationships – breaking up, quarrels, the cooling off period, etc. Any kind of RELATIONSHIPS – that is interesting to me. I define it for myself as a 'romantic Snarry'. (LucasDawson, reader)

Another pronounced category of writers and readers, on the other hand, loves general ('gen') fanfics that are unconcerned with romantic or sexual relationships. These fans are more interested in plot twists, and tend to request narrative ingenuity in crossovers and non-magical AU as well. However, even for them the plot is third in importance in comparison with the characters and the development/building of worlds: with gimmicks in the construction of new worlds and with completely new magical creatures or artefacts.

Finally, any specificity of writing style and modalities with regard to non-magical AU and crossovers is marked in three questionnaires only, for example: 'The irony inherent in the canon – *Discworld* – disappeared under the influence of another world' – morcabre, translator. In general, respondents either answered these questions with the wording 'does not matter', or dismissed them with the fandom clichés, such as 'every good fan fiction writer writes in their own individual style'. Fan fiction writers

do not think much about crossovers as stylistic games, and fan fiction readers do not expect this from them. World-building, and the fictional anthropology closely connected to the construction of new universes, remain the two main driving forces of the genre for those interested in it.

#### 4. Conclusion

Contemporary communities of imagination not only receive and experience, but also actively transform and co-create imaginary worlds and live their lives in these worlds with great intensity, constantly expanding the spheres of their interests. Such transformative creative activity is extensive and emotionally saturated. It encourages self-guided learning and self-development, equally of intellectual and emotional nature. This development is realized in the process of the study of texts and materials, in writing itself as intellectual activity, in ongoing discussions of values and norms in online communities, in the practices of 'fictional anthropology' that presuppose understanding, interpretation and multiple experiments with human behaviour in fictional form.

In the traditional production of literature, a writer must 'grow' characters over the years, and build the world from the ground up, 'from the ground under their feet to the roof over their head' (as nettles, fan fiction writer, formulated in the survey). But active transformative reception, which is common in contemporary communities of imagination, facilitates this creative process for the participants, thus involving much more people in the act of writing. It allows one to experiment with pre-existing characters, building worlds for them with ready-made blocks of material of very high quality (already loved by many), and relying on the support of the reading and writing communities. This practice is driven in a significant measure by interest in people – their psychology, sorts and kinds, the decisions and choices they make and the stories that they are able to live through and develop. Transnarrative, or transfictional characters of contemporary fan fiction are saturated with personal experiences, affections and identity constructions of their sub-creators, just as much as the worlds they inhabit are saturated with the results of these writers' and readers' playful imagination, their drive for exoticism, and their need for rationality and logic.

Such a multifandom genre as the crossover genre epitomises the possibilities of transformative reception of contemporary fan fiction, being specifically concentrated on world-building. The construction of crossovers (and, in the *Harry Potter* fandom, of non-magical AU) seems to be especially suited for more transformative writing within the general frame of fan fiction. Writers of crossovers experiment not only with characters, but with the fictional worlds they inhabit, and try to tie all loose ends in the process of a very sophisticated literary game. The writers and readers of crossovers appear to be intellectually savvy users of contemporary popular culture, displaying a good working knowledge of its constantly multiplying diversity. They also demonstrate the ability to operate with extremely rich contexts and blocks of information of high density, and the ability to notice parallels and quickly grasp connections between various elements of texts or canons, sometimes far removed from each other.

Svengaly, one of the most successful writer of crossovers in the Russian *Harry Potter* fan fiction community (she is directly named in many questionnaires, and her ability to see parallels between different canons was highly praised by the readers), characterizes her writer's interest in crossovers in her own answer as follows:

Why the world of *Harry Potter* is not enough? Because for me, separate canons just do not exist. I experience the whole literature as one canon, together with all released movies and theatrical productions, with all music and painting, and in addition with real life. All this is the canon, and every book is a part of it. I suppose this is a common disease of the postmodernists.

In addition to this quotation, another, meta-reflexive one from her crossover *The Tempest* can be remembered. Shakespearian heroine, Miranda, tells Severus Snape, when he confesses that he is ashamed of his past: 'but you've changed: then you were in one story, and now – in another'. Taken together, these quotations can serve as a point of assembly not of the crossovers only, but maybe, in a sense, of contemporary fan fiction in general – as a post-modern cultural practice and a fictional frame, which

make world-building and creative ‘fictional anthropology’ accessible for contemporary communities of imagination.

## Notes

1. ‘Like fan producers, postmodern theorists and artists emphasize pastiche, appropriation, and intertextuality, often challenging themselves to create within firmly established boundaries’ (Stein and Busse 2009, 193).
2. ‘Letters pages in fiction magazines became public forums for debates about imaginary characters and worlds, which often elided into discussions about the real world. Similarly, associations, publications, and conventions devoted to imaginary characters and worlds were also sites for the collective discussion of fictions and their relations with the real’ (Saler 2012, 17).
3. ‘Many of the best fan stories (as well as many of the mediocre and the worst) are completely unpublishable for reasons that have nothing to do with nebulous assessments of literary quality, and everything to do with the fact that fanfiction is often so deeply embedded within a specific community that it is practically incomprehensible to those who don’t share exactly the same set of references’ (Tosenberger 2014, 4–5).
4. ‘*Expansion* extends the scope of the original storyworld by adding more existents to it, by turning secondary characters into the heroes of the story they experience ... *Modification* “constructs essentially different versions of the protoworld, redesigning its structure and reinventing its story” (Dolezel 1998: 207). ... Most literary examples of modification follow a counterfactual sequence of events by giving a different destiny to the characters, one that in effect answers the question What if? ... *Transposition* ‘preserves the design and the main story of the protoworld but locates it in a different temporal or spatial setting’ (Dolezel 1998, 206) ... To the three relations described by Dolezel I would like to add *quotation*. Examples of quotation would be a character in one of the *Lord of the Rings* movies using a light saber borrowed from *Star Wars*’ (Ryan 2013, 366).

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- A Soviet Tale* by Toma: [http://awards.ruslash.net/works/879?archive\\_params%5Barchive\\_type%5D=all&archive\\_params%5Bnomination%5D=5&archive\\_params%5Bpage%5D=1&archive\\_params%5Byear%5D=2011](http://awards.ruslash.net/works/879?archive_params%5Barchive_type%5D=all&archive_params%5Bnomination%5D=5&archive_params%5Bpage%5D=1&archive_params%5Byear%5D=2011)
- A True Friend of a Theater* by Gavrusssha: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/3722797>
- Delicatessen* by Vilissa: <https://ficbook.net/readfic/95235>
- Elysium, or In the Land of Lost Dreams* by Dver-v-zimu: <http://slasyaoui.com/forum/index.php?topic=529.msg3050#msg3050>
- Galatea* by Ayliten: <http://www.fanfics.me/index.php?section=3&id=60060>
- Indivisible* by Megumi: <http://hpfanfiction.borda.ru/?1-12-0-00000003-000-0-0-1397510589>
- Pass on the Good Round* by aqua-tofana: [http://awards.ruslash.net/works/4039?archive\\_params%5Barchive\\_type%5D=all&archive\\_params%5Bnomination%5D=5&archive\\_params%5Bpage%5D=2&archive\\_params%5Byear%5D=2014](http://awards.ruslash.net/works/4039?archive_params%5Barchive_type%5D=all&archive_params%5Bnomination%5D=5&archive_params%5Bpage%5D=2&archive_params%5Byear%5D=2014)
- Shadow of the Barbed Wire* by PurpleMally, a Russian Translation from Italian by Liannon: <http://hpfanfiction.borda.ru/?1-12-0-00000006-000-0-0-1397510951>
- The Tempest* by Svengaly: <http://archiveofourown.org/works/2546999>
- Traffic Jams – Ten Points* by Doch Zmei: <http://hpfanfiction.borda.ru/?1-12-0-00000011-000-0-0-1430228160>
- Up the Hills, Down the River* by Dver-v-zimu: [http://vk.com/doc73588331\\_119261441?hash=1499fe692bcb891bebf&dl=6e0d727345c819fc31](http://vk.com/doc73588331_119261441?hash=1499fe692bcb891bebf&dl=6e0d727345c819fc31)