UNIVERSITY OF AGDER

The Adapted Antagonist

The Female and Male Antagonist in Transfer from the Victorian to the
Postmodern: The Adapted Moffat/Gatiss *Sherlock* Television Series
Compared and Contrasted with the Printed Works of
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

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*This master's thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the
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for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1. 1 Introduction and thesis statement

The field of adaptation is a difficult one to embrace. The subject is one of considerable size and complexity as it involves both literature and film, as well as other elements of intermediality. Writings on the subject are of such vastness that the majority is often limited to specific case studies in their attempt to illuminate certain adaptation issues. Though issues like "why we adapt" or "what an adaption is" might be relevant, this will not be the main concern of this thesis. Instead we will give close consideration to the notion of fidelity in the adaptive transfer, and observe what this fidelity, or lack thereof, causes in terms of change in meaning or spirit. For this we will consider the works of, amongst others, Linda Hutcheon and Thomas Leitch. In a comparative study of the adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's works, resulting in the 2010 BBC series *Sherlock* created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, this thesis will be predominantly focused on the issue of characters and what happens when this intrinsically Victorian universe is transferred to the 21st century. The Victorian society dealt with in this thesis concerns mostly the urban society that was centred in London rather than the society influenced by rural culture. The mores connected to its society, its ideals, and particularly its literature is still relevant in a modern society, as evidenced e.g. by the adaptation this thesis concerns.

The works in this thesis subject to close analysis will primarily be the Conan Doyle short stories *A Scandal in Bohemia* (1891) and *The Final Problem* (1893), and episodes from

the BBC *Sherlock* (2010-) series adaptations – created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss; predominately *A Scandal in Belgravia* (2012) - written by Steven Moffat and directed by Paul McGuigan, *The Great Game* (2010) – written by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, and directed by Paul McGuigan *The Reichenbach Fall* (2012) – written by Steve Thompson and directed by Toby Haynes.[1] Other episodes, adaptations, films and literary works that prove relevant to the comparative analysis will also be featured.

As the characters of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson so often has been the main subject of analysis, this thesis will rather be concerned with the more prominent peripheral characters of Irene Adler and Professor Moriarty, and how the adaptive transfer affect their manifestations as characters and their relationships with the famous detective. A close look at what is added, removed, changed, or kept in the process of such a transfer will be the main objective of this thesis. The notion of fidelity – the adherence to the original literary works that is being displayed in the adaptation - is consequently an important one. Other aims will be to study what elements from the original Conan Doyle works have been kept in the adaptive transfer, to comment on the changes that have been made and their consequences.

As Thomas Leitch points out in his chapter *The Hero with a Hundred Faces,* Sherlock Holmes, in terms of adaptation, is a special case. Being a vastly popular literary character, he has been the subject of numerous portrayals and adaptations, including stage plays, silent movies, comics, series and films. These have added to the franchise and effected public perception of whom or what Sherlock Holmes is. Consequently, adaptations featuring the famous detective today are not merely an issue of adapting a literary work to the screen. Due to the mythic nature and legendary status of Holmes the task will automatically include elements from the entire Sherlockian franchise, making the notion of "fidelity" a complex one. Other adaptations or onscreen products from the franchise where the famous detective appears, particularly those featuring Adler or Moriarty, will therefore be relevant.[2]

This thesis is an open one, where the goal is to perform a comparative analysis concerning characters rather than achieve a specific end product. As an in-depth discussion of the nature of adaptation would be beyond the intent of this thesis, the parts of the thesis that touches on film adaptation will be limited to a somewhat superficial treatment. Film technique will not be a major point of discussion

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[1] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1942612/
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1942614/
[2] Leitch, (2007), p 207-210

1.2. Sherlock Holmes

From the moment Sherlock Holmes first appeared in *A Study in Scarlet* in 1887 he has been a success. Though Edgar Allan Poe has been recognized as the first author to introduce the world to the modern detective genre with the creation of Auguste Dupin, Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes has through his constant presence and through numerous adaptation become the very prototype of the detective. The sentimental heroes of the Romantic era were replaced by the new, archetypical and self-made man of the Victorian era; a man whose success is born of intellectual capacity and agency rather than hereditary privileges. Holmes is described as "cold, precise, but admirably balanced… the most perfect reasoning machine[3]" He can certainly be arrogant, presumptuous and rude, but is also capable of expressing kindness and gratitude, and follows his own set of elevated morals, unencumbered by the bureaucracy of the law. Much like many a Victorian, Holmes lives in a society whose composite elements he both embodies and scorns. By the capacity of his brilliant mind, he is able to utilize the new possibilities of the Victorian society and simultaneously strive towards repairing the elements of that society subject to scorn.

Incidentally, when creating the character, Conan Doyle did not intend Holmes to feature in more than one story. However, the success of his protagonist was immediate, and Conan Doyle ended up creating 56 short stories and 4 novels featuring the now famous detective. Because of this creation, over time Sherlock Holmes shows signs of contradictory personality traits and dispositions. There is also an efficiency to Conan Doyle's writings on Holmes that favours plot over character – largely due to the nature of the short story structure and the intricacies that are necessary to the genre. This structure leaves little room for specific detail outside the plot, and Holmes' character is consequently one of simple, but clear and strong outlines. Iain Pears argues that the Conan Doyle Holmes' personality is so strong, simply because "he is not supposed to have one[4]". Other than his capacities as a world class sleuth, we know very little about Sherlock Holmes. The fact that nobody really knows him is part of his appeal, and also why his character is so well suited for adaptation. The narrator John Watson is our window into the nature of Holmes, and partly what makes Holmes so great is the unfettered admiration that Watson has for him. In other words, in the Sherlockian universe, the people that surround Holmes are of absolute importance. Incidentally, peripheral characters in this universe are reciprocally attributed worth or importance on the basis of

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[3] Doyle, Roden, Roden, (1924), p 145-159
[4] Doyle, (2001), p viii

Holmes' relationship with them; the close friendship between Holmes and Watson, the stalemate animosity between Holmes and Moriarty, and the peculiar relationship between Holmes and Irene Adler are of such a nature that that they have ensured these characters' permanent presence in the Sherlockian franchise.[5]

The Victorian society was fast paced and rapidly changing. The surge in technology, invention, medicine, economy etc was developing at new speeds. Holmes has always been the self-made man; a Renaissance man, trusting in deductive reasoning and utilizing the technology that his time provided. As he has always had a rapidly working mind, an adaptation to a modern society that is characterized by a similar speed, suits both his mind and his personality. In spite of all the technological aids and inventions available to him in the 21st century, he still has to amalgamate the details of a crime scene to form a narrative, impressing both characters and audiences with his extraordinary capabilities

1.3. The Franchise

The poster for the 1939 film adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*[6] when it premiered in the United States featured several elements. Most prominent are the letters that spell the title; printed in the somewhat squiggly font associated with the horror movies of the period, the yellow letters have a sickly tinge that stands out on a green and blue background. Also prominent are the faces of actors Richard Greene and Wendy Barrie portraying Sir Henry Baskerville and Beryl Stapleton. Below them is listed the names of other contributing actors, some of which are now undeniably linked to the Sherlockian franchise, e.g. Nigel Bruce (in the perpetual role of Dr. John Watson) and Lionel Atwill (as Dr. James Mortimer, and later Professor Moriarty in *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon*). At the bottom is the confirmation that this is a *20th Century Fox* production. From a green background resembling the moorland fog protrudes the head of the renowned hound with a snarling mouth and red eyes. Above are the slanting letters that spell out the name of author of the original literary work the adaptation is based on - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – in cursive. Covering the largest part of the poster, however, is the blue silhouette profile of Sherlock Holmes. The perspective audience all knew it was Holmes, even though the poster says nothing to affirm this. How did

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[5] Doyle, (2001), p vii
[6] See appendix 1

they know? Featuring little other than a pipe, a prominent nose and a partial deerstalker hat, the figured portrayed in dark blue is sporting some of the most recognizable icons in film history. Though not explicitly mentioned in the original Conan Doyle works, props like the calabash pipe, the deerstalker hat and the Inverness cape have been used so emphatically in other visual media featuring the famous detective as to create a decanted and concentrated chain of meaning where these icons alone are enough to convey attitudes and values connected to Sherlock Holmes. The people reading a comic book or watching an adaptation *know* Sherlock Holmes. Upon recognizing the signature deerstalker hat, the classic calabash pipe, or the magnifying glass, they also recognize his demeanour and his deductive talent. They recognize the human bloodhound hot upon the trail of evildoers and mystery. They recognize the confident and authoritative man who, with calm rationality, swiftness of mind, and hints of arrogance and humour, explains the process of his deductions to baffled spectators. This is why, when transferred into other stories or media, in acts of homage, parody or pastiche, both the physical and mental qualities of Sherlock Holmes are easily recognizable. Due to the icons connected to Sherlock Holmes, and the meanings these items embody because of this connection, the character lends itself easily to adaptations and appearances in various media.

Thomas Leitch talks about the extent of the Sherlockian franchise in his chapter *The Hero With a Hundred Faces*.[7] Out of literary characters transferred from the page onto the screen, our hero detective ranks fourth in the world in terms of number of actors who have portrayed him on screen.

Through numerous books, short stories, stage plays, comic books, cartoons television series, films etc., Sherlock Holmes has been portrayed so many times and with such variation that he takes on a mythopoetic nature. As Leitch points out, the character takes on an autonomous existence outside of the original literary works that contributes to the continued popularity of the franchise and expands it.

When Conan Doyle brought Sherlock Holmes back from the dead in *The Adventure of the Empty House* he ensured the perpetual existence of the hero who had defeated death. Capable of penetrating temporal or spatial limits as a result of this, Sherlock Holmes takes on the status as *legend*. In the opening titles of he has, consequently, been solving crimes and fighting enemies in numerous settings and periods outside of the Victorian era, and fought and collaborated with both fictional and real characters from all corners of the earth. Basil

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[7] Leitch, (2007), p 207-235

Rathbone and Nigel Bruce made their way into franchise fame through their many performances as Sherlock Holmes and John Watson respectively. What is remarkable about the film series is that, with the exception of the two first films produced by *20th Century Fox* in 1939*,* the remaining 12 movies produced by *Universal Studios* are of a contemporary setting – actively temporally displacing the universe and consequently contribute to the notion of Holmes as an eternal character. From 1942- 1946 Sherlock Holmes was actively used as a propaganda tool in WWII – particularly noticeable in the 1942 films *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon.* Holmes' timelessness is explained in the opening titles of *Voice of Terror,* the first movie set to a contemporary world: "Sherlock Holmes, the immortal character of fiction created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, is ageless, invincible and unchanging. In solving significant problems of the present day, he remains – as ever- the supreme master of deductive reasoning.[8]" Sherlock Holmes would, through his mythic existence, be known to the audience as having a superior mind as well as a strong morality. Having this enormously popular detective take sides against Adolf Hitler and the Nazis is an example of how the myth of Holmes would affect the audience in terms of real and contemporary issues. The series features several Moriartys as well, who is at times collaborating with the Nazis. If there were still any doubt as to which side of the war was the "right side", the fact that *Universal Studios* was equating the renowned nemesis with the Nazis was the final confirmation of the ethical superiority of the Allied forces. Though Moriarty is never portrayed by the same actor twice, the fact that this "Napoleon of crime" can die and still appear in the next movie gave the villain a touch of legend status; both Holmes and Moriarty have conquered death. One vital difference is that Holmes carries the authority Conan Doyle's work, which gives his resurrection more prestige and weight. There are no iconic images connected to Professor Moriarty, he has no signature prop or catchphrase. Some would argue that this only adds to the mystery of Moriarty as a character. His main feature is that he is of a mental capacity that matches Sherlock Holmes'.

In spite of Conan Doyle's death in 1930, Sherlock Holmes continues to appear in new stories and scenarios through the creation of new literary works, or onscreen adaptations. Similarly, peripheral characters from the Sherlockian universe have taken on a separate life on their own in noncanonical works. The deductive capabilities of John Watson, Inspector

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[8] Leitch, (2007), p 218-219

Lestrade, and even Mrs. Hudson have been explored, as has the life and adventures of Irene Adler. [9]

1.4. Adaptation

When studying adapting for the screen, one realizes that the task of the author of the literary work and the writers of an adaption share certain tasks. As George Bluestone points out in his chapter on *The Two Ways of Seeing*, the main task of both creator and adapter is to make the audience *see.* Whether this is an experience of the visual senses or of the minds inner eye, the task is similar; to create a relationship between the producer of the product and the receptive audience where the first affects the other.[10] Though the manifestation of these might be different, both literature and film speak in a language of structure, myths, symbols and images that must, in order to be successful, be available to the audience on some level or another. When reading a literary work, this language is constantly present, making our imaginations work to provide us with a personal perception - a perception not only based on the text itself, but the readers' personal experiences. Linda Hutcheon emphasises Christian Metz' point on how cinema has a different way of expressing itself than what is possible through words. This ability to tell a story from a different angle and in a different artistic language is the very essence of adaptation. Adaptation itself has traditionally been viewed as a baser art form, and has also been accused of simplifying the art of literature. Hutcheon refers to what she calls a "hierarchy of medium or genre", where literature outranks films, and where films are perceived as "lowering" the literary work.[11] The reason for this presumption is a romanticizing of the original creation, literature's status as a superior art form, and the "let down" that the readers are bound to experience upon watching an adaptation of a literary work they are familiar with.

Taking Wolfgang Iser's views on the effects of reader response into account, one might argue that the perception of adaptations being viewed as secondary to literature might be due to the fact that films are confined to operate primarily within the realm of physical perception. Narrowing creative possibilities down to one immutable picture cancels out the active imagination of the audience, leaving them disappointed.[12] Naturally, an adaptation

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[9] Leitch, (2007), p 210
[10] Bluestone, (1973), p 1
[11] Hutcheon, (2006), p 3
[12] Iser, (1974), p 283

cannot meet the expectations and all the pre-existing inner imaginings of all members of an audience. It will, firstly, be the physical manifestation of one or more individuals in charge of the production. Secondly, there are certain limitations to an adaptation where the display of violence, sex and language are concerned, particularly regarding television adaptations as these are often subject to stricter censure. There are also limitations as to budget and availability of technology and time. Though the perceived sanctity and the tradition of the written word are extensive, there are certain obvious, artistic opportunities offered by operating within the medium of film, mainly that there are more and quite simply different devices available for invoking emotion than in a literary work.[13]

Firstly, there can be no denying the effect audio and visual representation can have on an audience. Though the human imagination is limitless and powerful in its own way, the screen allows for the use of different sensory organs. Aesthetic choices related to colour-schemes, locations, lighting, costumes, furniture etc. provides the audience with a full visual representation that often has the ability to amaze. For example: Tolkien's mentions of the surrounding nature in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy are many. However, when displaying the impressive, beautiful and diverse nature of "The Shire[14]" on screen in the adaptations, an entire audience was enthralled as the film took on an epic scope.

Secondly, there is the undeniable "magic" of CGI (Computer-generated imagery). Though this is a relatively recent addition to the world of film-making, the possibilities become close to endless as the art expands and improves. In *The Lord of the Rings,* the combination of acting, make-up, special effects and CGI technology made Andy Serkis rocket into fame due to his portrayal of the character Gollum. The possibilities presented by CGI brings the audience several steps closer to having what was previously limited to their imagination manifest itself on the screen in front of them. Superheroes can fly, entire cities come into existence and space ships can crash into and destroy famous buildings. Monsters exist, and magic is real. Drawing ever closer to believable manifestations on screen, CGI definitely adds to the film and opens up for the possibility that the medium might match the imagination.

In terms of invoking emotion in an audience, music proves absolutely vital. Having been an important component of the film experience ever since the medium was created, music still provides films and television series with a language that cannot be matched with either visual senses or the spoken word. A language of majors and minors, dissonance and

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[13] Hutcheon, (2012), p 3

[14] The *The Lord of The Rings*-trilogy features New Zealand landscape heavily

consonance, force and silence can be used to steer the emotional experience of an audience in whichever direction one chooses. The choice of instruments, the linkage of a certain theme to a specific emotion or character, the creation and dissolving of tension are only a few elements of the manipulation that is possible through music – possible due to the fact that music is a vastly recognizable language that transcends cultural barriers. It is the music that links the audience to what is happening on the screen and that creates a very particular dimensional depth.[15]

When considering the presentation of an adapted character on screen, the choice of actor is important. The literary work often gives criteria for what limitations or possibilities there can be with regard to casting. Plot or character might call for an actor of a particular age, or a particular appearance. A certain skill-set or a certain talent might also be a determining factor. The actor contributes with his/her personal interpretation of the character, a certain physical appearance and a particular voice. In dealing with a popular franchise, the audience's expectations (of even demands) of a character's manifestations on screen may be many. Choosing the wrong actor might lead to an unsuccessful and disappointing adaptation. There is also the undeniable fact that the actor's previous merits often are taken into account. When casting Benedict Cumberbatch in the role of Sherlock Holmes, Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss held no auditions; they had a list with only his name on it. Cumberbatch was already thought to be an intelligent man with great command of the British language. In his work as an actor, he has had previously mastered intricate and "exotic" roles like genius Stephen Hawking in *Hawking* (2004), sexual predator Paul Marshall in *Atonement* (2007) and terminal cancer sufferer James in *Third Star* (2010). The auditions for the role of John Watson resulted in Martin Freeman being cast. Freeman, who had his big break in comedy series *The Office* (2001-2003) is renowned for his dead-pan acting and for having great comic timing. Though his onscreen activity is varied, he also achieved great critical success in his lead role as intrinsically British Arthur Dent in the adaptation of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005). In 2012 he starred in the Peter Jackson adaptation of *The Hobbit* (2012) in the lead as Bilbo Baggins. [16]

There can be no denying the fact that a popular or renowned actor will inevitably bring a kind of attention to a film that it might otherwise not have benefited from. Adaptations are

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[15] Hutcheon, (2012), p 41, 60

[16] http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1212722/

http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0293509/

somewhat different, however, due to there already being an interest there in the form of a reader following.

Today, adaptations are enormously common. Books, short stories, comics and plays have a tendency to find their way to the vastly popular medium of film. In a postmodern society there has been distinct naturalization where films are concerned; their structure, form and themes influence new work, and vice-versa. The way the modern audiences interpret the literary works pulls them towards an adaptation. Likewise, there is a tendency for linking the cinematic experience to the literary one; novels, short stories, fan-fiction etc. have been created in the wake of certain films, confirming there being a distinct push-and-pull factor between the two media. Classics like the works of Charles Dickens or Jane Austen are regularly being turned into films or television series. Literary works from the fantasy genre, e.g. the *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, or the *Harry Potter* serials, have, in the recent decade, found their way on to the screen with increasing speed and rising popularity. Similarly, there has also been a surge in the propensity for adapting comics to the screen; characters like Batman, Superman, Tintin, along with the entire school of characters from the *Marvel* universe, including *The X-men* and *The Avengers,* have found their way into cinemas. The enormous success these serial adaptations enjoy emphasises just how important *characters* are to continued success and to the audience. Production companies like HBO, Showtime and AMC have in later years shown an inclination to adjust to the apparent new trend to view television series as the new movie. Popular series and mini-series like *Band of Brothers* (2001) and *Generation Kill* (2008) tell stories based on historical events and real people. Series like *Game of Thrones* (2011--) and *The Walking Dead* (2011--) are based on epic-scale literary works and graphic novels. There are also instances where existing shows have been remade to better suit an English-speaking audience, as is the case with the Danish television series *Forbrydelsen* (2007-2012), that got turned into *The Killing* (2011--) and the Swedish series film adaptations of Stieg Larsson's Millennium trilogy that has currently resulted in *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* (2011) with an anticipated production of *The Girl Who Played With Fire* (announced). Though the above-mentioned adaptations are based mainly on plot or events gathered from a literary work, there is also the kind of adaptations that bases its product predominantly on character. Showtime's *Dexter* is based on author Jeff Lindsey's *Dexter*-series, and although there is extensive material to draw from the books, the creators of the show made certain changes as to plot and peripheral characters to keep the series running for 9 years. The British television series *Wire in the Blood,* based on Val McDermid's books on psychologist Tony Hill, quickly ran through the storylines and plots provided by the

existing books. The series continued, based only in the characters of the original works. What binds these works is not only that they are adaptations, but that they are serial adaptations that also carry a quality comparable to movies.[17]

There is a distinct advantage to operate in formats that cater to the notion of a serial. The Moffat/Gatiss *Sherlock* series, whose episodes are a full 90 minute long, has the advantage of being able to present the characters in the initial episodes, develop them during the course of the series, and focus on plot and a story-arc that stretches over one or several seasons. The length of each episode allow for a treatment of plot that gives a sense of partial/close completion to the audience, similar to a film. The story-arc and character development spanning over several episodes keep the audience coming back for more. Though the Rathbone-series from 1939 would alternate between 60 and 90 minute format, their practice was in this aspect similar to the Moffat/Gatiss series, and both productions have achieved immense critical and financial success.[18]

Linda Hutcheon argues that what is appealing about an adaptation to an audience is the combination of familiar and new material. If there is a certain genre preference or character preference an audience member is likely to search for films or series that cater to these preferences. The ever-popular character of Sherlock Holmes therefore speaks to an audience that is already familiar with the basic nature and tasks of the character. The challenge of such an adaptation, therefore, becomes to create something that is new and that adds to the universe, but that does not deviate from the character we know from the most dominant parts of the franchise. The Sherlockian franchise is a large corpus of both canonical and non-canonical works, expanding over several years, and multiple genres and media. Every parody, pastiche and allusion that can be recognized as pertaining to Sherlock Holmes is, because of the autonomy, vastness and variety of the material within the franchise, accepted as a part of it. There are certain elements that more than others are seen as a natural and intrinsic part of the franchise which we, by aid of Thomas Leitch[19], call the Sherlockian universe. Conan Doyle's works, though a body of authority to anything Holmes-related, are not the only things that give credence as to what belongs within the universe. The popular adaptations featuring Basil Rathbone for example, are seen as an authority in its own way. Exactly what parts of the

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[17] http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1913734/
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1568346/
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0773262/
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0337792/
http://dexter.wikia.com/wiki/Differences_between_Dexter_Novels_and_Series
[18] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1475582/ http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001651/
[19] See Leitch' chapter *The Hero With a Hundred Faces:* Leitch, (2007), p 205-235

franchise that constitutes the Sherlockian universe and what that does not is hard to define. However, there are certain elements that are accepted as a part of the franchise but that will be not accepted a "true" portrayal of Holmes and his surroundings. It is these unspecified markers that makes us accept something as pertaining to the true, milieu, characterization and spirit of the franchise that provide the blurry lines of this definition[20].

Hutcheon also points out the obvious financial gain there is to be had from the refurbishing and rebooting a franchise that will likely attract a certain audience. Film as a medium has the ability to reach a far greater audience than a play or a book. Where a book might take days to read, the movie is of a limited time span. Where a theatre performance calls for the audience to be present at a certain locale, the movie can be watched, repeatedly, in the comfort of one's own home. In repurposing a franchise, as is what happens when a new production like that of the Moffat/Gatiss series comes on the market, is a reintroduction of the franchise as a whole. Audiences already fans of the franchise will likely show interest for the new production, and generations that were not around to experience previous adaptations at their most popular, and that have yet to read the original works, will become consumers.[21]

In adapting certain stories to the screen, and particularly in the case of Sherlock Holmes, there are elements of this kind of merging of canonical and non-canonical material. In their chapter *Beyond Fidelity: Transtextual Approaches*, Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan emphasises the importance of intertextual and intermedial liberties taken in creating an adaptation. When considering critical success, complete fidelity to the source text will yield little. To simply transfer a text onto the screen will cause a comparison to the original work that will often lead to the "the book was better"-argument. Similarly, adaptations are bound to be compared to other adaptations – which is particular in the Sherlockian franchise, since there have been so many of them. The study of fidelity in this thesis will not be a discussion of whether fidelity makes an adaptation good or bad, but rather what the fidelity to or deviation from the original literary work does to the manifestation and audience perception of character.

1.5. Fidelity

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[20] This might include abstract notions and attitudes, e.g. and an endorsement of deductive reasoning and science, a discard for things of a supernatural or magical nature, and an adherence or concern with mores and morals from the Victorian society. It may also include physical elements, articles, settings, etc, e.g. the iconic deerstalker, pea-soup fog, London landmarks. Also present are a great sense of mystery and adventure, and a hero worship connected to Holmes and his abilities

[21] Hutcheon, (2006), p 4-5

In *Film Adaptation & Its Discontents* Thomas Leitch talks of how adaptations, when they are recognized as such, work as intertexts in relation to their source texts. He is also saying that "thinking of them exclusively in these terms inevitably impoverishes them because it reduces them to the single function of replicating (or, worse, failing to replicate) the details of that single source text.[22]" In other words, complete fidelity to a source text puts the adaptation in an immediate correlation to the source to which it can never fully compare. To attribute value to an adaptation based on their level of complete fidelity can only damage the adaptation as well as the source text. Leitch points out what Cartmell and Whelehan would later reiterate; the importance of additions made to the source material when judging its critical success. They all seem to argue that too close a fidelity to a source text causes a juxtaposing to the original work that is bound to disappoint as a result of a consequential comparison. By operating beyond the limits of the source text, one removes certain juxtaposing elements, expands the function of the adaptation, and establishes it as a work in its own right.[23]

Depending on the authority the literary source holds in the eyes of its following, the adaptation may contain various amounts of complete lexical fidelity where dialogues or narrative lines are transferred directly from the source onto the screen. Leitch uses *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) as an example when he emphasizes how the public's relationship to the source text plays an important role in relation to deciding what lines to keep and what to discard. In the case of the Sherlockian franchise, the original literary works by Conan Doyle hold a certain authority, although nothing akin to the authority of the bible. The franchise is of such a size, and the character of Sherlock Holmes has been subject to so many renditions, that the public's relationship to the exact dialogue portrayed is not of such a nature that omitting, rewriting or changing the lines is of great importance. In relation to this, Leitch also mentions fidelity to pivotal incidents and narrative sequence, by which is indicated elements of cause and effect. The following comments on fidelity are derived from Leitch's structure in his chapter *The World Made Film*.[24]

Certain scenes and scenarios may also be subject of direct transfer. These, however, will most likely be the more iconic scenes best suited to fit on screen. According to Leitch, scenes that are "more dramatic, most readily compressed, most easily visualized, […] and least likely to bore or offend the contemporary audience[25]" are the scenes most likely to be chosen. Added to this are scenes, dialogues or actions that are the most memorable, that have been subjects of mythic

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[22] Leitch, (2007), p 17
[23] Cartmell, Whelehan, (2010), p 73- 75, Leitch, (2007), p 17.
[24] Leitch, (2007), p 47-66
[25] Leitch, (2007), p 49

concentration, and that most effectively promote the spirit of the franchise and the nature of the characters. Plot fidelity and conflict fidelity are important aspects of adaptation fidelity, especially when dealing with close or intermediate adaptation. Antagonists and protagonists rarely switch roles where an adaptation is concerned, and their conflicts tend to be rooted in similar, or mirrored, issues.[26]

Character fidelity is another important issue of adaptation. Due to the fact that the length of a literary work often exceeds the length of a film, there will more times than not be need for a compression of the literary universe which is subject to adaptation. What characters is superfluous to the telling of the story or the developing of a plot is something that would have to be taken into consideration. Many times have characters important to a following of certain literary works been cut in the transfer from paper onto screen. Sometimes, the exclusion of one or more characters leads to their actions, lines or personality traits being transferred to another character. In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2007) the character of Marietta Edgecombe was cut, and her actions transferred to that of Cho Chang – a character already a significant part of the Harry Potter universe. In the book by J.K. Rowling, Marietta betrays her friends and fellow members of *Dumbledore's Army* due to fear and intimidation. In the film, Cho betrays her friends under the influence of Veritaserum which compels her to tell the truth when questioned by the antagonists. While this change makes little difference in the grand scheme of the franchise, it was felt by some fans of the literary work that it changed the nature of a particular incident and the nature of betrayal in the story[27]. Similarly, in Peter Jackson's adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* franchise, the character of Tom Bombadil was omitted. A longtime beloved character by the avid readers of Tolkien's work, some expressed disappointment at this choice. However, not affecting the main plot nor contributing to the development of main characters Bombadil was not necessary for the telling of the story. The universe created by J.R.R. Tolkien is of such vastness that it will be impossible to fit it all on screen. Other literary works have a smaller number of characters that adding to their roles almost becomes a necessity. Leitch makes a point of how more prominence is assigned to peripheral characters where the film adaptations of Christ are concerned. This, we find, is also the case in the Sherlockian franchise – Characters like Mrs. Hudson, Inspector Lestrade, Mycroft and even Wiggins are not only more prominent in terms of screen-time and lines, but also in plot-influence.[28]

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[26] Leitch, (2007), p 49, 57.
[27] http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Marietta_Edgecombe
[28] Leitch, (2007), 49.

Physical fidelity is closely related to character fidelity. When casting Matthew Lewis as Neville Longbottom in the *Harry Potter* franchise, the young actor was 12 years old. The Longbottom we know from the literary works is described as a blond, chubby and short nerd. Little could the producers know that Lewis was to go through a massive growth-spurt in his teens. Consequently, the short Neville Longbottom turned out to be 1.82 m on screen. Since Neville was a peripheral character, and his physical appearance made little relevance in terms of the telling of the story, this fact was a non-issue. Also, Neville Longbottom has yet to become an iconic figure. The matter is another one when dealing with characters that have long been a part of the audience consciousness.

Leitch points out that Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977 mini-series) features Robert Powell in the lead as Christ, making the adaptation actively conform to the mythic tradition of portraying Christ as Caucasian rather than Jewish or Mediterranean. Here, public anticipation and preconceived notions of what Christ looked like, notions that are the result of years of mythic manipulation and decantation, takes precedence over historical fidelity. In other words, the audience becomes a mass authority that decides what is a "true rendition" - resulting in opinions that will sometimes clash with the actual historical truths.[29]

Similarly, the character of Sherlock Holmes has become the subject of a certain iconography through multiple renditions; choices made by different illustrators and directors when choosing models or actors have steered the public's perception of what are the physical traits of Sherlock Holmes away from Conan Doyle's description. It would be fair to say that the audience perception of the "true" physicality of Holmes has been distorted through years of being exposed to various versions of the famous detective. Leitch points out that a faithful adaptation of the franchise is impossible. This is firstly due to the many inconsistencies and contradictions in the Conan Doyle canon. Secondly, the many adaptations add to our perception of what is a true Holmes in such a way that being faithful to the franchise would not amount to a cohesive, structured or even sensible narrative.[30]

When dealing with adaptations which claim to be based on true stories, the notion of fidelity of location becomes pertinent. Certain works, like that of *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), draws authority from being true to the locations described, in part because there is great emotional attachment to the Gospels. Filming on the actual locations described, with the benefit of certain buildings and a particular landscape, will likely provide a faithful mise-en-scene. Due to the fact that there often is a historical or cultural connotation attached to certain

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[29] Leitch, (2007), p 53.
[30] Leitch, (2007), p 230

locations recognizable to the readers of the literary work, location fidelity will inevitably help in convincing an audience of the authenticity of the adaptation, regardless of it being based on a true story or not. Although the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation involves a historical and temporal displacement in terms of it being a modernization of literary works that are so intrinsically Victorian in their original form, the series still adheres to a certain location fidelity. The city of London is a vital part of the Sherlockian universe and several icons related to London are heavily featured in the adaptation, though this is often limited to the exterior scenes e.g. Buckingham Palace and St. Barts Hospital. Through the use of an iconic tableaux, London features much like it does in the Conan Doyle works.

Related to this is the concept of setting fidelity. Settings and places from literary works that achieved a status as intrinsic parts of the story are often, by the audience, seen as a compulsory part of the universe that is being adapted. Rivendell from *The Lord of the Rings* franchise, Pemberley Manor from *Pride & Prejudice* by Jane Austen, and Hogwarts from the *Harry Potter* franchise are all memorable places connected to plot and spirit. 221B Baker Street has achieved iconic status as the core setting of the Sherlockian franchise. It carries connotations of domestic calm and felicity, and it is, both in the Conan Doyle works and in the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation, more frequent than not the setting for Sherlock's many deductions. The iconic tableaux featuring Watson and Holmes in their respective armchairs in front of the fireplace have been embedded into the minds of the audience. Adhering to the original works' setting is important in order to stay true to the spirit of the work, to avoid disappointing avid fans, and to achieve critical as well as commercial success.[31]

Leitch seems to claim, like others before him, that the notion of fidelity only has merit as a marker of value when one can be certain that the original work carries more prestige - is better - than the adaptation. However, well-known institutions have certain brand qualities attached to them which enhances the adaptive work and gives it a higher level of prestige. Leitch makes an example of Hitchcock whose adaptation franchise is acclaimed in the world of film scholars. Similarly, the BBC is an institution that carries "great commercial and critical cachet." Where Hitchcock's films can be said to take prestige precedence over some of the original works upon which they are based, the fact that *Sherlock* is a BBC series, penned by the renowned and much sought-after Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, gives the series a similar prestige.[32]

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[31] Leitch, (2007), p 31-32, 53.
[32] Leitch, (2007), p 6, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/bbc/8067325/Mark-Gatiss-the-journey-of-a-geek-made-good.html

There seems to be a certain consideration of the fan-base in the creative and adaptive process. Though it is mixed and spanning over different age groups, there is notion of a keen awareness of the younger following. Leitch points out how the adaptation process that resulted in *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) also had moral and spiritual elements to consider; what did the death of Christ mean to the contemporary audience?[33] Though the nature of the two adaptations is very different, there are perhaps elements of the same considerations in the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation; the fact that they enjoy a young and impressionable following make them perhaps think twice where elements like Holmes' heroin-use, and even smoking, are concerned.

Audience perception had a great influence on the artistic choices made when adapting a text for the screen. What preconceived notions they have of the literary work, of history, of culture etc. goes a long way in deciding what should be kept in and what should be cut from a transfer. The notion of what a faithful adaptation is, however, is not always coinciding with success. An adaptation that stays too close to the literary work and does little to add to it will most likely be scrutinized for not being a work in its own rights; it will always be compared to the literary work. What is a close fidelity will not always fall in under the category of what is entertaining. And so the sacrifice of fidelity in the service of entertainment will be remain nothing new.[34] The concept of fidelity will be dealt with in detail in this thesis as we perform a close reading of an adaptional transfer in the chapter on *The Final Problem* and *The Reichenbach Fall.*

1.6. Intertextuality and Intermediality

The issue of intertextuality and intermediality is a complex one, with many definitions. A pioneer in the definition of the term, Julia Kristeva subscribes to the notion of intertextuality as texts in dialogue with other texts. Utilizing Ferdinand de Saussure's theory on semotics and semiotic language, she seems to claim that because of the arbitrary nature of certain signs being carriers of certain meaning, the dialogue can only happen on the basis of a shared language of references and codes. Consequently, she argued that, in reading a text, one is in a dialogue between other external texts as well as author and reader. Michael Riffaterre described intertextuality as the associations and images brought to an audience/reader's mind

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[33] Leitch, (2007), p 57
[34] Leitch, (2007), p 51

by this language and these codes.[35] Linda Hutcheon later argued that large portion of what can be viewed as intertextuality is dependent on the audience and the meaning they derive from the work, and that the intentions of the author/creator has little meaning to how a work is received or interpreted.[36] Considering semiotics and Hutcheon's theory, this kind of dialogue is not limited to texts only, but also includes images, music, and other non-verbal media. Due to the nature of the medium, modern cinematic realizations are in constant dialogue with other media, creating intermediality. Klaus Bruhn Jensen explains:

"Intermediality refers to the interconnectedness of modern media of communication. As means of expression and exchange, the different media depend on and refer to each other, both explicitly and implicitly; they interact as elements of particular communicative strategies; and they are constituents of a wider cultural environment.[37]" Intermediality utilizes a blend of modes and realizations of representation that, because of the nature of its language, creates a three-dimensional structure. This structure often involves a form where the receiver of the message is subject to several sensatory modalities simultaneously; spoken language, text, images, music etc. In addition to this is the semiotic language of symbols and external references that is shared by members of the audience. This results in a multilayered construction that conveys several meanings simultaneously, or that emphasizes a specific meaning by simultaneously representing it in several modes.[38]

The ideas of intertextuality and intermediality are complex where storytelling is concerned, and as we deal with it one is faced with competing or complementing terms. Whether one agrees with Kristeva, Hutcheon or other minds in the field, one can argue that there often is a certain amount of overlap where the language of reference held by the audience and the creators are concerned. Nevertheless, authorial or creative intention will not be extensively discussed in this thesis as it will primarily be a close, formalistic reading of an adaptation of the original work. In doing this, however, we accept certain concepts pertaining to intermediality and intertextuality: As interpreters of literary and cinematic works, we accept that our reading is rooted in a semiotic language, and tradition of symbols, meaning and form that guides our analysis. The *Sherlock* series, - a modern adaptation, is not only a cinematic medium in dialogue with other texts, symbols and signs, but also a work that is in dialogue with itself and its own medium. This is a consequence of the ongoing dialogue between the source text and its readers, their shared traditions, and the semiotic effect this has had on

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[35] Hutcheon, (2000), p 87
[36] Hutcheon, (2000), p 87
[37] Jensen, (2008). Web. article
[38] Jensen, (2008). Web. article

society.

Through the reiteration and decantation of myths and symbols, carriers of meaning become more focused. Simultaneously, they are expanded to an increasingly larger group of people sharing the language. This results in a naturalization of certain semiotic links and languages, which means that the sender and/or receiver of a message are not always aware of the language they use to convey or decipher meaning. Creators and critics that subscribe to the postmodern ideals often utilize the existing language of intertextuality and intermediality to emphasize, self-reference, decode and ultimately defamiliarize the language and the material. This process is a process of estrangement or detachment from the codes of the language, allowing and forcing the audience to approach it in a new way.

A consequence, and sometimes purpose, of this is to make people aware of the language and the media used. In modern works, this often leads to, or takes the shape of, a self-reflexive realization or structure.

1.7. The Postmodern Influence

Literary theoretician Peter Barry defines the modern literary period as influenced by the following ideas:

1) A new emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity.

2) A blurring of distinctions – particularly those related to genres.

3) A new propensity for fragmented forms

4) A reflexive tendency.[39]

The postmodernism movement was a reaction to such tendencies, though it did not seek modernism' absolute opposite. There is however, a discard of its totalizing premises. This leads to an increased propensity for blurring of definitions and material. This also extends to social structures and mores, such as decency and morality. The postmodern works also reflect different attitudes formed by a world influenced by faster communication and mass mediated reality. Consequently, there is a heightened sense of fragmentation, discontinuity and a disappearance of the real. This also leads to a blending and blurring where genre is concerned. Barry comments on how one of the tenets of Postmodernism is an increased concern with intertextuality: "[...] parody, pastiche, and allusion, in all of which there is a major degree of reference between one text and another, rather than between the text and a safely external reality.[40]"

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[39] Barry, (2002), p 79

[40] Barry, (2002), p 87

These parodies, pastiches etc experiment with meta-discourse and meta-narrative, causing a "narcissistic narrative" form with increased self-reflexive realizations.

As a natural consequence of the contemporary nature of the *Sherlock* television series, it is highly influenced by the ideas that permeate the postmodern period, particularly meta-commentary, fragmentation and blending of material. The effects of the postmodern influence is extensive in the adaptations dealt with in this thesis; this will be illuminated further in chapter 3.

Chapter 2

The Victorian vs. The Postmodern Irene Adler

- a comparative study of the Conan Doyle short story "A Scandal in Bohemia" and the BBC Moffat/Gatiss television series episode *A Scandal in Belgravia*

1.1 A Scandal in Bohemia

This Conan Doyle short-story starts by John Watson divulging to the reader Sherlock Holmes' position on the subject of love. If Watson is to be believed, love is something which

is not easily merged with the precise and calculating mind of the reasoning Holmes. Though Holmes finds the notion of love useful in detecting people's motives etc, he himself would find a strong emotion like love to be as disturbing "as grit in a sensitive instrument". However, in the Sherlockian universe, there is one female character that stands out as the most important. It is because of Irene Adler's effect on Holmes, along with her intriguing nature, that she stands out in the franchise. Adler is only featured in *A Scandal in Bohemia* but has since become an intrinsic part of the Sherlockian universe on the grounds of being a match for Holmes' renowned intellect. Adler is a woman of beauty and talent, as well as great resolution and agency. Being the former lover of the hereditary king of Bohemia, she is in possession of a compromising photograph which the king fears might damage his impending marriage to the King of Scandinavia's daughter. Upon Adler's refusal to sell the photograph back to the king, he then tries several times to take it from her by force; attempts that all fail due to Adler's cunning. Holmes is then hired by the king to retrieve the photograph. He lays his plans in order to entrap her, but Adler deduces what the great detective intends to do, and escapes to America with her newly wedded husband before the net closes around her.

Conan Doyle's Adler is rather progressive as a female character, most notably because she bests Sherlock Holmes. Adler is, by the king, described as a well-known adventuress – by which he implies that her role is similar to that of a courtesan. He also describes her as having "the face of the most beautiful of women, and the mind of the most resolute of men.[41]" In addition to her beauty, Adler is also as refined and cultured. By her description in Holmes' index, we learn that there are certain almost exotic elements attached to her character; she was born in America and has been doing well on the operatic stage as a Prima donna Imperial in Warsaw. That, as well as the close relationship with the Bohemian majesty makes her the Madamme de Pompadour of the Sherlockian universe. However, as Holmes learns through the course of the story, an exotic lifestyle is not synonymous with being dishonorable. Adler has many skills, and she is able to act swiftly and resolutely, as evidenced e.g. by her avoidance of the king's many attempts of retrieving the photograph by force, and her ability to escape Holmes. There are quite a few similarities between Holmes and Adler, perhaps most notably their propensity for disguise. Watson is amazed by Holmes' talent in this respect and proclaims that "the stage lost a fine actor, even as science lost an acute reasoned, when he became a specialist in crime.[42]" Both characters are capable of resolute thinking and action, while simultaneously retaining an eye for detail as well as their

[41] Doyle, (2001), p 11-12
[42] Doyle, (2001), p 18

inherently good manners. They both seem to enjoy the thrill of the game, as evidenced by Holmes' amusement when, disguised, he is asked to be the witness to Adler's marriage to Mr. Norton, and Adler's cheekily wishing Holmes a "goodnight" disguised as a young man.

Though Adler, in the Conan Doyle works, is described as a courtesan she, in the end, proves to be of an honorable character. What we learn of Adler's lifestyle, apart from what the king divulges, is that she is a retired Prima Donna Imperial now living in London, and her life seems one of steady routine. She also shows a capacity for kindness, as evidenced by her treatment of the disguised Holmes, both at the wedding and outside her house. Adler is peculiar as a character because Holmes, who is not only apt at solving cases but also a great judge of character, is completely in the wrong where she is concerned. Not only does he fail in recognizing her abilities and her disguise; he fails in recognizing her honorable character despite the evidence of his own eyes. Due to the King's description of her, Holmes does what he explicitly warns Watson against: He theorizes before he has data. Or rather, Holmes' data is wrong where Adler's character is concerned.

1.2 A Scandal in Belgravia

When examining the BBC Moffat/Gatiss adaptations of stories from the Sherlockian universe, there can be very little doubt that these are in fact true adaptations. The creators are not simply transferring a text onto the screen, nor are they indulging in creating completely new material which has little to do with the original Conan Doyle stories. Where the Sherlockian universe is concerned, the latter will sooner or later occur due to the vastness of the myth that is Sherlock Holmes – a mythic universe of such proportions that it can contain almost any kind of character or scenario set in any time or space.[43] Linda Hutcheon points out that adaptation is repetition without replication; that "as a process of creation, the act of adaptation always involves both (re-)interpretation and (re-)creation.[44]" Cartmell and Whelehan seem to reiterate her views when they emphasize the act of adding new material to a body of work as a means for continuing its success.[45]

This is what the creators of the Moffat/Gatiss series are doing. With a great sense of the history of the franchise, this series plays with, copies and unscrupulously borrows elements from previous works – be it characters, lines or filmatic realizations – whilst

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[43] Leitch, (2007), p 219
[44] Hutcheon, (2006), p 8
[45] Cartmell, Whelehan, (2010), p 73

simultaneously adhering to the original works to a great extent. Leitch points to peculiarities concerning the Sherlockian franchise and adaptation. Due to the number of non-canonical works that has come into being in the course of the last century, the Sherlockian universe has been greatly added to through treatments of either parody or pastiche. This caused, and causes still, a great ramification of the franchise. The sheer body of work is of such vastness and diversity, spurring from all angles in the artistic world, causes adaptations to include not only the original Conan Doyle works but elements from the entire franchise. It also gives credence to non-canonical work that stays true to the spirit of the original work and to the franchise in general.[46]

In adapting *A Scandal in Bohemia* for the screen, the character of Irene Adler has to be transformed to fit a more modern realization, as well as a more modern audience. The most notable thing when one compares *A Scandal in Belgravia* with the Conan Doyle original *A Scandal in Bohemia* is the realization of her as a criminal mastermind eventually revealed to be in cahoots with Holmes' nemesis Moriarty. Though this is nothing new to the franchise (Rachael McAdams portrayed her in a similar role in Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* (2009)[47]) it notably deviates from the original Conan Doyle work.

Due to the nature of the medium, visual images play a vital role in *A Scandal in Belgravia.* According to Yvonne Tasker, "post feminist culture operates in the realm of images", which makes the silver screen the perfect canvas for expressing realizations of e.g. physical and sexual ideals.[48] A lot of attention is paid to sex, nudity, sensuality and sexuality in this particular episode largely attributed to Adler's profession as a dominatrix. There can, however, be little doubt that in the cinematic experience "sex sells". That being said, this is also because, as Tasker points out, when one is dealing with female representation in a post feminist society the physical representation of female characters matters a great deal; especially on screen. Obviously, cinematic Adler is immediately different from the literary Conan Doyle character due to the physical representation of her character. When adapting a text for the screen, and especially in this adaptation where there also is temporal displacement, changes in character realization is bound to happen – the two Adlers are immediately different.   However, the characters do share certain plot-related and mental qualities.

[46] Leitch, 2007, p 213
[47] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0988045/
[48] Radner & Stringer, (2011), p 68-69

2. The Two Irenes

2.1 Their Similarities

An adaptation that stays so close to the original is bound to share similarities with the Conan Doyle works where characters are concerned. For instance, both Holmes and Adler have preconceived notions and knowledge of the other one before they meet. In *A Scandal in Bohemia* Holmes acquires details about Irene's life from the hereditary King of Bohemia, as well as from Holmes' own index system, while in *A Scandal in Belgravia* the information concerning Adler is provided by Mycroft and "the illustrious employer's" employee. Adler on her part has been warned (by whom is never divulged) of the fact that the king is prone to hire an agent and that this agent is likely to be Holmes. She is also describes him as "the celebrated Sherlock Holmes[49]" which would indicate that his reputation has preceded him before their meeting. Albeit somewhat late, the Conan Doyle Adler eventually sees through Holmes' clergyman disguise. Unlike the adaptation, she realizes that she has revealed the location of the precious photograph, and escapes both Holmes and the king. The Moffat/Gatiss Adler also makes a point out of "defrocking" Holmes and removing his clergyman's band when she reveals that she evidently knows who he is by appearing naked before him,

Irene Adler is known as *the* Woman in both stories. In the Conan Doyle works this is an honorary title bestowed upon her by Holmes; a sign of respect for the woman who outwitted him and of whose character he was mistaken. According to Watson, Sherlock rarely mentions her by any other name because to him "she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex[50]". In the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation the nickname *The Woman* is a name Irene has taken on as a part of her profession as a dominatrix. It might be a point of discussion whether this change in the character diminishes or empowers her. Is the loss of Sherlock's honorary title a loss of honour itself, or is the fact that she names herself thus a symbol of her strength and freedom?

Both Adlers are linked to political scandal. The Conan Doyle-Irene is being named by the king as a "well-known adventuress" – but which he implies that she takes on a role similar to that of a courtesan. Having had a relationship with a member of a royal family, and having evidence of this fact, Irene Adler threatens the future marriage between the Scandinavian and

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[49] Doyle, (2001), p 25
[50] Doyle, (2001), p 3

the Bohemian royal family. Irene has threatened to go public with the photograph that reveals their intimate relationship, according to the king himself, out of vengefulness and a desire that he marries no one but her. After Irene's good character is revealed one speculates whether she did this in fact to warn the future bride of the true nature of the king. The Moffat/Gatiss Irene is also involved in political scandal but with a very different attitude. She gets hold of classified information by, in her own words, "misbehaving", and apparently sees it as part of her job to extract information from the higher-ups. Her sexual relationships with people of power make her able to threaten to topple the status quo of an entire country. This mirrors the Conan Doyle-Irene's hold over the future of the Bohemian kingdom.

In a ploy to get Irene Adler to reveal the location of the photograph(s), Sherlock Holmes, with the aid of John Watson, fakes a fire. His reason is the theory that when exposed to danger a woman's eyes will turn to what is precious to her. His hope is that Irene Adler, upon hearing the alarm/cry of fire, will look to the place where the photograph(s) are hidden much like a mother would look to her child. Both versions of Irene Adler fall for this scheme, and unwillingly divulge the secret compartment in the wall where the(y) are hidden.

As the story comes to a close we are made aware of that Adler has left for the Continent, i.e. America. In *A Scandal in Bohemia* Holmes is thoroughly shocked by this news. Adler has escaped across the Atlantic, to a vast continent, making her capture almost impossible. Her having seen through his disguise, deduced his actions, and acted as a result of this was not something Holmes had foreseen. His being unable to retrieve the photograph turns out to have little consequence; Adler gives her word that she will not publish the photograph, and he word is apparently all the king needs in order to claim it a certainty that she will not interfere with his engagement. He is therefore ready to leave her to her newly wedded husband and her freedom. *A Scandal in Belgravia* approaches Adler's departure somewhat differently. Here Mycroft, and consequently Watson, claims that Adler has relocated to America in order to be a part of a witness-protection programme. As is revealed, this cover story is concocted in order to protect Holmes from the truth: that she has been assassinated by a terrorist cell in Karachi. As it turns out, Holmes has already rescued Adler from decapitation and keeps this hidden from everyone but the silent observers of the audience.

2.2 How are they different?

There are several ways in which the Alder from the modern Moffat/Gatiss adaptation

differs from the character in the original Conan Doyle work. Most notably is the relation between Adler and the adaptation's focus on and display of sex, sexuality and nudity. The initial exposition of the character is that she is one with the power to influence Moriarty to the extent that he lets Holmes and Watson live. Her physical portrayal is initially faceless, focusing mainly on other physical aspects of her: Nails painted red on fingers decorated with diamond rings are handling an expensive phone. A woman dressed in black lace underwear is handling a whip asking a female person tied to a silk-sheeted bed in a BSDM-scenario "Have You been wicked, Your Highness?" This scene, which is a part of the cold open, sets the theme for the episode – it hints of a gleeful display of power, violence and sex where, with a few exceptions, the one is linked to the other. It also makes allusions to sexuality, in that it is a scene of an obvious sexual nature between two women. Throughout the episode, luscious and rich textures meet the sharp and cold, and surround the characters in a world clad almost entirely in black, white and blood red. This is proleptically stated in this scene where the white silk sheets are contrasted with the rough, black leather whip handled by The Woman with her red nails. Even though her face is initially not shown, Irene Adler is immediately displayed as a sensual and fatal woman. Ultimately, the entire episode seems to mirror Adler's profession as a dominatrix, and this scene foreshadows that fact.

In a sensual power-play, Adler appears naked before Holmes upon their first meeting in an attempt to rattle him. Holmes has played the role of the wounded gazelle – a vicar who has been hurt in a mugging – in order to get into the house. This is a mirroring of the Conan Doyle works, although there he fakes an injury in a staged fight posing to protect Adler. By appearing naked in "her battle dress" Adler is stating that she has seen through his disguise, and that she is aware of who he is. Here, as so many other places, she alludes to her profession when she, in a sensual manner, exclaims: "Look at those cheekbones. I could cut myself slapping that face[51]" Nudity, to Irene, is a device. By "defrocking" both herself and Holmes in his vicar-disguise, she makes a first and aggressive move in the power play that is to dominate this episode.

Adler goes on to comment on a case Holmes is working on, claiming that she likes detective stories and detectives: "Brain is the new sexy[52]" Shortly after, Holmes comments on the irony of that statement: "You cater to the whims of the pathetic and take your clothes off to make an impression. Stop boring me and think. It's the new sexy[53]". In the light of this statement, it seems

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[51] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:24:32)
[52] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:26:45)
[53] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:28:03-00:28:10)

equally ironic that the creators of the series encourage the virtues of intelligence and deductive reasoning while simultaneously displaying nudity and sensuality in such a tantalizing manner.

The implementation of sex, nudity and sexuality is ever-present in this episode, from Adler's bumptious talk of her work, via the display of nudity, to the allusions to the relationship between Watson and Holmes being of a homoerotic nature. Whenever there is a scene not immediately focused on sex, Adler's personalized text-alert on Holmes' phone (a moan) have a tendency to steal focus. The actors' performance (particularly that of Lara Pulver who portrays Irene Adler) makes even mundane sentences loaded with sexual tension. Although Adler is using sex, sexuality and nudity as a device in order to fluster the people around her, it is quite evident that this does not have the effect on the Holmes that it has on other people. Traditionally, Holmes is seen as an asexual character whose work takes precedence over anything akin to love or sexual attraction, as indeed is stated by Watson in the opening lines of Conan Doyle's *A Scandal in Bohemia.* That being said, Adler seems to have an effect on Holmes, though this is a multipronged matter of ambiguity and complexity that reflects the postmodern nature of the adaptation. Other characters seem flustered by or taken aback by the unabashed approach to sex that is displayed predominantly by Adler. Her strength in relation to Holmes does not, however, lie immediately in her sensuality. Throughout the episode she alludes to her ability to gain information from men by "knowing what they like". As Mycroft also amplifies; her strength lies in knowing people. "All it takes is one man. One, lonely, naive man, desperate to show off – and a woman clever enough to make him feel special[54]" Through Adler's treatment of him, Holmes becomes somewhat subdued. Both the British government and Mycroft see him as a nuisance because through his attachment to Adler, Holmes has compromised the national security. Keeping with her role as a dominatrix, Adler subdues both the country and Holmes, as becomes clear in the negotiation with Mycroft. The detective has been put on the sidelines, and works only as Adler's mouthpiece when called to it. Holmes' defeat is emphasized through Adler:

"Isn't he good? I should have him on a leach. In fact, I might.[55]" She is, seemingly, the perfect criminal mastermind - clever enough and with enough acumen and agency to plan a plot so intricate that she bests the dauntingly intelligent Mycroft and Holmes. Much like the Conan Doyle Adler, she has "a soul of steel" and "the mind of the most resolute of men". In addition to her beauty, Adler is also depicted as clever and with great insight into the minds of even the most

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[54] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:15:38)
[55] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:17:59)

complex of men. However, this realization of Adler is drastically reversed when her plan and the execution of it is attributed to Moriarty.

"I can't take all the credit. I had a bit of help. Jim Moriarty sends his love[56]" She goes on to say: "I had all this stuff and never knew what to do with it. Thank God for the consulting criminal. Gave me a lot of advice on *how to play* the Holmes boys.[57]" Consequently, Adler as a criminal mastermind and a great reader of men is drastically undermined in a matter of seconds. Her one redeeming feature, apart from her beauty, is that she is clever enough to keep her phone secure. Nevertheless, here too she fails drastically. Holmes gets a hold of the phone twice – once through deducing the code to her safe, and once because she sends it to him for safekeeping. Where the Conan Doyle Adler is capable of acting swiftly and resolutely, the Mofatt/Gatiss Adler is too fond of games to escape: because the code to her phone is not random but a result of her having "too much fun" playing the game, she loses everything. As Holmes brutally points out: "You got carried away. The game was too elaborate; you were enjoying yourself too much.[58]" He also points out that the reasons for her "losing the game" is because of her feminine propensity; that it is because she was prone to a feminine weakness like sentiment that she is bested: "Sentiment is a chemical defect found in the losing side.[59]" This marks a distinct difference between the two versions of Adler; in the postmodern adaptation, Victorian ideals of feminine sentiments are no longer idealized. Adler is the lesbian criminal mastermind who finds herself attracted to Holmes, implements this crush into her game, and loses because of her inability to stay unattached. In Holmes' words, she "let her heart rule over [her] head".

Conan Doyle's Adler has a number of good qualities. She is honourable, resourceful, resolute, and intelligent. She loves her husband, and is the recipient of a good man's love. She is beautiful, and talented – especially where acting and disguise is concerned. In addition to this, the Conan Doyle Adler is in complete control most of the time –keeping the king at arm's length and arranging her own marriage, her escape, and her new life. Considering the contemporary period in which the character was created, Adler is a fast-paced and resolute woman of a new, fast-moving society. She is, however, subscribing to some of the ideals from the "old" society, making her a character that reflects the Victorian society. The literary Adler is one who exudes the power, agency and freedom to choose for herself. In that respect, she is a truly progressive female character that embodies certain characteristics pertaining to what would be described as post-feminism.

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[56] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:18:57)
[57] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:19:13) – my emphasis
[58] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:19.52)
[59] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:20:05)

In comparison, the adapted Adler does not come off equally strong. Her intelligence and agency in the capacity of being a criminal mastermind is being attributed to Moriarty instead of her. She is incapable of self-restraint, as evidenced by her compromising propensity for games, and her decision concerning the pass-code to her phone. She also "betrays" her sexual orientation by falling for a man. Adler takes on the characteristics of a hypersexual teenager with a romantic obsession. Despite being a dominatrix, there is little fight in this Adler - once beaten she seems to accept her fate and her death calmly and collectedly. Not counting her beauty and grace, this Adler has one quality that ultimately saves her from complete ruin: the fact that she left a strong enough impression on Holmes to have him come and save her. Consequently, the postmodern adaptation of Adler is, seen from a post-feminist point of view, rather regressive. Holmes finds himself fascinated by her, despite the fact that her agency as a criminal mastermind and a knower of people is not her own. Throughout the entire episode, their mutual attraction to one another is tangible. The fact that Holmes, an asexual creature who in a previous episodes states that he considers himself "married to his work", falls for a woman of such limited capacity (compared to both himself and the Conan Doyle Adler) diminishes him in the eyes of the audience. When Adler's characteristics have been reduced to concern her looks only, Holmes is made a lesser man for being attracted to her. He becomes divorced from his renowned intellectual properties and is heeding more to the baser desires of man.

2.3 Molly Hooper

During the course of the series, the character of Molly Hooper has been slowly added to the Sherlockian universe. A socially awkward pathologist and laboratory-technician, Molly harbours romantic feelings for Holmes. Having a personality and appearance that is cute and quirky rather than glamorous and sophisticated, Molly is, at first glance, quite the opposite of the postmodern Adler. She does, however, play an important role where the subject of Holmes and love is concerned. When we first meet her in *A Study in Pink,* Molly functions primarily as a support-character in the exposition of Holmes: He is direct, often borderline rude, and if not oblivious to her feelings then at least beyond care. With time, her character becomes one of greater importance, to Sherlock Holmes himself and to the development of plot. In *The Great Game* Molly is dating Jim Moriarty disguised as an IT worker from St. Barts, and in *The Reichenbach Fall* she proves to be truly valued by Holmes when he asks her for help - we

assume she assists him in faking his death.

In *A Scandal in Belgravia*, the link between Irene Adler and Molly Hooper is tangible. Their appearance is mirrored; they both wear black and white clothing, and both are wearing red lipstick[60]. Holmes points out, in a meta-commentary, that the colour of the present Molly gives him is the same as the colour of her lips, and associates this with the desire for romance. This is echoed in Adler's gift which bears a similar shade of blood red that we've previously seen her wearing on her lips. When comparing the two Adlers it becomes evident that the character we know from the original canon is more honourable and stronger by both Victorian and modern female standards. When examining the character of Molly Hooper, it seems as if the good qualities from the Conan Doyle Adler, and that the Moffat/Gatiss Adler is lacking, has been transferred onto her. Molly is a hard worker and a talented one, as evidenced by the fact that she comes in to work at all hours and that the meticulous Holmes continues to work with her. Not unlike the case of Adler's relationship with the king of Bohemia, Molly has also been dating a man that turns out to be of questionable moral fibre: Moriarty. When Holmes approaches her for help, Molly immediately reacts with a sense of care, loyalty, efficiency, and resolution that seems to echo the Conan Doyle Adler:

Sherlock: "You're wrong you know? You *do* count. You've always counted and I've always trusted you. But you were right. I'm not OK."

Molly: "Tell me what's wrong"

Sherlock: "Molly, I think I'm going to die."

Molly: "What do you need?"

Sherlock: "If I wasn't everything that you think I am, everything that *I* think I am... would you still want to help me?"

Molly: "What do you need?"

Sherlock: "You.[61]

Irene Adler - both renditions- and Molly Hooper are juxtaposed, mirrored and compared in *A Scandal in Belgravia*.

3. The Dominatrix Episode

What is particularly noticeable in *A Scandal in Belgravia* is the gleeful display of violence. Adler is a professional dominatrix, a profession where physical subjugation, exertion of power and the affliction of pain are elements often linked to sex and sensuality.

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[60] See appendix 2a – 2d
[61] *The Reichenbach Fall*, (01:02:17)

These elements, and particularly the attitude to the execution of violence, are woven into the plotline and the manifestation of characters. The story is riddled with interpersonal power plays that are in some way linked to sex, sensuality, nudity etc. The sibling rivalry between Mycroft and Holmes contains allusions to sexuality, a discussion about sex, and a half-naked Sherlock Holmes. The relationship between Watson and Holmes is of a domestic nature and, in this series riddled with homoerotic allusions as a recurring element of comedy. Simultaneously, this relationship is a constant tug of war, where power play, bickering and banter are parts of their interpersonal rapport. Adler's hypersexual approach, although assumed to be a vital part of her personality, is also an obvious ploy to derail and fluster the people around her, particularly Watson and Holmes.

The basic tenets of this episode are that violence and sex is not only fun but *funny*. Watson and Holmes are engaging in a physical fight the audience are exposed to pure slapstick comedy. Upon being threatened by the American agents infiltrating Adler's house, Watson, Holmes and Adler prove that they are skilled fighters. In an extended slow motion scene they are fighting and disarming the agents, which also includes indirectly killing one of them. The nature of the production of this scene makes it obvious that Holmes and Idler in particular are – for lack of a better word – cool for exercising violence skilfully. The choice of actors, and their performance in this scene, also makes the use of violence take on sexy undertones. Holmes' use of a gun as a way of calling the police is a proof of his disregard for the law and of violence as an element of fun. His disregard for the law returns in the "smoking-indoors"- scene, when he fights the American henchman, and when he rescues Adler in an act of vigilant justice.

This episode basically condones violence when it is performed by a woman. Adler's treatment of the American agents establishes her as a resourceful and skilled fighter. She also stabs Holmes with a needle and injects him with a sedative in order to incapacitate him and to make him give back her phone. As Holmes consequently is of limited capacity, she would have no problem prying the phone from him. However, keeping in line with the ideals of a dominatrix she whips him with a riding crop in order to subdue him and get him to *give* her the phone. Adler's use of the riding crop as a tool to gain information mirrors Holmes' exposition scene in *A Study in Pink* ever so slightly. His being attacked in this way is a source of fun aimed at the audience, mainly due to Benedict Cumberbatch's comic performance as the diminished and incapacitated Holmes. However, members of the Sherlockian universe also finds this entertaining as evidenced by Watson's warning that Lestrade, representing the police force, filmed the drugged Holmes on his phone.

Even when faced with the death of Adler, there are subtle elements of humour. It is Hooper's obvious attachment to Holmes that is the source of this rather than the death in itself. She warns Holmes that Irene's face is deformed so it might be hard to identify her body. When, as a consequence, Holmes asks to see "the rest of her" the effect that this comment has on Hooper is tangible, and followed by the comment "Who is she? How did Sherlock recognize her from.....not her face?[62]" The fact that Irene's death is a source of amusement, albeit subtle, foreshadows her being alive after all.

Even though Adler is the dominatrix who eagerly and unnecessarily utilizes violence, the entire episode and characters reflect her attitude. When Holmes discovers that Mrs. Hudson has been attacked, interrogated and abused by the American agents his "Holmes Scan" switches to a "Holmes weapon-sight" – Violence performed by a man on a woman is *not* an element of fun. Here Holmes becomes a creature of tranquil fury; cold and calculative, and out for revenge. He tricks, attacks and disarms the henchman before securing him with ropes and duct tape; actions that seem to mirror Adler's BDSM attitude – though with few sexual connotations. While the gagged henchman listens with increasing dread, Holmes says:

Sherlock: [on phone to] "Lestrade? We've had a break-in at Baker Street. Send your least irritating officers and an ambulance. No, no, no, we're fine. No, it's the burglar. He's got himself rather badly injured. A few broken ribs, fractured skull, suspected punctured lung...He fell out of a window.[63]"

Following this is a Gilligan-cut where Watson tends to Mrs. Hudson's wounds in her kitchen, when the henchman rushes past them and lands with a thud outside her window.

Mrs. Hudson: "Oh! That's right on my bins[64]"

Upon sending the henchman off in an ambulance, Lestrade turns to Holmes:

Lestrade: "And exactly how many times did he fall out the window?"

Sherlock: "It's all a bit of a blur, Detective Inspector. I lost count.[65]"

This entire scene confirms the cold, brutal and vengeful nature that sometimes emerges in Holmes. Both his threats and his follow-through of brutal violence is an exertion of mental and physical power to which the audience are gleeful spectators – much like they are when Adler displays the same characteristics. Mrs. Hudson and Watson's complete lack of concern for the injured man, as well as Lestrade's snide remark are direct elements of comedy. Holmes is neither reprimanded nor chided for his actions – not by the authorities and not even by Watson who normally exhibits a great sense of moral right and concern for others. By protecting Mrs. Hudson, and therefore the domestic reality of Baker Street, Holmes is exempt

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[62] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:45:59- 00:46:05)
[63] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:59:36- 01:00:00)
[64] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:00:08 – 01:00:11)
[65] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (01:00:15 – 01:00:25)

from any reproach. By making the scene funny, the writers ensure this.

Juxtaposed, Irene Adler and John Watson seem positively opposite. Slightly put on the sidelines of the actual plotline, Watson takes mainly on a domestic role. In this episode he serves as Holmes's loyal and concerned friend, flatmate, messenger, caretaker, and nurse. A constant concern with Holmes' wellbeing and how his relationship with Adler affects him, seems to be his main undertaking. In this episode, more than any other, is he *Doctor* Watson. He takes care of Holmes when he has been drugged, he shows concern for Adler's unconscious assistant, and he takes care of Mrs. Hudson after her attack. A concern for Mrs. Hudson's physical well-being is also present in Holmes' actions, making him mirror Watson slightly. The only one with no such tendencies is Adler, establishing her as a woman with "a soul of steel" and "a mind like the most resolute of men" – strong and ruthless compared to the other characters in the episode.

4. Victorian mores vs. Post-feminist ideals

In the Victorian era, the female social realization was one of domesticity. Here, the traditional feminine ideals were reiterated as women's social role was limited to the home. In a world of rapid change, where Capitalism, industry and harsh competitiveness were ever more present, the home was seen as a sheltered "garden" where a man could regain his moral and emotional footing. The core of this restoring oasis was the wife and the family. The association between men and women grew closer in the Victorian era, and several writers and political thinkers expressed contemporary views on the nature of *women*, domesticity and home.[66] Coventry Patmore's famous poem "The Angel in the House" promotes the woman as an exalted creature, worthy of worship and praise in her domestic and moral role[67]. Many contemporaries, however, saw this poem as the epitome of an old-fashioned and unrealistic idealization of women, and engaged in a discourse concerning the Victorian view on women. Writers like John Ruskin wrote extensively on the role of men and women in this new society, promoting their role as the kernel of everything good and moral. Where the man was to be the

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[66] Houghton, (1985), p 341, 344
[67] Christ, (2006), p 1586-1587

thinking and reasoning mind of society - the progressive doer - the woman was to be the heart; promoting goodness and softness through the ordering of the home, bearing children and caring for her family. The man's role was one of speculation, action, fight, and conquest, whilst the woman's was one of innocence, decision and noble existence. The woman's existence was one of dependence. Her reality consisted of being a dutiful daughter in her father's house, and later the wife in her husband's - and mother to his children. Education and knowledge was increasingly important in the Victorian society, and so women were privileged to more, or at least a different, education than in previous years. In a society where the two genders interacted more than before, a thinking woman made for a more suitable companion to the knowledgeable man. However, a woman of higher education, or worse, a professional career, was not desirable. Having her become an active part of the competitive, harsh and cold industrial world would, it was thought, forever ruin her inherent goodness and moral. It would allow for the exterior world to seep into the serene and peaceful oasis of the home and consequently corrupt it. Ruskin suggests that for the woman to be true to her ideal she would have to be incorruptible. If the man was to falter, it was only a consequence of him having to live in the harsh conditions of competitive trade and industry. However, Ruskin seems also to suggest that the fault for his faltering lay with the woman; she was to be the man's moral compass, rejuvenating him and steering him in the direction of goodness. It was through women's natural faithfulness, wisdom and goodness that men were to be redeemed from their vices and weakness.[68] Certain contemporaries reared against these notions, however. Activist like John Stuart Mill and Virginia Woolf spoke out against the idea that women's rightful place was subordinated to that of the man. Mill reared against the interpretation of this social structure as something "natural", drawing parallels between the slavery and the Victorian subjection of women.[69] Plato and Aristotle's The Great Chain of Being depicted a hierarchy of all things in creation[70]. The hierarchy places deities or an eternal force outside creation at the very top, and minerals and stones at the base. In this chain, man is placed in the middle, below angels and spirits, and above animals and baser creatures. In the wake of Neo-Platonism and the spread of Christianity, The Great Chain of Being came to denominate God as the highest form of being; an entity whose qualities were deemed the ultimate goal after which to aspire. As man was seen as both a spiritual and physical creature, he was prone to both elevated and baser acts – and his task would be to

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[68] Houghton, (1985), p 341, 344, 348- 361
[69] Christ, (2006), p 1060-1061, 1587-1588
[70] http://faculty.grandview.edu/ssnyder/121/121%20great%20chain.htm

strive for the spiritual world, the elevated existence, and to avoid the physical and baser part of his nature.[71]

The Great Chain of being, along with the Christian religion, lends relevance to the Victorian's view on sex. Sex was often deemed as something sinful, especially when related to elements like physical desire, infidelity, promiscuity and sexual deviance. By giving into one's physical desires, one adhered to one's baser needs and drew further away from God and the angelic ideals. Religious purity was transferred onto sex, promoting a "cleanness" of body and mind as a part of having good morals and religious righteousness. As a result of this, sex was something akin to a taboo topic – it was a "secret" topic that was mostly treated with silence. [72]Similarly, the woman was subject to a respect that was not too far from awe. The Victorians put their mothers, their sisters and their wives on pedestals. In her purity she remained the devoted model of moral goodness. That being said, a woman who had sex outside of the parameters of marriage faltered in the eyes of the Victorian society. To become "a spoiled" woman lowered the social standing of many, and a great deal were brought into a life of prostitution. The fall from the elevated status of "the angel of the house" to the baser life of "a fallen woman" was a long and hard fall for many. This was the life and the fate of many a Victorian woman – so many in fact that prostitution became of the main social problems of the time. Extramarital sexual activity and pregnancy were deemed shameful; the woman had discarded her duties to her family and to society by not adhering to the mores of the time. However, sex within the parameters of marriage was seen as a good thing. Here it was both the husband's and the wife's duty as a part of the fulfilment of the domestic ideals, especially in the social and religious duty that entailed procreation of children.

Houghton describes three different "types" of the Victorian woman. The first is one of submissive duty, conservatively fulfilling the notion of "the angel in the house". The second adhered to the notions of more radical attitudes; fighting for women's right to , both legally and socially, be seen as man's equal. The third found a middle position between the conservative and the radical; claiming that woman is of equal worth to the man but that their nature is inherently different, and that they consequently will take on different roles in a society.[73] Women's issues, e.g. the suffragette movement, grew increasingly important, resulting in women's right to vote being instated in 1918 and 1928. This movement would later be termed First-wave feminism.

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[71] http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/cs6/ren.html
[72] Houghton, (1985), p 353.
[73] Houghton, (1985), p 348-349

These notions of the nature and role of women have remained important to the discourse concerning the portrayal of women in literature and film. The world experienced a surge in women's issues in the 1960s, creating a second-wave feminist movement that would influence art, literature and film greatly. Television being a male-dominant world, women found it hard to "make it big" in the industry. Sheila Smith Hobson, for instance, describes the role of women in television as reduced to bringers and makers of coffee, and to sexual objects. The feminists of the 60s and 70s focused on a number of issues related to women in society, e.g. social and individual oppression of women, the power of sisterhood, and issues related to the life of professional women e.g. education, work environment and equal pay.[74]

In more modern times, the Post-feminist ideals have made a considerable impact, especially upon the world of cinema and television. The women of the first- and second-wave feminist movements liberated themselves from the constraints of the old ideals of feminine beauty. During the course of several years, the women rid themselves of several social decrees connected to appearance and conventional beauty. As Yvonne Tasker points out, traditional Feminism seems to promote the ideal of women behaving like men. Women rid themselves of the corset and the skirts, and started wearing trousers and business suits. They cut their hair shorter, and started smoking and drinking in public. They fought their way to the top, businesswise, and aspired to the harsh and cut-throat ways of businessmen. Conventionally, the romantic/feminine and the cynical/masculine are being juxtaposed and, in the world of Feminism, the one is almost irrevocably divided from the other. The feminist's existence as a woman in a man's world was, however, a somewhat joyless one. At the core of Feminism lies the idea that women and men are treated differently by society simply because of their gender. The social levelling of genders and making men and women equal – especially in terms of the law and the workplace – became one of the main pillars of Feminism.[75]

During the surge of Post-feminism, the realization of femininity, previously having being discarded or rejected in an attempt to escape the social conventions related to women's appearance or behaviour, was yet again emphasized as an important part of the female identity. Where the feminists had previously sought equal treatment by individuals, corporations and governments as a way of escaping suppression, the post-feminist women sought a liberation from the masculinisation of their gender. Freedom was one of the main ideals of Post-feminism, which also entails liberation from an asexual or unfeminine

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[74] http://womenshistory.about.com/od/feminism/tp/Ten_important_feminist_beliefs.htm
[75] Radner, Stringer, (2011), p 74-75

appearance. Femininity was again embraced, and women found strength in the utilizing or realizing it. Physical or mental strength, sexual confidence and feminine beauty were important aspects of Post-feminism – something that increased the desire to operate in a world of images and physicality. Yvonne Tasker highlights the contradictions that occur within the Post-feminist practice; that the focus on individual choice and self-realization consists, on screen, of an adherence to conventional physical beauty and conventional female realizations – actively diminishing the role of women that are trying to empower themselves. Where the Post-feminist emphasis is on freedom of choice, individualism and female strength, there is simultaneously the tendency that women should operate within the boundaries of femininity. That a woman should, if she can possibly help it, be beautiful – a notion which on screen is governed by conventional ideas of what beauty entails – and that she should fulfil the domestic ideal. Female characters adhering to the ideals of the Feminist movement often take on, or aspire to, a reality that is ultimately one of passivity and dependence. These notions are also present in the post-feminist movement, seemingly in direct conflict with its own ideals of strength and liberty.

In light of this we might argue that both realizations of Irene Adler previously discussed adhere to character traits from both "worlds" – exhibiting traits of both Victorian mores and more post-feminist ideals. The Conan Doyle Adler, created in a contemporary Victorian setting, naturally carries quite a few of the Victorian markers. Initially, she is depicted as an accomplished opera singer with an established career in Warsaw. She is, in other words, not "excessively educated" but with immediate talent and training where the finer arts are concerned, keeping with the ideal of the Victorian woman. Adler's character takes on connotations related to "angel in the house". To Holmes, she is the perfect example of a how a woman should be, and ends up placing her on a pedestal. He is prone to woman worship where Adler is concerned. However, the narrating Watson is quick to reassure the reader that there is no love affair between Holmes and Adler. The feelings Holmes has for Adler are, in other words, completely honourable and devoid of influence from the impulses of "the baser self". Watson claiming that "there was but one woman for him" establishes Holmes as a man of constant feelings – a faithful man. By not engaging in a love affair, the relationship between the two characters remains one of mutual respect, admiration and regard – making it all the more purer from a Victorian viewpoint.

The adaptation Adler, though somewhat regressive in terms of the feminist issues, is the embodiment of certain postmodern ideas. Her lifestyle, behaviour and morals may, from a Victorian perspective, be construed as reprehensible and indecent. It is, however, one of the

tenets of the postmodern literary movement to challenge the borders of decency. Similarly, the movement challenges certain definitions and categorizations; in this case it takes the form of Adler's sexuality. She is a proclaimed lesbian that simultaneously harbours romantic feelings for Holmes. The nature of their relationship is never explicitly explained, solved or addressed in clear terms, creating multiple layers of interpretive meanings. By doing this, the audience is also forced to question what is the truth and reality of the characters. As the adaptation offers no answers, the audience is activated to fill in the gaps themselves.

5. The adaptive transfer

5.1. The spirit of the work and complete fidelity transfer

The Moffat/Gatiss adaptation of the works of Conan Doyle can be said to adhere to the original works quite extensively. It adheres to different ideals of fidelity and approximates several of the memorable or notable components of the original works. It is true to the spirit of the original works in that it advocates reasoning, promotes the strong bonds of friendship between Holmes and Watson, and emphasizes the superhuman nature of Holmes' skills. Watson and Holmes both act as heroes in the face of many and intricate evils, often following a moral compass that might at times deviate from the societal norm.

When comparing Conan Doyle's *A Scandal in Bohemia* with the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation *A Scandal in Belgravia* it becomes apparent that instances of *complete* fidelity are few, largely due to the modernization of the series. Complete historical fidelity, for instance, will be close to impossible with the transference of the Victorian Sherlock into the 21st Century. Instances of complete lexical fidelity are few; a part from the names of characters and Adler's nickname as *The* Woman there are but a couple of minor cases: In *A Scandal in Belgravia*, Holmes playfully denigrates Watson's deductive skills - "You see, but you do not

observe[76]" – and echo of his own statement from *A Scandal in Bohemia*[77]. In the original work Adler also cheekily appears in disguise in front of 221B Baker Street and wishes Holmes a good night.[78] Though the Moffat/Gatiss episode ends with Holmes besting Adler instead of the other way around, the line "Goodnight, Mister Sherlock Holmes" occurs at a point in the story where Adler most definitely has the upper hand.[79]

When it comes to setting fidelity, it is, again, hard to describe it as a complete transfer, simply due to the modernization of the series. *A Scandal in Bohemia* features the following locations: The rooms of Baker Street and the streets outside it, Adler's villa in Briony Lodge and the street outside it, The Church of St. Monica and the back of the king's brougham. Baker Street is surely an important and indispensable component of most adaptation of Conan Doyle's works, and even though it is updated to coincide with a modern universe, the Baker Street in the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation is still recognizable as the famous detective's lodging. Similarly, London itself, though it too is modernized, is a natural part of the Sherlockian universe.

Certain pivotal incidents are transferred directly onto the screen, e.g. the hiring of Holmes to retrieve compromising photos that are in Adler's possession, Holmes' disguise as a vicar, and the faking of a fire in order to get her to reveal their location. The adaptation also shows signs of conflict fidelity: Adler is in direct conflict with both Holmes and a royal family. The conflicts take on a different nature, however. The relationship the Conan Doyle Adler has with the king of Bohemia is of a personal nature which makes the case concern ill-treatment and emotions. The Moffat/Gatiss Adler has next to no emotional attachment to the royal family; her relationship with them, even if it is of a sexual nature, is one of power and subjugation. This denotes a shift in the attitude towards sex; from the Victorian sense that sex was something taboo – to the postmodern deliberate and delighted treatment of the subject. The adaptations also marks a shift in the notion of sexuality as it blurs the lines of established, preconceived definitions of sexuality; also subscribing to the tenets of Postmodernism. In this aspect, the Moffat/Gatiss Adler is somewhat more liberated that the average Victorian woman. This being said, both versions of Adler show a great sense of freedom. Conan Doyle's Adler makes her own choices throughout the story, and is in complete control as to her own destiny. Choosing to marry Norton, she does subscribe to the Victorian domestic reality, but out of her own will. The Moffat/Gatiss Adler also makes her own choices,

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[76] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:21:28)
[77] Doyle, (2001), p 4
[78] Doyle, (2001), p 11
[79] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00:34:00)

particularly those related to her profession as a dominatrix and to her criminal activities. Ultimately, the postmodern Adler does not exhibit the same level of control as she not only loses the ultimate match with Holmes and Mycroft, but is controlled and manipulated by other characters throughout the episode – Moriarty being one of them. She is perceived as a more regressive woman due to the (sometimes) low moral standard of her choices and her life. Her perceived virtues, e.g. her intelligence and her love for Holmes, are being diminished by the fact that they are revealed to be untrue, or because of her refusal to be honest.

Adler's conflict with Holmes has also changed nature in the transfer. In *A Scandal in Belgravia,* there is a definite sexual and mental attraction between the two, despite Adler being of questionable and dubious nature. In *A Scandal in Bohemia,* Watson is quick to assure the reader that the relationship between Holmes and Irene is not of a romantic nature, but rather one of respect and admiration. In the adaptation, Adler has also been made into a criminal mastermind, which removes the possibility of character- and plot fidelity. In *A Scandal in Bohemia* it becomes apparent that it is the king who has mistreated Adler, and that she in fact comes close to being an example of good morals and integrity. Holmes was, it seems, too quick to judge her character, and does not mind being bested by such a woman. With Adler having been turned into a criminal in the adaptation, Holmes defeating her is justified. His emotional attachment to her, however, makes him rescue her. In the end, the morally superior character comes out on top, but there has been a role switch as to who that character is – a shift from Adler to Holmes. Other than that, there are quite a few instances of plot fidelity, or *approximated* plot fidelity. Adler is in possession of compromising photographs of royalty that becomes a matter of national importance. Holmes is hired to retrieve the photograph(s), disguised himself as a bleeding vicar and fakes a fire in order to figure out where it/they are hidden - which turns out to be behind a sliding panel in the wall of her house. When writer of the episode and co-creator of the series Steven Moffat was asked in an interview as to his reasons for making this distinct change in Adler's character his answer reflected a sense giving entertainment precedence over fidelity; implementing a Adler as a criminal antagonist seemed to him to be more exciting then to have her story end with a marriage.[80]

Where physical fidelity is concerned, there will be obvious discrepancies due to the transfer from a Victorian to a modern society. For instance, Adler is not wearing a bonnet.

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[80] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MltF5YNPac

She is however, depicted as strikingly beautiful, which is also the case with Lara Pulver who portrays Adler in the adaptation. Though the franchise has helped imprint the image of Holmes as a tall, hawk-nosed man with bright, blue eyes, he is described as having "a tall, spare figure" in *A Scandal in Bohemia.* He is also described as having "long, nervous hands". The casting of Benedict Cumberbatch, and the choices he makes as an actor ensures there being a certain degree of physical fidelity also there.

5.2 Sins of omission – What was omitted?

Most noticeably left out of the transfer of *A Scandal in Bohemia* onto the screen is the character of the hereditary king of Bohemia. In some ways the king is the "plotter" character of the short story; the one to have a relationship with Irene Adler, and the one responsible for hiring Sherlock Holmes. He is also, when all things are said and done, the villain of the piece. Holmes is proved to be rather a bad judge of character in this story; he is wrong where both the king and Adler are concerned. A vital piece of Holmes' development as a character happens because of the king. By removing him it becomes necessary to introduce another plotter and another villain if the adaptation aims to be true to both the spirit and the nature of the original Conan Doyle works. The adaptation features anonymous members of the British royal family instead, actively removing the foreign element that is present in the Conan Doyle work. However, there are some allusions to Germany, e.g. the case of the dead airplane passenger, and other countries.

Secondly, there is Adler's marriage to Godfrey Norton. Norton features quite heavily in the short story, but no such character, or anyone like him, appears on screen. By removing him from the plot entirely, one opens up for the possibility of a romantic connection between Adler and Holmes. Allusions to this are heavily featured in the adaptation.

Watson is somewhat different in this adaptation as well. In the original works Watson is happily married to Mary Morstan, and no longer a resident of 221B Baker Street. By making him still be sharing a flat with Holmes, several things are made possible. Firstly, it allows for the story of the relationship between Watson and Morstan to be implemented in a later episode. Secondly, it opens up for an odd kind of love-triangle between Adler, Holmes and Watson, where the latter is reiterated as Holmes' trusted doctor companion worried for his emotional as well as his physical health. Due to the modernization of the series, a homoerotic interpretation of their domestic reality has been implemented as an element of comedy. This again emphasizes their close relationship which is in line with the spirit of the

original works. The domestic nature of Baker Street is being juxtaposed to the dangerous world Irene Adler is a part of. It also results in a conflict between Adler and Watson. . Adler character has undergone quite a radical change in the transfer from the source text onto the screen. She is no longer a singer, nor does she disguise herself in men's clothing.

5.3. Sins of commission – What was added?

The Moffat/Gatiss television series is operating in a 90 minute format which allows for several things. Firstly, the fact that each installment is a part of a series allows for a continued cast. Character traits are being reiterated rather than introduced in each episode, allowing for more three-dimensional peripheral characters, bringing them closer to the centre of the franchise. Secondly, the length of each episode being closer to a movie-standard than a series-standard allows for a fuller and more intricate plot, and thus staying true to the nature of Sherlockian cases as well as characters. The choice to make *Sherlock* into a multi-chapter serial, where each episode is of such a considerable length, lends epic scale and gravitas to Sherlock Holmes, emphasizing the actuality of the iconic nature of the famous detective. By expanding the scale of the story, one subordinates the fidelity to a specific source in favour of the grand scale. In *Sherlock*'s case, there is a close adherence to the specific source text that is the subject of adaptation, as well as a keen awareness of the Sherlock franchise in general. A large part of the material added to the adaptation is therefore rooted in the franchise itself rather than in a particular text. Consequently, fidelity dissonance occurs; dialogue, characters, subplots, settings etc might show complete fidelity to intermedial or intertextual sources while simultaneously not show as close a fidelity to the adaptation source text.[81]

Extensive literary sources of adaptation will naturally be subjected to cutting or removal of dialogue, plotlines, characters, etc. This is simply due to the fact that a literary source of considerable length will not fit on screen in its entirety. *A Scandal in Bohemia* is a 13 page short story; not at all a long text to adapt faithfully. Still, the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation deviates in many ways from the original source text. This is mainly due to the modernization of the work. The creators' desire to stay true to the spirit of the franchise, however, is tangible in how they strive for and achieve *approximate* fidelity. Situations, dialogue, plots, subplots, icons etc. have often a modernized or mirrored equivalent in the *Sherlock* series. An example

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[81] Leitch, (2007), p 32

of this is how the series deals with the issue of smoking.

When adapting short story like that of the 13 page long *A Scandal in Bohemia* into a 90 minute time frame, certain things will necessarily be added. The expansion of the story allows e.g. for a fuller dialogue, the implementations of comical scenarios, the building and developing of interpersonal relationships, implementation of visual devices and music etc. In Conan Doyle's works, John Watson is the narrator who constantly praises Sherlock's skills and talent. With the loss of a narrative voice in its transfer onto the screen, this praise or amazement is manifested in the "slowing down" effect that is so frequently used throughout the series. It is effectively showing the intricate details of Sherlock's deductive methods, thoroughly establishing to the audience the swiftness and accuracy of his reasoning. By transferring parts of the narrative task to the camera, the adaptation still stays true to certain aspects of the spirit of the original work.

Several plots and subplots have been added; perhaps most notably Holmes' other cases, Adler faking her own death, and the plot of Coventry conundrum. Adler is known in the Sherlockian franchise as a woman with strong enough mental capacity to be a worthy opponent to Holmes. In the Conan Doyle story she famously gets the better of him, and escape to America. In the Moffat/Gatiss version, however, Adler is bested by Holmes, extradited to Karachi, and rescued from execution by the hero.

Several additional characters are added to the story; a large portion of them being already implemented in the Sherlock franchise and in this Sherlockian universe in particular. Characters like Mycroft, Mrs. Hudson, Lestrade and Molly Hooper stand out as regular members of the series, but none of them are mentioned in *A Scandal in Bohemia* (Holmes' housekeeper is mentioned, but in this case she is called Mrs. Turner). In addition there are characters like Harry – the representative for the royal family, Jeanette – Watson's date, and Kate - Adler's secretary. In addition to this, there are Holmes' other clients, peripheral members of the police force, etc. Implementing characters already known to the franchise expands the story, and implementing the other minor characters expands the Sherlockian universe in general. Having e.g. Mycroft or Lestrade take part in the story, opens up for reestablishing and reiterating character traits, character development, and conflict. Hooper's presence adds to the love-triangle and is immediately juxtaposed to the somewhat odd attraction shared between Holmes and Adler. The mentions of Holmes' nemesis Moriarty ensures a continued story arc, culminating in *The Reichenbach Fall* at the end of the season. Moriarty as the ultimate plotter behind the main conflict in this episode re-emphasizes his role as a criminal mastermind. It seems that Adler's connection to Godfrey Norton has been

replaced by the professional non-romantic connection she has with Moriarty.

With the transfer of the text to fit a modern setting comes several modern elements. Certain technological elements mirror certain things from the original story e.g. Google have now replaced Holmes' indexes and books, the blog has replaces Watson's diaries and taxicabs have replace the horse-drawn broughams. Adler's cabinet photograph has not only been replaced with digital photos on her phone, but also technological information. Other modern elements are there simply because it would seem odd not to implement them, e.g. forensics. The implementation of smoking as a health hazard and illegalized in public areas is an entertaining way of juxtaposing the well-known Victorian detective to the more modern version. The conflicts of modern times also allows for modern threats - like bombs and modern forms of terrorism – and modern nuisances – like paparazzis and unwanted fame. There also gunplay in the adaptation, and linked to it is the notion of guns as something "cool", fun or even funny. Apart from the faked attack on the disguised Holmes in front of Adler's house, there is no violence in the Conan Doyle story. Juxtaposed to this is the adaptation that readily utilizes violence. Most notably, however, would be the implementation of gratuitous sensuality. Adler had been transformed to a professional dominatrix, constantly making allusions to her work in her dialogue. Her personality is much changed from the Adler we know from the Conan Doyle story; here she is sensual, devious, calculating, cold and a criminal. The changes in Adler's character lead to a certain emphasis where Holmes is concerned. His personality has also been tweaked in the transfer of the familiar character onto screen. The postmodern character is much less congenial, has few social skills (or lack of care for perfecting such a skill) and has almost Asperger-like tendencies. With the presence of a romantic connection to Adler, this modern Holmes is up against new challenges. Holmes' development as a character is being reiterated as he is being confronted with the possibility of love and attraction in the form of Adler.

6. Where it leads

A lot of these changes, particularly those related to plot and character development through extended exposure and interaction with other characters are a consequence of the extended format. Other changes occur naturally as a natural consequence of the transfer to a modern era. Though fidelity to the original Conan Doyle work is not particularly weighted in this adaptation, there is a great deal of care for the entertainment of a modern audience. Elements like plots of romantic connections or tensions, extended, fun and gratuitous

violence, and self-references intended to amuse are being favoured over the notion of fidelity.

With a move from a literary work to the screen follows a natural and necessary display of the visual and the auditory. Though the series in general subscribes to a certain aesthetic, this particular episode stands out as it portrays lushness where colour and texture are concerned; the realization of Adler's character is mirrored in the visual.

A notion that permeates this series in its entirety is the sense that the creative forces behind the adaptation process have a great deal of care for the authority and the spirit of the original works, as well as a for the entertainment of the modern audiences. There is a sense of creative originality that is being displayed, as well as an experimental attitude towards the franchise; to play with something as controversial as turning a well-known Victorian heroine into a modern villain dominatrix exudes a great sense of fun; both for the creators and the audience. There is something to the notion of the challenge of this adaptation process. A character like Holmes, with his abilities and intriguing and iconic personality, calls for intelligent treatment of the material. It is also a challenge to adapt well-known plots and stories in such a way that they achieve the coexistence of a certain level of fidelity and surprise. A faithful adaptation such as this, where certain details and/structures are provided by the original work, begs for a new or closer treatment of characters. One could argue that playing with the development and interpersonal relationships of well-known characters is a challenging and fun for people involved in the creative process. As Thomas Leitch reiterates, as have many before him, an adaptive transfer achieves more success with a mixture of fidelity and free invention.[82] Cartmell and Whelehan supports this as they argue that too close an adaptation will inevitably disappoint in the unavoidable comparison to the original literary work that follows such an adaptation, and that one of the contributing factors concerning a successful adaptation in the addition of new material.[83] In the case of this adaptation, the temporal displacement to the 21st century causes defamiliarization as it simultaneously draws the Sherlockian universe closer. The postmodern treatment and depiction of characters, plots, themes etc brings the franchise closer to the postmodern audience. This allows for a connection between audience and work that is no longer hampered by the gaps and differences caused by the temporal dissimilarities.

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[82] Leitch, (2007), p 64
[83] Cartmell, Whelehan, (2010), p 73, 75

Chapter 3

The Victorian vs. The Postmodern Moriarty

- a comparative study of the Conan Doyle short story *The Final Problem* and the BBC Moffat/Gatiss television series episode *The Reichenbach Fall*

1. Plot

1.1. The Final Problem

Being know for the introduction of the most memorable antagonist in the Sherlockian universe as well as the apparent death of Sherlock Holmes', *The Final Problem* is immediately different from other works in the Conan Doyle canon. It is known for its portrayal of Sherlock Holmes' nemesis Moriarty; a highly intelligent and malevolent villain of organized crime who is Holmes' intellectual equal, and ultimately responsible for the hero's death.

Due to "the recent letters in which Colonel James Moriarty defends the memory of his brother", [84] a reluctant and saddened John Watson comes forward to refute these letters and finally reveal the truth about what occurred between Professor Moriarty and Sherlock Holmes to the public. Watson's story starts with a pale and exhausted Holmes entering his office, laying before him the narrative concerning his dealings with and the nature of the most notorious criminal the detective has encountered. Holmes explains how he has been following the highly intelligent and inherently devious criminal for some time, and how his net is now closing in around Moriarty and his key collaborators. He then goes on to narrate the meeting that occurred between the two, and how the sophisticated but cold and calculating Professor tried to threaten him to cease his pursuit. Holmes explains to Watson how he, upon refusing, has since been attacked by Moriarty's henchmen multiple times, and that he expects continuous attempts at his life. He consequently asks Watson to accompany him on his trip abroad in the assumed hope of escaping Moriarty. In a cat-and-mouse game involving an intricate plan of coaches, trains, misdirection, disguise and secrecy, Watson and Holmes are able to make their way to Switzerland, to a village close to the Reichenbach falls. Upon their hike to see the falls, Watson is called away on a medical emergency and Holmes is left alone at the top of the falls. Upon discovering that the emergency was a fabricated one, Watson returns to the falls to find Holmes' walking stick and a letter in which Holmes explains how he has foreseen and understands the necessity of his imminent death at the hands of Moriarty. Holmes gladly accepts his death because in his sacrificing his life, he will also rid the world of the most notorious criminal when he, quite literally, "brings him down with him" in the drop down the Reichenbach falls. In his few and concluding words, Watson remembers his friend as "the best and the wisest man whom [he has] ever known[85]".

1.2 The Reichenbach Fall

Like *The Final Problem, The Reichenbach Fall* opens with Watson revealing that Sherlock has died and his consequent narrative of what transpired and how Sherlock's death occurred. Moriarty has returned to simultaneously break in to three of the most secure buildings in England; The Tower of London, The Bank of England and Pentonville Prison. Because of Holmes' rising fame as a consulting detective and his previous dealings with Moriarty, he is called in as an expert character witness at his trial. Despite overwhelming

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[84] Doyle, (2001), p 488
[85] Doyle, (2001), p 506

evidence against Moriarty, he goes free after having intimidated the jury into releasing him. Moriarty then visits 221B Baker Street, where he informs Holmes about the existence of a computer key code that can break into virtually anything and that is currently in Moriarty's possession. He also threatens Holmes' with the following phrase: "I owe you a fall, Sherlock. I. Owe. You.[86]" A few months later, Holmes is hired to solve another case; a kidnapping case involving the two children of an ambassador. Moriarty, who is behind the abduction, leaves clues for Holmes to follow, resulting in him solving the case with such speed that members of the police force suspects him to have caused the kidnapping in order to solve it. Due to Moriarty's careful planning, and manipulation of the press it is believed to be true that Holmes' is a fraud. Holmes and Watson find themselves being chased by the police as they try to reveal the many levels of Moriarty's carefully constructed plan to destroy Sherlock Holmes – both the man and his reputation. As Holmes goes to ask Molly Hooper for help (presumably to fake his own death), Watson discovers that Mycroft Holmes has been manipulated by Moriarty to divulge details about his brother's life, making the lies he tells more believable.

"So, one big lie – "Sherlock's a fraud" – and people will swallow it because the rest of it is true. Moriarty wanted Sherlock destroyed, right? And you have given him the perfect ammunition" [87] In a final confrontation, Moriarty and Holmes meet on the rooftops of St. Barts. Moriarty reveals that there is no computer code, and that it was a piece in a game and a ploy to get assassins to stand by to kill all of Holmes' friends unless they see him commit suicide. When Holmes deduces that the flaw in the plan is that Moriarty has the capability to call off the assassins, Moriarty kills himself. Apparently left with no other choice, Holmes jumps to his death off the roof of St. Barts. However, when Watson visits his grave, the audience witness Sherlock Holmes standing alive on the outskirts of the cemetery.

2. Comparison and fidelity

The adaptation of this particular Conan Doyle story is somewhat more complex than simply transferring a text to the screen, or adding or removing material to that text to make it viable for film audiences. The reason for this lies not in the episode's strong ties to the rest of the franchise, but also in this particular episode's connection to other episodes within this

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[86] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:26:09 – 00:26:19)
[87] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:05:15- 01:05:30)

series. The way that *The Final Problem* has been adapted is peculiar because of its treatment of Moriarty. Though initially featured only in the one short story, Moriarty has nevertheless earned a place in the "Sherlockian hall of fame" as the most calculating and deadly villain the detective encounters. In the Conan Doyle works, Holmes' interaction with Moriarty ultimately leads to both their deaths. Because of this, any rendition of Moriarty will immediately carry noticeably more weight than any other villain because he threatens Holmes' existence, and because he draws the authority to do this from the original, literary works. This is, in part, why Moriarty is a character of high entertainment value. By the presence of Moriarty, Holmes' destruction becomes an eventuality.

The idea of Moriarty as a special villain, in terms of the level of intrigue and tension that is attached to him, helps us understand the impulse to explore and enhance the mythic elements of the character. *The Final Problem* has been adapted in such a way that its contents have been dispersed over several episodes, methodically building the myth of the character, in terms of his relation to the individual plots of the episodes, in relation to the story-arc of the series and in relation to the franchise as a whole. As Thomas Leitch points out: "[…] these adaptations do not ignore the ideal of fidelity; they merely displace its subject from a specific adventure to a larger or smaller text.[88]" Consequently, we observe instances of fidelity that cross the boundaries of the adaptation of a single story.

2.1. Approximated/Faithful transfer

2.1.1 Plot fidelity

The first instance of absolute plot fidelity concerns the meeting between Holmes and Moriarty at Baker Street. The conversation mirrors that in *The Final Problem* in terms of tension but not in content. Moriarty does, however, allude to his desire to solve "the final problem" several times, reiterating the connection the adaptation, and this scene in particular, has to the original work. In both works, the threat that Moriarty imposes is of a psychological nature. Nonetheless, there is a marked presence of a weapon in both renditions. The gun handled by Holmes in the Conan Doyle work reemphasizes the threat that Moriarty poses. The fact that he carries no weapon reiterates his being in control. In the adaptation, Moriarty uses a knife to carve "I O U" into an apple. Here, the weapon is used to underline Moriarty's

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[88] Leitch, (2007), p 213

destructive nature. In spite of there having been a switch concerning which character wields the weapon, both versions utilize the presence of the weapon to support the notion of Moriarty as threatening. What is so tangible in *The Final Problem* is the notion that the bloodhound-like detective readers know from previous stories is suddenly being hunted. Moriarty himself, as well as numerous assassins, tries to kill Holmes and Watson on their journey to Switzerland, culminating in their encounter at the Reichenbach falls. This idea of role reversal where Holmes is concerned is also present in the adaptation. Here, however, Watson and Holmes are being hunted by the police. Though the assassins are present, their role is not to murder Holmes but to hinder others in approaching him in order to access Moriarty's computer key-code. Though Moriarty is a tangible force behind the hunt for Holmes, he himself is not involved in the chase. This high-lights the role of Moriarty as one who "[doesn't] like to get [his] hands dirty" [89] – a character trait that is in accordance with both previous adaptations within the series and the original work.

Another case of plot fidelity involves Watson being called away on a medical emergency. *The Final Problem* features a letter being delivered where he is led to believe that a dying Englishwoman staying at the Swiss hotel wishes for an English doctor. In *The Reichenbach Fall* Watson is being contacted by paramedics telling him that Mrs. Hudson has been shot and is dying. Plot-wise, the removal of Watson is necessary in order to open up for the final one-on-one confrontation between Moriarty and Holmes. In both cases, had Watson been present it would render the fight less fair; diminishing Holmes' identity as a morally superior hero. It would also have morally elevated Moriarty, reducing his status as a villain, and reducing the perception of the two enemies being polar opposites where good and evil is concerned. This is not to say that the postmodern Moriarty does not invoke sympathy in the contemporary audience. [90] What is notable in the transfer of this part is the exchange of character. Conan Doyle's Watson answers the distressed call from a fellow countrywoman, emphasizing the Victorian notion of duty to fellow countrymen that is embedded in his character. By, in the adaptive transfer, implementing Mrs. Hudson, both Watson's character and the audience are engaged on a more personal level. This case is not unique to the series; characters already a part of the franchise and known to the audience are often implemented into the story. These characters are often utilized as a means of expanding the adaptation, but also take on roles, tasks or lines originally held by other, often minor, characters. As a consequence, the peripheral characters' personality traits are being reiterated, and the

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[89] *The Great Game* (00:01:22:35 – 01:22:39).
[90] More on this in the "Moriarty" chapter.

franchise is drawn closer and personalized. In *The Final Problem*, Watson leaves to aid a fellow countrywoman and Holmes sacrifices his life in order to rid the world of Moriarty. Compared to this is *The Reichenbach Fall* where Watson rushes to aid Mrs. Hudson and Holmes sacrifices his personal reputation in order to save his friends. The move from Victorian to Postmodern also marks a shift in approach to attachment to, and display of, character; we move from the universal to the individual.

This same postmodern preference for the individual over the universal can also be seen in other plot fidelity cases, as e.g. with Holmes' suicide note. Though the Victorian Holmes expresses sadness over having to "give pain to [his] friends, he is primarily occupied with ensuring that Moriarty and his organization can do more damage. [91] The Postmodern Holmes' main concern is the lives of his friends. This, rather than bringing Moriarty down with him, is the objective of "the fall". He delivers his final words to Watson over the phone, making it, and the interpersonal relationship of the characters, less detached. This, in combination with the fact that Watson is there to witness the fall, intensifies the event. In addition to the plot transfer of *The Final Problem* there are instances of plot fidelity to other Conan Doyle source texts that intertwine with the exposition and presentation of Moriarty. A subplot in *The Great Game* is a modern adaptation of *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington,* where, it is revealed, Moriarty has ordered the theft. The implementation of a story that originally heavily features Mycroft opens up for the embedding of another conflict, namely that between Mycroft and Moriarty. This, in turn, allows for the embedding of this conflict in other episodes, e.g. *A Scandal in Belgravia* and *The Reichenbach Fall* where Mycroft's dealings with Moriarty are minor in terms of exhibition on the screen but vital to the plot. By giving repeated plot significance to peripheral characters, embedding of certain franchise-related elements, e.g. the Diogenes Club, is justified. This reinforces the franchise, and strengthens this adaptation's authority in its ties to the original texts.

2.1.2. Literal fidelity

In spite of the heavy focus on storytelling and fidelity to the spirit of the Conan Doyle works, there is little literal fidelity in the adaptation of *The Final Problem*. As the depiction of Moriarty has been divided into *The Great Game* and *The Reichenbach Fall* in this series' adaptation, both episodes show instances of literal fidelity. In *The Great Game*, the dialogue between Moriarty and Holmes mirrors or approximates that from the short story. "You can't be

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[91] Doyle, (2001), p 505

allowed to continue. You just can't[92]". Though not a case of absolute literal fidelity, this is recognizably similar to that from *The Final Problem* "You must drop it, Mr. Holmes. […] You really must […]. " [93] The episode ends on a cliffhanger, with lines of fidelity approximation:

Moriarty: "All [Everything] that I have to say has already crossed your mind"

Holmes: "Then [possibly] probably my answer has crossed yours". [94]

In *The Reichenbach Fall,* Holmes' comment on how he expects "the criminal trial of the century"[95] is echoing in the media coverage that is depicted in the wake of Moriarty's heists.[96]

Holmes' description of Moriarty is also a case of literal fidelity: "[He is a spider] A spider at the centre of [a] web. [97]"

What is particularly noticeable about these cases of literal fidelity is that they all relate to Moriarty, denoting a concern with truthfully adapting the villain and further iconize him. The adapted dialogue in *The Great Game* helps establish his character, especially his ability to calculate outcome and probability. The minor change concerning the word "possibly" being replaced with "probably" enhances this.

The cases of literal fidelity existing in *The Reichenbach Fall* all concern Moriarty and his personality. The exception to this is the comment on "the trial of the century" that in both cases emphasizes the extent of his crimes. Also, the fact that this permeates

the various media coverage gives further credence to the importance of media as a theme in this particular adaptation.

2.1.3. Setting fidelity

There are few instances of setting fidelity in this particular transfer; apart from the streets of London in general, this is limited to Baker Street. It does, however, play an important role. Not only is Baker Street synonymous with the detective and his entire enterprise, it is also a major scene of domesticity. The latter is particularly emphasized throughout the television series, predominantly through domestic interaction between Watson and Holmes, and occasionally Mrs. Hudson. In *The Final Problem*, the readers learn that the rooms at Baker Street have been set fire to. Due to the vital role this particular setting plays in

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[92] *The Great Game* (01:28:00 – 01:28:05)
[93] Doyle, (2001), p 493
[94] [ ] = *The Great Game* (01:28:05: - 01:28:30), Doyle (2001), p 493.
[95] Doyle, (2001), p 492
[96] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:10:15 – 00:12:00)
[97] [] = *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:16:10 – 00:16:16), Doyle (2001), p 491

the franchise, this accentuates the finality that characterizes this particular Conan Doyle work. The burning of the rooms is copied in *The Great Game*, only here the notion of finality is non-present as the context is not the same. It is, however, a blow to the core of the detective's existence. By destroying and intruding Baker Street, Moriarty is threatening the domestic refuge that Baker Street represents. Because of Holmes' intrinsically British background and affiliation, an attack and violation of the security of Baker Street is also an attack on the British domesticity.

2.1.4. Structure

In terms of structure, *The Reichenbach Fall* adopts certain elements from *The Final Problem.* Firstly, both renditions are definitely a narrative being told by John Watson. The story begins and ends with his account of what happened, making him the ultimate narrator in both versions. In *The Final Problem*, the readers are made aware of his role by the fact that he is absent at the moment of Sherlock Holmes' death, which leaves no one to witness or recount the event. In *The Reichenbach Fall*, his final wish, "don't be dead", is instantly fulfilled, attaching immediate power to his words. Secondly, the adaptation also adopts the notion of Sherlock as a narrator. The nature of film and television as a medium is such that the narrative voice often is conveyed through the camera. In that respect, there are several instances in previous episodes where the audience has been witness to scenes that do not include John Watson; effectively diminishing his narrative role somewhat, and transferring the narrative point of view to someone else. In several cases, this someone is Sherlock Holmes. This, however, is particularly marked in this episode, especially in scenes that only feature Moriarty and Holmes. The adherence to the narrative nature of the original work is tangible. Both *The Final Problem* and *The Reichenbach* are heavily centered around or focused on the sense of narration. In transferring the notion of narration as a theme, though dealt with differently in each medium, the adaptation exhibits a sense of fidelity also here. Sherlock Holmes's genius is brought to us and enhanced by John Watson's experience of him. Moriarty's extraordinary abilities and role as an opponent is explained through Holmes' depiction. Due to the nature of the medium of *The Final Problem,* the entire story is relayed to the audience through the written word. The nature of Conan Doyle's writing, however, subscribes to an oral realization. Conan Doyle's voice merges with the narrative voice of John Watson, who here relates a story wherein Sherlock Holmes is telling him about Moriarty. A construction such as this is actively creating a chain of dimensionality where storytelling is concerned. In the adaptive transfer, this dimensionality is enhanced as multileveled treatment of storytelling is

thematically and practically implemented into dialogue, plot, character, and intertextual references.

Even though the presentation and implementation of Moriarty is expanded and divided over several episodes, this series shows some fidelity where the exposition of Moriarty is concerned. The chronological exposition of the character roughly mirrors that of *The Final Problem*. Moriarty is gradually introduced to Holmes and the audience as a mysterious figure connected to organized crime ("the consulting criminal"), which expands as his methods become known. When they finally meet, Moriarty's physical appearance is established, as is his way of expressing himself. Moriarty goes from playfully berating Holmes, to warning him against continuing his attempt to trap him, and threatens him as to the outcome if he does not. Moriarty then moves from wanting to get rid of Holmes for professional reasons to wanting to exact his personal revenge for him thwarting his plans – this to the point that he is willing to risk and accept his own destruction. What deviates from this chronology is the suggestion made in this adaptation that Moriarty has nurtured feelings of animosity towards Holmes from their childhood. By making this change, the writers of the series underline the notion of Moriarty as inherently evil, as is suggested in the Conan Doyle work. The adaptation stays faithful to certain elements whilst other are being discarded in order to create a more believable, modern psychological profile.

It is also worth mentioning that, in terms of structure, Moriarty is given considerable end weight. The choice to adapt and divide *The Final Problem* into several episodes opens up for the use of Moriarty as a "cliffhanger-character". By embedding the character in the season finale of all three seasons, the episodes in which he is featured is elevated through his iconic status as a villain. A consequence of this is also that there is a reciprocal effect, where the mythic nature of the character is being reiterated and enhanced by his presence in the season finales.

2.2. Additions

Often, when making the transitional leap from a short story to a television of considerable length, the original content will have to be expanded to fit the screen. Cartmell and Whelehan describe the adding of new material as a vital part of the adaptation process in order to achieve success. In adapting a book, one will often need to remove elements, which may cause dismay in fans of the original work. Even if this is not the case, a transfer of such close fidelity that the adaptation becomes a mere copy will likely have little success as it will immediately be compared to the fuller universe of the book. In light of this, one might argue

that adaptation of short stories like those of Conan Doyle accomplish financial and critical success easier, because the additions made in the transfer are parts of a natural and expected contract. In terms of a television series operating within the Sherlockian franchise, making additions in the form of extending the original plot, creating new subplots, and also by adding elements from other corners of the franchise will often be both necessary and natural. In the case of the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation, the issue of the content is solved by, amongst other things, changing or giving additional relevance to peripheral characters, or embedding new characters. In addition to the expansion of characters, the adaptation of a short story also allows for further insertion of comedy in the space that occurs in the adaptational transfer – something which is heavily weighted in this series adaptation. Peripheral characters are more clearly defined in terms of their interpersonal relationship to the core characters, and in their role as a part the construct. Along with the main characters, their presence and the manifestation of their portrayal also underlines the connection to the Sherlockian franchise. These elements - the expansion of characters and their interpersonal relationships, the implementation of comic elements and the meta-commentary focus in the iconic franchise – constitute the biggest additions made in the adaptational transfer.

2.2.1 Characters

Mrs. Hudson, though not featured in *The Final Problem* except for in Holmes' suicide not, has been implemented in her role as a permanent fixture of 221B Baker Street. As a part of the domestic reality, she is a slightly comic figure; a bumbling and somewhat powerless mother-figure to the parts of Holmes' personality that subscribes to that of a headstrong and moody teenager. She also acts as Watson's confidant in issues that involve Holmes. In *The Reichenbach Fall* she is not extensively featured, except for in brief moments of comic relief. She is, however, one of Moriarty's three targets in his plan to destroy Holmes. As a fixed part of the franchise and this particular series, the threat against her has great impact, both on Holmes' and the audience.

Lestrade is not mentioned at all in *The Final Problem*, but still features quite heavily in the adaptation – especially in terms of plot. He is heavily involved in the call-out during Moriarty's heists, he is lead detective in the kidnapping investigation and he is in charge of arresting Holmes. In the latter he is used as a pawn in Moriarty's game.
In his story about Sir-Boast-a-lot the villain effectively names him the king, emphasizing the high status he holds both in terms of his position in the police force, and in the franchise.
In the Conan Doyle works, there is a certain animosity between Inspector Lestrade and

Inspector Gregson. The two police inspectors are traditionally seen as polar opposites; one is course-looking and tenacious, the other is more handsome and somewhat more refined in his intellectual capacity. While both inspectors have to operate within the boundaries of the law, Gregson shows more of an inclination to look through the fingers of minor crimes if it furthers the good.[98] While Gregson is featured in 4 of Conan Doyle's stories[99], Lestrade is featured in 13. [100] Through their constant working together, Lestrade is gradually admitted into Holmes circle of friends. By his continued presence and loyalty throughout Holmes' career, the character becomes iconic in his role in the Sherlockian universe, and a natural component of any adaptation of the literary works. As the Conan Doyle works only allude to Lestrade's first name as having the initial G., the choice to name the adapted character Greg shows fidelity to the original canon as well as the particular choice of name high-lights the fact that in adapting the character for the screen, the Moffat/Gatiss production has combined the personality traits of Gregson and Lestrade to form Inspector Greg Lestrade. In a recurring joke throughout the series, Holmes is unable to remember his first name, reemphasizing the iconic nature of Lestrade, and giving new credence to Gregson. This series' Lestrade operates mostly within the boundaries of the law, except for giving Holmes access to classified case material. As Holmes is suspected of criminal conduct, he finally has to answer for this in *The Reichenbach Fall*. As he has come to represent the police force, Lestrade is both a useful tool and a natural component of every case where Holmes' investigation overlaps with theirs. The creation of characters like Donovan and Anderson expands Holmes' relationship with the police as conflicts, mistrust and comedic quarrels find an outlet in them. Minor characters like these are given further significance as they are featured in recurring jokes and become more relevant to the plot as the series progresses. Though there are elements of ridicule connected to Lestrade because his intellect is constantly juxtaposed to that of Holmes, he remains loyal and well-meaning in the eyes of the audience. Much in accordance with the Conan Doyle stories, his relationship with Holmes gradually goes from being professional to personal. Due to the gradual but constant exposure of him during the course of the series, Lestrade has

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[98] This is tangible in "the adventure of the Greek interpreter (1893), where Gregson overlooks Holmes committing a minor felony
[99] *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), The Adventure of The Greek Interpreter (1893), The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge (1903), The Adventure of The Red Circle (1911).
[100] *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), "The Boscombe Valley Mystery" (1891), "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor" (1892), "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box" (1893),), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901), "The Adventure of the Empty House" (1903), "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" (1903), "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" (1904), "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons" (1904),), "The Adventure of the Second Stain" (1905), "The Bruce-Partington Plans" (1908), "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax" (1911), "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs" (1924)

become a part of Holmes' inner circle, which makes his presence in the adaptation of *The Final Problem* natural, even though he is not originally featured. His friendship with and value to Holmes, as well as his part in the franchise, is reiterated when he along with Mrs. Hudson and Watson is being targeted by Moriarty. In the end, he is one of the people Holmes sacrifices himself for.

In *The Final Problem,* Mycroft Holmes is mentioned by Holmes as being disguised as the coachman that aids Watson in meeting Holmes and escaping Moriarty. The character has been expanded in the adaptive transfer, and in *The Reichenbach Fall* he is heavily featured; especially in terms of plot construction. The presence of Mycroft opens up for the implementation of certain franchise-related elements, i.e. the depiction of The Diogenes Club. Mycroft is known for being involved with the British government, and for his brilliant mind. Usually depicted as exceeding Sherlock Holmes in terms of intelligence, Mycroft utilized his mental capacities differently from that of his brother. As the Conan Doyle works have provided the audience with this backdrop where his personality is concerned, the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation expands this to create a fuller and more three-dimensional character. There is a passive-aggressive sibling conflict constantly present between Mycroft and Sherlock Holmes that characterizes their every interaction and often their actions. The lack of background concerning the characters' interpersonal relationship creates an active audience and engages them to fill in the gaps. Mycroft's interaction with Watson particularly describes the care he has for his brother, the dangerous nature of his work, and his extensive knowledge concerning all things. Sherlock has previously been depicted as the weaker of the two brothers, particularly in *A Scandal in Belgravia*. *The Reichenbach Fall* shows a faltering Mycroft that allows himself to be manipulated by Moriarty, and that consequently endangers his brother.

The ongoing battle between Moriarty and Mycroft happens in the periphery of the main story, but proves vital to the plot. The two characters symbolize the opposing forces that are working on Sherlock Holmes. Mycroft represents the ideal; the super-ego of Sherlock's personality while Moriarty represents the animalistic and baser nature; the id. The battle between these two characters personifies and personalizes the emotional struggle of Sherlock Holmes. [101] The addition of Mycroft Holmes has immediate links to previous episodes in the series. His involvement in government business includes previous encounters with Moriarty, and the story-arch that concerns the interaction between the two characters spans across

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[101] More on this in the Moriarty-chapter

several seasons. The implementation of Mycroft is natural as *The Reichenbach Fall* involves Moriaty's death and the culmination of their conflict is set to this episode. Mycroft Holmes is an intrinsic part of the franchise, and has been accentuated as a part of Sherlock Holmes' inner circle. Mycroft is therefore often referred to and appears frequently throughout the series. Adding him to the episode allows for development of character and interpersonal relationships where he is concerned. Mycroft is secretive, formidable and almost illustrious, and his presence is often linked to plot. His involvement raises the seriousness and complexity of the story – something that gives him high entertainment value. Writer and co-creator of the series Mark Gatiss is cast in the role of Mycroft, which might be related to why Mycroft is so heavily featured.

Molly Hooper is an addition to the series not rooted in the Conan Doyle works. As she is not a part of the original franchise, one would perhaps expect her to have less exposure than the other characters. This is, however, not the case. In her role as an intrinsic part of the heavily featured St. Barts hospital, and in her romantic attachment to Sherlock Holmes, Molly Hooper is equally weighted as the rest of the characters; giving her, in this series, full admittance into the franchise. This is high-lighted in the plot as she, despite claiming that she "doesn't count" amongst people close to Holmes, ends up proving necessary to his survival. Hooper's "otherness" as not part of the original literary works is mirrored in the fact that Moriarty leaves her out when he threatens Holmes' friends. Molly Hooper's relationship with Moriarty, though not given extensive exposure, provides the audience with information concerning the personalities of Moriarty, Holmes and Hooper. In *The Great Game* Moriarty shows his total disregard for other people, his skills in manipulation, his propensity for playing games, and his obsession with Sherlock Holmes. Notably, he also shows his propensity for disguise and acting when he enters into the role of Hooper's boyfriend Jim. This personality trait is strongly reiterated when he later assumes the role of Rich Brook in *The Reichenbach Fall.* When confronted with Hooper's boyfriend, Holmes reacts with a particular passive-aggressive arrogance. The fact that this meeting affects his mood so, and that he falls for Moriarty's disguise suggests two things: Firstly, that Holmes is perhaps not so emotionally detached from Molly Hooper as he appears. Secondly, that Moriarty is very skilled when it comes to assuming different personalities; both in adapting his personality according to his false persona, and in physical disguise. In *The Final Problem* it is Holmes that dons the disguise in his attempt to escape Moriarty. The fact that in *The Great Game* Moriarty dons a disguise in order to meet Holmes emphasizes their similar, yet polar opposite, nature simultaneously. Hooper's relationship with the disguised Moriarty is generally viewed

as being an attempt to end her seemingly futile crush on Holmes. The fact that she severs the romantic ties to Moriarty suggests that Hooper possesses certain "deductive" skills where people are concerned. This is supported by the fact that she, in *The Reichenbach Fall,* shows the same kind of deductive capabilities where Holmes is concerned. The addition of Molly Hooper to the series takes on symbolic meaning seen in the light of Cartmell and Whelehan's view on the matter of addition; much like Molly Hooper ends up saving Holmes, the addition of new material often saves an adaptation.[102] Hooper brings a particular romantic tension that otherwise does not exist in the original works, and that is juxtaposed to this Holmes' interaction with Irene Adler in *A Scandal in Belgravia.* Hooper's presence emphasizes and exposes certain personality traits in Holmes, especially his asexual and anti-social behaviour. The interaction between the two characters is a source of comedy, but it also provides the audience with an insight into Holmes' emotional life and psyche that exists outside of Watson.

The implementation of the character Kitty Riley exemplifies there being a shift in perception from the Victorian to the Postmodern; a move from the universal to the individual. Through her, media is personified. The addition of Riley is important to both theme and plot, as these both deal extensively with truth, myth, storytelling, and reputation. As Riley becomes an embodiment of media, her weaknesses as an individual mirror the weaknesses of media in general. She shows an inclination to manipulate and trick her subjects in her pursuit of a story. She is ambitious and she has a personal grudge against Holmes. The décor in her apartment simply stating "make believe" suggests that she is willing to sacrifice and manipulate the truth if it serves her goals. She is, however, not depicted as an evil person, but rather a misinformed one. Moriarty's manipulation of her as a person mirrors Moriarty's manipulation of truth and media in general, and gives thematic exposure to the power and weaknesses of media.

2.2.2 Comedy

Though the Conan Doyle works of Sherlock Holmes are not void of comic elements, the nature and theme of *The Final Problem* hardly makes it natural. However, there are some instances of comedy. Traditionally, the comedy of Conan Doyle is often found in Holmes' remarks, or in Watson's relating situational comedy. It is therefore noteworthy that the first clear sign of comedy is to be found in Moriarty. His first comment to Holmes is "You have

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[102] Cartmell, Whelehan, (2010), p 73-75

less frontal development than I should have expected"[103]. In Victorian England, the pseudo-science of phrenology equaled great frontal development of the skull with great brain capacity. The remark, which is related to the fact that Holmes hides a loaded gun in the pocked of his dressing gown, is an obvious insult.[104] It firmly establishes Moriarty as a man in control and who has a tendency to notice the hidden, but also as a man who is prone to ridicule and verbal sparring. This is juxtaposed to a segment occurring later in the story where Holmes' surprises Watson by revealing the fact that he has been disguised as the confused, Italian priests. Watson's reaction to this reveal is comical, and mirrors similar reactions of shock and admiration from previous works.

In the adaptive transfer the comedic elements, like so many things, have been given extended focus. A source of comedy frequently used is the various interactions between characters, especially in their relationship with Sherlock Holmes. As his character has been adapted for the expanded time frame and the immediacy of the screen, and for the modern age, he has been turned into a "high-functioning sociopath" with Asperger-like tendencies. [105] The fast-paced processes of Holmes' mind, his staunch belief in his own abilities, his lack of social skills, and his arrogance makes the nature of his interaction with others a source of comedy. Comical frustration, incredulity, mockery, resignation or anger as a result of other character's interaction with Holmes is often depicted in the series. Holmes' critique of characters like Lestrade, Donovan and Anderson, and their subsequent retaliation, and the verbal sparring between Holmes and characters like Watson, Mycroft and Moriarty is a recurring source of comedy. Holmes's petulant rivalry with this brother Mycroft, his domestic squabbles with Watson and Mrs. Hudson, and his detached and awkward interaction with Hooper are not only comical, but highly personal. These instances of comedy are immediately related to exposition and nature of the characters as they are defined by their interaction with Holmes.

The creators and writers of this series show a propensity for the literary tradition and a particular fondness for fidelity to the source texts and the franchise. Consequently, the comedy displayed in this series is predominantly a verbal one. The physical comedy is rarely just physical comedy, but is made funny by aid of the context of music, situation, or dialogue. choice of actors is important when it comes to physical comedy in this series, and particularly in this episode where the switch between comedy and seriousness happens rapidly and subtly.

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[103] Doyle, (2001), p 493
[104] http://sherlockholmes.stanford.edu/print_issue12.html
[105] "I'm not a psychopath, I'm a high-functioning sociopath. Do your research "
The Study in Pink (00:57:56-00:58:00)

The casting of e.g. Martin Freeman, who has extensive background in comedy, allows for certain interpretations and manifestations of comedy that is unique to his performance. Being famous for his portrayal of roles like Arthur Dent (*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005)) and Tim Canterbury (*The Office* television series (2001-2003) he has been established him as an actor particularly skilled at portraying the comical confusion and incredulity which is at the core of unusual or unconventional experiences. The portrayal of John Watson is a similar one, as he is a fairly "normal" individual to whom extraordinary things happen as a consequence of his enterprises with Sherlock Holmes.

Similarly, Andrew Scott's portrayal of Moriarty, both in terms of his verbal and his physical performance, is one that simultaneously invokes humour and fear. Moriarty's character is displayed mostly by what he says, and though the switches in both theme and mood are noticeable, it is Scott's performance that enhances his erratic nature. The sudden switches between threats and banter also allow them to blend. This adheres to the notion of a postmodern blurring of mood and intent as opposing manifestations mix to denote the same ideas. The comical elements occasionally manifest themselves as frightening because they underline the detached nature of Moriarty. Similarly, due to Scott's artistic choices, both in terms of physicality and voice, the serious elements are tinged with comedy. Moriarty is traditionally seen as a villain that Holmes both fears and admires, as is conveyed through his and Watson's depictions in *The Final Problem*. In *The Reichenbach Fall* these feelings of fear and admiration become linked to Scott's performance as an actor. There is cognitive dissonance that allows the villain to undulate between a propensity for comedy and a desire for destruction. Similarly, Moriarty is a villain that invokes both terror and comedy, in Sherlock Holmes and in the audience.

As *The Reichenbach Fall* is a postmodern adaptation, there is an increased focus of attention given to sex, sensuality and sexuality. Whilst *The Final Problem* contains near to no allusions to either romance or sexuality, there are quite a few interpersonal relationships in the adaptation being tinged with romantic or sexual undertones. The romantic tension between Holmes and Hooper, the domestic nature of Holmes and Watson' relationship, and the occasional parallels to romantic attachment that is manifested in Moriarty's relationship with Holmes are relationships that is characterized by a postmodern propensity for lack of definition, but that still alludes to sexual or romantic attraction.

What is perhaps more peculiar to this series adaptation is the use of sex, sexuality and romance as sources of comedy. There is the obvious comedy of Holmes' inappropriate and anti-social behaviour that is given particular and specified attention in his interaction with

Molly Hooper. His asexual and apparent indifferent behaviour towards her emphasizes his "otherness" which in turn gives occasion for a particular situational comedy. As the relationship develops and Hooper is utilized further as important to the plot and a part of the franchise, the comedy subsides, indicating a development in characters and in their interpersonal relationship. In this series adaptation is the implementation of the constant allusions made to a romantic attachment between Holmes and Watson is also a source of comedy. Thematically and socially more at home in a postmodern rendition than in a Victorian literary work, the focus given to sexuality, especially where Holmes and Watson is concerned, is extensive. The domestic disputes between them, the assumptions made by the audience and other characters concerning their relationship and sexuality, and Watson's frustrated reactions to these becomes recurring instances of comedy throughout the series. Similar is Hooper's awkwardness and Adler's forwardness where sex, sexuality and romance is concerned. At the core of it all is Sherlock Holmes. It is his reactions, or lack thereof, that provides context or juxtaposition to the other characters. This is also the case where Moriarty is concerned. Save for a few hints and assumptions, the audience is privy to little information where the villains personal life is concerned, and even less so when it comes to his sexuality or romantic life. The only utterance made on the subject is in *The Great Game:*

"[…] I have loved this, this little game of ours. Playing Jim from I.T. Playing gay"[106] From this, the only comment on the matter of his sexuality, one could assume that Moriarty is straight. There are, however, certain elements about Moriarty's behaviour that suggest otherwise, e.g. his flirting with Sherlock Holmes (by e.g. signing off his texts with an "x", which is text message slang for "kiss".)[107] From his comments on the subject, one gets the impression that Moriarty is amused by sex as a theme – or at least that he, similar to Irene Adler, enjoys trying to upset Holmes' equilibrium e.g. "Is that a British Army Browning L9A1 in your pocket, or are you just pleased to see me?"[108], "[…] the flirting's over, Sherlock, daddy's had enough now"[109] By Moriarty's treatment of the matter, sex becomes a part of the comedy repertoire in the episodes which feature him. His also alludes to himself and his crimes as sexy, and has a vocabulary and a mode of speech that features words pertaining to sex: "Big client list. Rogue government, intelligence communities, terrorist cells, they all want me. Suddenly, I'm Mr. Sex." [110] This playful attitude and self-reference where

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[106] *The Great Game* (01:23:57-01:24:07)
[107] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:09:47)
[108] *The Great Game* (01:22:00-01:22:06)
[109] *The Great Game* (01:23:30-01:23:38)
[110] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:24:59–00:25:10).

sex is concerned is not overly featured, but nonetheless juxtaposes Moriarty and Holmes, and magnifies the differences between them. The notion in the series as a whole is that sex is not only fun but funny, as is firmly established in *A Scandal in Belgravia* by Irene Adler and by the various characters' interactions with her. In staying true to this notion, it contributes to the sense of unity of expression in the series. Moriarty's obvious obsession with Sherlock Holmes manifests itself in such a way that one could argue a case for there being a level of homoerotic or romantic attraction there, bringing ambiguity to the characters and their interpersonal relationship. Similar to this is Holmes' relationship with Hooper and Irene Adler. As Holmes is traditionally seen as an asexual character, and is depicted as such in this series, the romantic connection between him and the two female characters is a matter of dissonance. Likewise is Adler's attraction to Holmes as she simultaneously proclaims herself as a lesbian. The writers of this series show a postmodern propensity for deconstructing definitions of sexuality, romance and attraction. This to both create new character traits and staying true to the original franchise and the authority of Conan Doyle's works, but also as a source of confusion and ambiguity that leads to comedy.

2.2.3 Plot

Plots and sub-plots that are added to the story are many in number, simply because the difference in length between the short story and the series adaptation varies greatly. Most notable is Moriarty's heists, where he breaks into The Tower of London, The Bank of England and The Pentonville Prison. This action is at the core of the episode as it ties in with Moriarty's plan to destroy Holmes' reputation. Connected to this are the incidents of the trial that follow in the wake of Moriarty's crime. Here, Holmes mentions his previous interaction with Moriarty, effectively tying this episode to other episodes in the series. Also intertwined with the heist- and the trial-plot is the implementation of Kitty Riley and the focus that is given to news coverage into the plot. Apart from its apparent thematic role, and connection to the main plot, this sub-plot provides a circular structure to the story. Character interaction that supports a spanning story arch, reiterates certain connections to the franchise, and that shows character development have also been given plot relevance. Examples of this are the conflict between Mycroft and Watson, and Holmes' interaction with Hooper. Another sub-plot is the kidnapping of the children of Rufus Bruhl – England's ambassador to the US. In this episode, the kidnapping is orchestrated by Moriarty as a part of his plan to disrepute Holmes. The nature of Moriarty's involvement in the incident accentuates and confirms what we know of

him from the Conan Doyle works: "He does little himself. He only plans."[111] The kidnapping case in itself arouses associations to "The Adventure of The Priory School"; a Conan Doyle story where Holmes is hired to retrieve the kidnapped son of a Duke. The plots and plotlines that are added to the transfer are obviously needed in order to fill the allotted time span of each episode. However, particularly notable in this series adaptation are the allusions, mentions or direct implementations of other stories from the franchise and the Conan Doyle canon. The elevated intertextual focus that permeates this series in general leads to constant implementation and communication with other bodies of work, and self-reference both to the series itself and to the franchise as a whole.

2.3 Changes

2.3.1. Setting

Notably, in the adaptation of *The Final Problem,* Holmes and Watson never travel to Switzerland and the Reichenbach Falls; a choice which has many consequences. Firstly, from a production point of view, remaining in England is ultimately cheaper than moving the production abroad. Secondly, the choice leads to further use of the historical London landmark St. Barts. The building has already a place in the franchise as it, in the Conan Doyle works, is the setting where both Dr. Watson and the readers are first introduced to Sherlock Holmes. In adapting *A Study in Scarlet* to the screen, the creators of this television series imitate the setting of this meeting. St. Barts is often used throughout the series as a way of introducing and emphasizing the scientific part of Holmes' deductions. As the characters are mostly situated in the pathology department of the building, this underlines Holmes' connection to murder cases, as well as his emotionally detached nature. The latter is particularly discernible in *A Study in Pink* where Holmes, as a part of his scientific discoveries, is whipping a corpse. In addition, St.Barts is the primary stage for Holmes' interaction with Molly Hooper and the romantic tension that characterizes a large part of their relationship. Through the repeated use of the building in the television series, the building

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[111] Doyle, (2001), p 491

becomes comparable to 221B Baker Street in terms of serving as a "home base" and as one of the recurring and familiar settings. As the apparent death of both Holmes and Moriarty takes place at St. Barts, it actively replaces the renowned Reichenbach falls in Switzerland. As a result of this the building takes on an elevated iconic status, and claims a higher seat in the franchise.

2.3.2.The Technology Update

A lot can be said about the upgrade in technology that has been a consequence of making a modernized adaptation. Though it will not be extensively discussed here, there are still some changes that are relevant to Holmes' interaction with Moriarty. Perhaps most notable is the constant usage of phones and internet. Holmes often uses these in his investigation, which makes them in effect replace his encyclopedias and information index system.[112] Watson's many diaries have been updated in the modern adaptation, resulting in a blog. This ties in with the notion of media and online fame, and reputation, which are heavily featured themes of *The Reichenbach Fall*. Here, as a result of Holmes' detective fame, he becomes known to the media as the Reichenbach hero, effectively repurposing the renowned name to the franchise.

Certain details have also been modernized in the transfer, like the London taxies, and Moriarty's henchmen. Holmes' iconic magnifying glass, though not entirely removed from the series, has in many scenes been exchanged for the more high-tech microscope. [113] This change enhances Holmes' modern, scientific side, and down-plays the traditional "bloodhound" tracker image known from the franchise.

Moriarty is also an ardent user of the modern technology, having replaced his old-fashioned notebook and blackboard with high-tech snipers, hacker skills and modern grade explosives. The most featured device, however, is the mobile phone. It is an important component in his heists. It is also a device used by the writers as a tool of narration. The "heist-apps" emphasize Moriarty as the instigating force behind the crime. He also uses it to play music which creates a link between the character, his actions, and the audience. Most notable is that the mobile phone allows for direct communication with Holmes. The fact that the two characters communicate directly, and in a similar fashion, underlines their similarities.

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[112] Doyle, (2001), p 10
[113] Holmes uses a portable magnifying glass in e.g. *A Study in Pink.*

2.3.3 Characters

The main story of the *The Final Problem* opens with Holmes paying Watson a visit in his office, asking him to accompany him to America in order to avoid Moriarty. As his wife is from home, and his practice is quiet, Watson accepts. Though neither is heavily featured in the story, what we notice in the adaptational transfer is the change, or rather lack of change, in Watson's circumstances. The Watson we encounter in *The Reichenbach Fall* is not married, and has yet to be introduced to Mary Morstan whom he later marries. She is vitally featured in Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*, and becomes a permanent fixture in the franchise (though not heavily featured) after this. What follows is Watson's move from Baker Street and Holmes, and his refocusing on his medical career. This ultimately leads, not only a physical gap, but to a mental one between Holmes and Watson. His relocation suggests a reordering of priorities, where Watson no longer is primarily subscribing to the domestic reality of his friendship with Holmes, but commits to the Victorian notion of domestic felicity. As this television series, and this episode in particular, is thematically focused on the close and peculiar friendship between Holmes and Watson, the implementation of Morstan is postponed. This, too, to be able to utilize her character in later episodes and in a different story arch – as is shown in the series third season.

Holmes is known for his propensity for disguise, and for his talent as an actor. Often is the narrating Watson expressing astonishment and admiration for his ability to change his physical and verbal expression so entirely. In *The Final Problem*, Holmes disguises himself as an elderly, confused Italian priest in his ploy to escape Moriarty. The similarities between the two characters is being underlined yet again, as the adaptation depicts Moriarty as the one utilizing disguises. When first introduced to the audience in *The Great Game,* he is disguised as the slightly awkward "Jim". In *The Reichenbach Fall,* Moriarty is briefly disguised as a taxi-driver, and later as the actor Richard Brook who portrays The Storyteller. Moriarty as an actor and master of disguises are given theme-, plot- and character relevance as it supports the meta-construction, the focus on myth, fame, and storytelling, and the franchise depiction of his character. [114] While drawing parallels between the postmodern Moriarty and the Holmes we know from the franchise, the writers also stay faithful to certain personality traits in Moriarty. Though the Conan Doyle Moriarty is being described as a man who seldom gets

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[114] More on Richard Brook and Moriarty on page (?)

personally involved, he does show a propensity for action where Holmes is concerned. He visits him at Baker Street, chases him to the train station, and follows him to Switzerland. As both train travelling and Switzerland have been omitted in the adaptation, Moriarty's actions have been transferred to include disguise and deception.

Though barely featured, Mycroft has a minor role in *The Final Problem,* where he aids Watson, disguised as a coachman. As Mycroft is known from previous Conan Doyle works[115] for being somewhat illustrious and discreet, the changes made to his character in this adaptation are rather large. Here he not only refrains from helping Holmes but also, in an attempt to further the greater good, aids Moriarty. This is a consequence of the ongoing power-play between Moriarty and Mycroft, and in which Holmes is a significant component of a larger scheme.

In *The Final Problem,* Holmes is in close collaboration with the London police, creating a net around Moriarty and his associates. He also stays in contact with them during his travels:

"I cannot do better that get away for the few days which remain before the police are a liberty to act". [116]

The adaptation depicts Holmes as being pursued by the police, standing virtually alone in the fight against the villain. Also, the focus that is been given to Moriarty's criminal organization in the Conan Doyle work has been severely diminished in the transfer, giving extended focus to Moriarty as the sole criminal. By this, we notice move from the universal to the individual where Moriarty and Holmes are not the generals of two opposing organizations, but rather two individuals in opposition being aided by a group of more or less "faceless" people. Holmes and Watson being pursued echoes the feelings being expressed by of the Conan Doyle Watson:

"One would think that we were the criminals"[117]

Moriarty's chase in *The Final Problem* is initially an event of some magnitude as, as we know, he rarely gets physically involved; something that underlines Holmes' uniqueness. More importantly, Moriarty's physical presence is witnessed by Watson. His narration verifies the "truth" of Moriarty's existence and draws the character and his crime closer to the audience; it is a firsthand account of the villain. This particular point is enhanced in the adaptation where the truth of Holmes, both in terms of what he says and what he is, is being drawn into question. As his constant companion, Watson is amongst the few people who believe Holmes, as he has witnessed Moriarty's true character.

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[115] Mycroft appears in "The Greek Interpreter" and "The Adventure of the Bryce-Parthington Plans"
[116] Doyle, (2001), p 495
[117] Doyle, (2001), p 499

It is noteworthy that when it comes to the imminent downfall of Sherlock Holmes, Mycroft is characterized by a passiveness that echoes the character from the Conan Doyle works; though he knows the truth, he is prevented from doing anything to save his brother. Watson, though equally prevented from aiding Holmes, is still an active witness to the event. The fact that Molly Hooper is the only one who knows the truth about Moriarty and is also able to aid Holmes, elevates her character in the eyes of Holmes himself, and in the eyes of the audience. By knowledge, emotional attachment and loyalty Molly Hooper earns her place in the franchise.

2.4. Omissions

2.4.1. Setting

As there is a close correlation between adaptive changes and adaptive omissions, one will often influence the other. Certain adaptive changes have here led to omissions. As there is little focus on Watson's role as a doctor, and he is still living in Baker Street, the meeting between him and Holmes in his office has been erased. With the transfer to a film medium, so has his narrative voice, though the narrative structure of the series in general often subscribes to the spirit of Watson as an indirect narrative voice.

Other omissions include Holmes and Watson' travels. The railroads were a vital part of the Victorian society, as was a new focus on the notion of time. **(.........)** Watson's intricate scheme to simultaneously escape Moriarty and catch the train on time speaks of an urban society subscribing to the contemporary attitude to changes in tempo and displacement. Though these elements are still present and relevant in a modern society, they are not weighted the same in the adaptation. Though the urban focus is there, and most important in the display of iconic parts of London, the train travel is not. Stress and escape in relation to Moriarty exists in part in *The Great Game* where Holmes has to solve his riddles in time in order to save various victims, and in the kidnapping case depicted in *The Reichenbach Fall*. The Conan Doyle Holmes initially speaks of escaping to America; "the land of the *free* and the home of the brave" [118] America as a continent is depicted as the continent of freedom, escape and possibility, much like it was in the case of Irene Adler in *A Scandal in*

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[118] From Francis Scott Key's *The Star-Spangled Banner* (1814), my emphasis. http://www.si.edu/Encyclopedia_SI/nmah/starflag.htm

Bohemia.[119]. The fact that Holmes later reveals that he is in fact travelling the opposite direction, to Switzerland, implies a foreshadowing of his fate. Watson gives the readers detailed accounts of their travels, depicting environments that are in stark contrast to the urban London and the familiar Baker Street. In the adaptation, these locations, and the notion of physical displacement, have been omitted. Still, it can be argued that the adaptation manages to stay true to the original and to the franchise as the displacement that occurs here is internal. As it has been absorbed into the series as a "home base" similar to Baker Street, St. Bart holds status as the physical base of numerous interactions, including the audience's first encounter with Holmes. The omission of Switzerland and the Reichenbach waterfalls leads to a change in the setting of Holmes' death, and to a process of defamiliarization where St. Barts is concerned. In a postmodern move of "blurring of lines", the emotions both characters and audience attach to this setting invokes a cognitive dissonance.

2.4.2. Characters

In his meeting with Watson, Holmes is depicted as thin, pale, and bleeding, which, in *The Final Problem* works as a foreshadowing of his death. This has not only been removed from the adaptation, but it has been replaced with an opposite depiction of Holmes. When first seen in *The Reichenbach Fall,* Holmes is prospering, gaining success, fame, and the media nick-name "The Reichenbach Hero". However, as the story starts at a point of prosperity, a certain volta is expected - this from a long narrative tradition. Though completely opposite depictions of Holmes, both these representations foreshadow his downfall. With the omission of Watson's office there follows a diminished focus on his profession as a doctor. There is a tendency, in this series, of elevating Watson's military background. Watson is less passive in the adaptation, as evidenced by his physically attacking the police, his escape with Holmes, and his investigative role. He serves as Holmes' eyes and ears in Moriarty's trial, he discovers and analyses clues left by Moriarty, and he witnesses the reveal of the identity of Richard Brook. This personality trait echoes the Watson in *The Final Problem* that, in the absence of Sherlock Holmes, has to use Holmes' own deductive methods in order to piece together the events of the Reichenbach.

In the transfer, the title of Moriarty is no longer being attributed with the title of Professor. The title being such an intrinsic and iconic part of the character, this change,

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[119] Readers will remember that Adler decided her own fate by escaping to America with her husband. Doyle, (2001), p 24

though minor, is significant. Properties like a brilliant, calculating, authoritative mind is attached to his title and field; properties easily transferred to a modern villain with intellectual capacity matching that of Holmes. Why then omit such a thing? One could argue that removing the title dehumanizes the character, making him all the more daunting; having his methods be factual and something that he has to "work out on a black board"[120] makes him less mysterious and consequently less scary in the eyes of the audience. The removal of the professor title and his attachment to a university removes his place of belonging and the notion of his having a life outside of his interaction with Holmes. He gains another level as a mythic character as he takes on a multimodal existence of un-approachability; if no one knows him, he can be anyone. If he has no home, he can be anywhere.

3. Where it leads

These fidelity issues have in common the constructing and deconstructing of the mythic universe that surrounds Sherlock Holmes in relation to the adaptation process of transferring the stories to a modern society. Due to the nature of characters and the ongoing popularity of the detective genre, the referential language used[121] concerning the Sherlockian universe contains a wide variety of simultaneously contrasted and emphasized ideas. This is aided by the many film- and television-adaptations of Sherlock Holmes, and the much-used practice of adding material to ensure creativity and success. There are many issues to creating an on-screen Sherlock Holmes, as the connection to the franchise is particularly strong in this character's case. The reception of the work depends largely on whether its plots, characters, settings etc. can be said to subscribe to the spirit of the original works and the fully embedded parts of the franchise. One could argue that in adapting certain stories for the screen, rather than creating new ones, the notion of fidelity becomes more important as the audience not only has preconceived ideas concerning the characters, settings and spirit, but also concerning specific plots, peripheral characters etc. The genre often subscribes to connecting mystery to the *cases* engaging the detective, particularly as to the identity of the perpetrator of a crime. [122] This leads to a format where the work is primarily structured around and supported by the plot. In a successful adaptational transfer, where surprise and additional elements are significant, the same format will not always be applicable as the audience will likely be

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[120] Doyle, (2001), p 495

[121] Language, text, images, icons, symbols, plots,

[122] Authors like Agatha Christie, Ngaio Marsh, G. K Chesterton, Dorothy L.Sayers, Michael Innes, John Dickson Carr, etc. subscribed to and honed the "Golden age" detective novel style that was often centered around a "whodunit" narrative structure.

familiar with the plot from the original work or other adaptations faithful to the plot. As the direct implementation of plot components are given less attention in a postmodern transfer, there is an increased focus on fidelity of characters, settings, speech, structure etc. as a means of subscribing to the spirit of the franchise. Another way of doing this is to implement characters, subplots, costumes, props, quotes, etc from the franchise - particularly other works in the canon. As a result of this, the issue of fidelity becomes even more complex. One could argue that the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation opens up for a use of the original plot as the transfer from the Victorian era to the modern age causes necessary and natural changes that defamiliarizes the plot to the audience. Simultaneously, it subscribes to the tendencies of a postmodern adaptation. It adheres both to certain heritages from the Victorian society that defines characters, environment, theme etc, and to a postmodern mode of interpreting/reconstructing these heritages. This process emphasizes and utilizes a self-referential language that not only gives attention to the franchise or the spirit of the Sherlockian universe, but also to the processes and roles of film-making, story-telling and audience involvement. Because the genre and the characters are still so popular, and because the literary works easily lend themselves to the screen, new adaptations, parodies and pastiches are bound to occur – expanding the franchise further still – providing both creators and audience with a larger body of references and referential language. As a consequence of this, the depiction of main characters becomes a matter of mythic decantation, and a referentially multipronged language. In this series adaptation, this is utilized to deconstruct, reconstruct and reiterate the myth of Holmes, Adler and Moriarty.

2. Moriarty

2.1. Moriarty – a closer look at the antagonist and the man

As some of the above paragraphs show, there are many elements attached to the character and role of Moriarty; both practical and symbolic. In this segment we will have a closer look at Moriarty, focusing on the postmodern adaptation in terms of physical appearance, personality and identity. Though the manifestation and nature of certain traits might be given different weight and meaning through e.g. context, there is bound to be overlapping between the Victorian and the modern character as the adaptation draws authority from the franchise and aspires to a faithful adaptation.

The Final Problem is immediately different from the other Conan Doyle Holmes-stories because it features the death of the detective. Likewise is Moriarty immediately different from other villains in the canon because he brings about his end. Like Irene Adler, Professor Moriarty has made his way into Sherlockian fame in his matching Holmes' renowned intellect. However, where Adler's strengths are her skills concerning disguise and her ability to act swiftly and resolutely, Moriarty's intellectual capacity comes in the form of deductive calculation, probability and game theory. Though Adler is ultimately depicted as morally good by Conan Doyle in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, the Moffat/Gatiss adaptation high-lights the similarities between Moriarty and her by creating a plot-based connection between them.[123] From this we learn that Moriarty has a function as Adler's "criminal consultant" and that Adler has, to some extent, an influence over Moriarty's decisions. By this interaction, their roles in relation to each other as well as their hierarchal position in the franchise is being manifested; Moriarty has been attributed the role of Adler's superior. The fact that he is a man levels him with Holmes in a way that Adler does not. The establishing of Moriarty as more important and more terrifying than any other villain is of course also manifested by him serving as Holmes' nemesis. Through the events that occur at the Reichenbach falls, Moriarty is forever linked to Holmes, the Reichenbach and the concept of death.

One of Moriarty's great achievements is that, despite being involved with an enormous number of criminal offenses and effectively "pervading London", he remains elusive. In Holmes' own words; "that's the genius of the thing". [124] When describing Moriarty in *The Valley of Fear*, Holmes also states:

"But in calling Moriarty a criminal you are uttering libel in the eyes of the law—and there lie the glory and the wonder of it! The greatest schemer of all time, the organizer of every deviltry, the controlling brain of the underworld, a brain which might have made or marred the destiny of nations—that's the man! But so aloof is he from general suspicion, so immune from criticism, so admirable in his management and self-effacement, that for those very words that you have uttered he could hale you to a court and emerge with your year's pension as a solatium for his wounded character."[125] His intellectual capacity and agency make him elude Holmes's attempts to capture him while simultaneously continuing with his criminal enterprise. This ultimately invokes the detective's admiration as well as apprehension.

In his accounts, Holmes describes Professor Moriarty as having physical features and mannerisms associated with an oscillating reptile; his voice soft and precise with a menacing undertone. He is a tall, clean-shaven and ascetic-looking man, with a protruding forehead,

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[123] This connection is made clear in *A Scandal in Belgravia*
[124] Doyle, (2001*)*, p 490
[125] Doyle, Roden, Roden (2009), *The Complete Sherlock Holmes, The Valley of Fear, p 734*

with in-sunken, curious and watchful eyes, and with hunched shoulders. The description of him is similar to that of a deadly animal – ultimately invoking a sense of him having inhuman qualities. Simultaneously is Moriarty's physical appearance not far off from Watson's description of Holmes. Watson has described the detective as tall, thin and lithe, with long, elegant hands and piercingly intelligent eyes. In *The Final Problem* he looks "even paler and thinner than usual[126]". The fact that Moriarty is said to have a protruding forehead, much like the highly intelligent Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes, highlights not only his intellect, but his resemblance to Holmes. In *The Final Problem,* Holmes and Watson are being hounded by Moriarty as they try to make their escape to Switzerland. The well-known comparison between Holmes and a bloodhound hot upon the trail of his enemies has been transferred onto Moriarty. [127] This depicts Moriarty as a force to be reckoned with, and Holmes in an unusual position of suppression. The fact that their roles are interchangeable in this manner not only accentuates their similarities, but also entertains the idea of what potential for good or evil either one would have had, had they "switched sides". Physical and mental similarities highlight the sameness of the two characters, and their intertwined fates. However, so does the notion of their being the other one's polar opposite; they are two sides of the same coin.

Moriarty and Holmes are both highly intelligent and rehearsed in deductive reasoning which allow them to see the big picture at a level that escapes most people. To the surrounding characters, and occasionally the audience, their capabilities sometimes cross over into the realm of "magic". Moriarty has a hand in most anything related to crime; he knows everything and is everywhere, and the fact that we as an audience know little of his methods makes the level and depth of his involvement take on mythic and almost supernatural qualities. This elevates his role as an unpredictable and menacing villain. The "magic" of Holmes is in part his deductions, though the notion is diminished as Watson and the readers are usually privy to an explanation concerning his methods. The magic is therefore not concerning the deductions themselves, but rather the speed, processing capabilities and detailed logic of Holmes' mind. In *A Scandal in Bohemia* Watson points out Holmes' "witchcraft":

"You would certainly have been burned had you lived a few centuries ago".[128]

In *The Reichenbach Falls*, however, though the deductions are source of baffled admiration, Holmes' "true magic" lies in his avoiding death at the end of the episode. His' death in *The*

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[126] Doyle, (2001), p 489
[127] In *The Hound of the Baskervilles"* Watson compares Holmes to a bloodhound. This image has made its way in to the franchise, and is often used to emphasize Holmes' natural capabilities"
[128] Doyle, (2001), p 5

Final Problem was supposed to be the end of the detective as Conan Doyle sought to rid himself of the character, but later revived Holmes due to popular demand and a surge in creativity.[129] Today's audience are likely aware of the fact that Holmes return after the incident at Reichenbach. Unlike in the *The Final Problem,* Watson, and also the audience, bear witness to the event in which Holmes falls off the roof of St.Barts. The vivid visual representation of the fall helps convince the viewers of the reality of it despite expecting the detective to survive. When Holmes then appears at the graveyard, the enormity of his survival takes on the nature of a supernatural feat. In "defeating" death in this manner, the character transcends to being a hero with religious connotations; his "resurrection" is partly what makes the character eternal.[130] The same qualities are tangible in the postmodern adaptation of Moriarty, effectively eternalizing the character through a deconstruction of his mythic existence.

2.2. The Psychology of Moriarty

Influential Victorian writers like Thomas Carlyle and John Stuart mill abhorred the idea of a person being equipped with an intelligent mind, but not using it for the furtherance of truth and Christian goodness: "This is the "beginning of all immorality, or rather it is the impossibility henceforth of any morality whatsoever" since insincerity is corrupting to the whole character"[131] To the Victorian mind, a person submitting to the powers of a criminal life due to financial need or lack of intelligence was, though wrong, to some degree understandable. However, a person being elevated by means, standing, and mental capacity, was considered bound to a moral duty to further the betterment of society. Placing much emphasis on morality, duty and respectability, a certain physical and emotional self-restraint was expected by men; particularly of those not in a manual profession. April Toadvine comments:

"Those who were unwilling or unable to control themselves, or who did not fit social views of traditional morality, were often diagnosed as mentally ill." [132] What the Victorians termed mental illness was often a case of "moral insanity". James Cowles Prichard (1786-1848[133]) described this as a "moral perversion of the feelings, affections and natural impulses, without any remarkable

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[129] Doyle, Roden, Roden (1924), Introduction, p xiii-xiv
[130] Leitch, (2007), p 223
[131] Houghton (1985) *The Victorian Frame of Mind,* "Enthusiasm", p 224
[132] Porter, (2012) *Sherlock Holmes for the 21st Century: Essays on New Adaptations.* Toadvine, "The Watson Effect", p 48-51
[133] http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/475841/James-Cowles-Prichard

disorder or affect of the intellect of knowing and reasoning facilities. "[134]The fact that Moriarty not only neglects to do good but uses his intellect to actively engage in criminal activity, makes him even more villainous in the eyes of the Victorian reader. Holmes famously calls him "The Napoleon of crime[135]"; a fantastic organizer and disguiser of criminal activity - the all-knowing "spider at the centre of a criminal web.[136]" As the juxtaposition and comparison is rooted in the reading of the two characters, and emphasized by Holmes naming Moriarty his intellectual equal, his own role as an extraordinary detective on the side of good is accentuated. In naming him the Napoleon of crime, Holmes does not only declare him his worst enemy, but the enemy of Britain entire.

Holmes indicates that there is something hereditary wrong with Moriarty, and that the villain's diabolical nature is due to "a criminal strain in his blood"[137] As Pears points out: "[…] hereditarian arguments – suggesting that criminals are born and not made can be identified by the study of physical characteristics and family trees […]. [E]ugenics, the science of race and its application, was then at the very cutting edge of research.[138]" He is refusing to adhere to certain moral codes and social duties as he discards the modifications of his privileges[139] and turns to a life of crime. As Holmes also points out, Moriarty's intelligence is, instead of removing or toning down his evil tendencies, making him a more talented and devious criminal[140]. According to the Victorian mores, Moriarty's way of life is both a consequence of choice and mental illness. This personality construction is echoed in the adaptation, where he displays being in possession of great intellect, as well as erratic and unpredictable behaviour easily associated with mental illness.

Moriarty also shows obsessive tendencies where Holmes is concerned. The influential psychiatrist Etienne Esquirol (1772-1840[141]) introduced the notion of "monomania" to the Victorians;

"a condition in which a break in the psyche – a break in the faculties of emotion, reason and will – produced a singular fixation, or aberration, within a mind that was otherwise rational. Monomania posited a form of partial insanity in which the afflicted subject could appear to be entirely normal and sane in all areas of behaviour except one. It thereby blurred the distinction between sanity and insanity, making it possible for one to

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[134] Porter, (2012) *Sherlock Holmes for the 21st Century: Essays on New Adaptations.* Toadvine, "The Watson Effect", p 50
[135] Doyle, (2001), p 491
[136] Doyle, (2001), p 491
[137] Doyle, (2001), p 491
[138] Doyle, (2001), Introduction, p xxiv
[139] Higher education, standing and financial security
[140] Doyle, (2001), p 491
[141] http://www.kingscollections.org/exhibitions/specialcollections/mind-matters/the-first-alienists/esquirol

appear sane to all observers and yet harbor the capacity for irrational behaviour.[142]"

What this suggests, much like Prichard's description of moral insanity, is a fragmented mind where certain parts are dysfunctional and others more normal. Though both the Victorian and the postmodern Moriarty's obsessions and evil tendencies extend beyond that of what pertains to Sherlock Holmes, one might argue that this theory explains the possibility of deductive reasoning and high intelligence co-existing with insanity. This initially Victorian theory is transferable to a postmodern adaptation as one of the hallmarks of Postmodernism is fragmentation and deconstruction. The postmodern Moriarty in particular shows signs of mental dissonance and a fragmented mind as he is, and is pretending to be, several things.

Though Prichard and other Victorians saw the lack of concern for the lives of other people as a sign of mental illness, this personality trait is comparable to the modern diagnosis of sociopathic behaviour which is characterized by a lack of empathy and meaningful interaction with other people.

"The definitions of antisocial personality disorder have shifted from the Victorian concern with moral health to the contemporary interest in preventing the sociopath from committing acts of violence towards others, from "moral insanity" to "antisocial personality disorder.[143]"" With this shift follows the notion that the postmodern Holmes, who describes himself as a high-functioning sociopath[144], shares traits with both renditions of Moriarty. In the canon, Holmes's compares Moriarty's mental capacities to his own. As the readers already are aware of Holmes' power, this elevates Moriarty, despite there being little demonstration of his deductive methods or intelligence. In the adaptation, there are similarities drawn between their antisocial behaviour, which initially diminishes Holmes in terms of morality. However, in a postmodern adaptation as this, this feeds into the recognizable pattern and notion of the anti-hero. The format of the television series allows for a development of Holmes' character where events and interaction with other characters (like e.g. Watson and Hooper) have a positive influence on him. The improvement of Holmes' social skills and empathy throughout the series gives emphasis to the importance of those friendships that remain such an important part of the franchise. What this leads to is an adaptation that not only supports and elevates deductive reasoning and intelligence, but that also values social skills and emotional intelligence. One can argue that the endorsement of two such different, and often competing, tendencies embraces more audience members on an individual level.

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[142] Brantlinger, Patrick (2007), p 76
[143] Porter, (2012) *Sherlock Holmes for the 21st Century: Essays on New Adaptations.* Toadvine, "The Watson Effect", p 51
[144] *A Study in Pink* (00:57:53- 00:57:57)

Where Moriarty displays a total disregard for the people around him and a complete lack of empathy, he still shows obsessive behaviour where Holmes is concerned – subscribing to the tenets of fragmentation and monomania. All these coexisting, competing and complementing personality traits and complexities make Moriarty a hard character to decipher. However, Holmes removes any doubts the audience might have as to Moriarty's nature:

> Holmes: "You're insane"
>
> Moriarty: "You're just getting that now?"[145]

From a Freudian point of view, the postmodern Moriarty serves, as suggested above, as the animalistic and base nature of Holmes's personality[146]. Representing bestial hunger, he subscribes to an anarchic attitude of wanting the world burn. His desires are not something so base as sex, wealth and not even power, but rather a need to provoke a reaction from the world to escape the torments of his own existence. Acting as the mirror to Holmes' ego, one can see the similarities between their behaviour when faced with boredom and "ordinary" minds. In Freud's psychic apparatus, Holmes and Watson together constitute the ego. Holmes has a left-brained desire to analyze, rationalize and stimulation. Watson is governed by conscience and emotions, evening out the explosive nature of Holmes – creating a symbiosis. As we've already mentioned, Mycroft serves as the super-ego. Reprimanding, correcting and collected, he will always be Holmes' superior – and although he cares for him, he will mock, order and contain him as a part of his role as the super-ego. Holmes' struggle is as a piece in the tug of war that transpires between his bestial side and his super-ego; between Moriarty and Mycroft. Mycroft is in constant dialogue with Watson in order to contain and control Holmes. He is also trying to suppress the consequences of Moriarty's dangerous impulses through torture. These scenes also high-light Moriarty's tortured nature. The battle between Holmes and Moriarty, seen in the light of this Freudian analysis, is the result of the interaction between the ego and the id. Ruth Ingamells points out:

"But the id is supposed to be hidden deep underground. The ego should never come into contact with the id directly – but Sherlock and Moriarty do. Previously Sherlock comes into contact with the result of the id – the crimes – but never the id singularly. So long as one is aware of the other, only one can survive."[147]

2.3 The Physical Moriarty

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[145] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:12:40 – 01:12:47)
[146] The main points of this analysis is derived from Ruth Ingamells:
http://notsoreviews.wordpress.com/tag/super-ego/
[147] http://notsoreviews.wordpress.com/tag/super-ego/

In the vastly popular Universal film series starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce as Sherlock Holmes and John Watson respectively, Moriarty is featured several times. Holmes usually bests the villain, and more often than not Moriarty ends up dead only to return in another movie. Usually, he is depicted by a different actor, resulting in a villain who has no identifying physical features or iconic props. Through the franchise and actors like Peter Cushing, Basil Rathbone, and Jeremy Brett, Holmes' physical features have become more decanted, iconic and easily recognizable to an audience. This is not the case with Moriarty. His identity to us as an audience is not rooted in a particular physical appearance, but rather in his reputation as a calculating, evil nemesis of one of history's most popular detective heroes.

As the Freudian analysis above demonstrates, there is an increased focus on Moriarty's physical representation in the postmodern adaptation. As Holmes is iconized through the continued exposure and utilization of props, lines, settings etc, his character is simultaneously expanded and decanted. The tendency that Moriarty is a character mainly recognized for his mental capacity is being deconstructed in the adaptation as the character's physical features are given extended attention and iconic value. Consequently, this postmodern Moriarty both defamiliarizes and reboots the franchise interpretations as well as it stays faithful to certain aspects of them. This iconization of Moriarty seems quite deliberate. From the first episode Moriarty's name has been implemented into plots; building expectations and making him renowned even before he is visually depicted. The combination of there being no expectations as to Moriarty's physical features, and choosing a relatively unknown actor to portray him, allow for the element of surprise when Molly's boyfriend "Jim from I.T" is revealed to be the notorious villain. The fashionable Westwood suits that Moriarty wears are a symbol of his class and power. His outfit also takes on a symbolic meaning as he, in *The Reichenbach Fall* is clad in light grey and white. This, in combination with his black hair and dark eyes emphasizes the black and white "magpie"-look; an aspect of the Moriarty character that we will later get back to. It also provides a visual opposition to Holmes' signature black coat, high-lighting their roles on the opposite sides of good and evil. When disguised as Richard Brook or "Jim", Moriarty's physical portrayal is so radically different from his usually groomed appearance that this not only accentuates his ability to adapt and disguise himself, but also intensifies the notion of the suit as intrinsic in relation to Moriarty; unlike other cinematic representations of the character, this Moriarty's physical appearance is slowly being iconized. One could also argue that Moriarty's suits are carriers of a referential language relayed to the audience by way of other cinematic realizations and franchises. In *The Final Problem,* Moriarty talks of being connected to a syndicate of crime in

Europe. Though having multiple definitions, the word "syndicate" is, to the postmodern audiences, related to the notion of a mafia. Through widely popular and influential movie franchises like the *The Godfather*-trilogy, a certain physical appearance has become linkable to organized crime. The fact that the Moffat/Gatiss Moriarty has black, slick hair and is sporting expensive suits might be a subtle physical manifestation of a postmodern interpretation of the Victorian Moriarty's allusions to his relation to a crime syndicate. In a more general language reference, a suit is often associated with power, or with being in control. Well-known characters from the world of film and television are depicted wearing similar outfits that also display similar character traits to Moriarty[148]: The character James Bond – an intrinsic part of the British cinematic tradition – is known for his suave, flirtatious, and controlled behaviour; qualities that are, today, directly associated with his appearance. Through constant use and emphasis, the suit has been permanently incorporated in the mythic decantation of the character where it takes on the role of an icon.[149] Don Draper, the main character from the *Mad Men* - franchise[150], is a particularly clear example of how appearance is directly reflecting his character. Well-dressed and clean-shaven, Draper exudes control and excellence. Michael Corleone from the *The Godfather*-franchise[151] gradually assumes the role as the new head of the Corleone family crime syndicate. The physical changes, particularly those related to his wardrobe, are directly linked to his exertions of violence and to his gain of power and control. The physical presentation of him that has later become so iconic is associated both with his standing and his appearance. Though the connection between the postmodern Moriarty and the associative language of certain cinematic characters may not necessarily be an intended one, there can be little doubt that in displaying the various personas of Moriarty, the one wearing the suits is the "real" one. Like the above mentioned characters, the "suited" Moriarty exudes qualities like professional control, playful flirtation, violence and power. Certain details in his wardrobe are carriers of semiotic references as a method of conveying character traits[152]. The wolf-head tie pin or the polka-dot skull tie sends subtle signals reiterating his identity as a predator – the Big Bad Wolf of the piece[153] - and bringer of death.

There can also be little doubt that the villain is depicted as, for lack of a better word,

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[148] See appendix 4a-4g
[149] See appendix 4c
[150] See appendix 4b http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0804503/
[151] See appendix 4e http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0071562/
[152] http://www.sherlockology.com/wardrobe/skull-tie-jim-moriarty, http://www.sherlockology.com/wardrobe/tie-pin-jim-moriarty
[153] The Big Bad wolf is a known predator from folkloric fairytales with many interpretations and connotations

cool. Moriarty's ring tone is *Staying Alive* by the BeeGees, a song that was widely popular in the 1970s as it was a part of the *Saturday Night Fever* (1977)[154] soundtrack. A vastly popular song then as well as now, the song is associated with a certain attitude, transferring this quality onto Moriarty as it is implemented into the series through him. The song is also used as a plot devise as it ends the tense stale-mate between Holmes and Moriarty in *A Scandal in Belgravia,* and because it provides meaning as to the nature of "the final problem". It is also used for comical effect. Moriarty's amusing dialogue, his arrogance, his superior intelligence, his scorn for authority and other people all, contribute to his status as cool. Interestingly, these are personality traits that he shares with Holmes, and which are interpreted similarly by a postmodern audience.

Intentional or not, the physical portrayal of Moriarty spurs an associative process in the audience, regardless of their awareness of this fact. As creators, actor and audience share a semiotic language, Moriarty's appearance alone is communicating certain things to the audience; his wardrobe, his mode of speech, his mannerisms etc. are all telling us something. This is rooted in a common language of intermediality where the images, symbols, music, audio, texts, etc. from the adaptation is in dialogue with other films, television series, and social conventions and traditions.

2.4. Moriarty's Many Roles

In comparing the Moriarty character we know from *The Final Problem* with the one we encounter in *The Reichenbach Fall,* it becomes evident that the latter is a fuller character. This is, in large part, due to the change of format; in the adaptive transfer, Moriarty moves from being the illustrious villain of 18 page Victorian short story to the highly exposed villain of a 90 minute television series in the 21st century. He consequently becomes more layered and more recognizable to the audience. In spite of having personal details and characteristics removed in the transfer, the impression is still that the adapted character is three-dimensional. In part, this is due to the extended exposure the transfer allows for. It is also because of the additional focus Moriarty gets as a cerebral creature. His fragmented mind, his multiple roles and realizations, his struggle and his insanity are being relayed to the audience, resulting in a character that is three-dimensional on a mental level.

As *The Final Problem* is the most famous Conan Doyle work that directly features

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[154] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0076666/

Moriarty, and the only one that features direct interaction between him and Holmes, it follows that in adapting the work to the screen, the character of Moriarty will be prominent. As previous episodes of the Moffat/Gatiss television series has featured a physical depiction of the character,[155] in *The Reichenbach Fall* - "the big Moriarty episode" - the character's involvement is, and has to be, extensive. This would include giving him more screen time, more dialogue and more visual exposure than in previous episodes. Naturally, elements have to be added to the episode, and also to the characters, as a way of expanding the story to fit the 90 minute format. Though there are elements of expansion that does not include Moriarty, e.g. the implementation of the Holmes-Watson domesticity or the potential Holmes-Hooper romance, very little of this does not directly or indirectly feature Moriarty.

2.5. Moriarty's identities

Moriarty takes on several roles and identities in *The Reichenbach Fall.* Firstly, he is the criminal mastermind; notoriously planning the heists, the kidnapping case, and Holmes' death and downfall. His role as the mastermind plotter and organizer is one of the character's most prominent traits, both here and in the franchise. In this episode it is evidenced by his plan to destroy Holmes, and by involvement in subplots.[156] He is the great catalyst behind almost everything that happens in this episode. In his attempt to destroy Holmes, Moriarty bribes, persuades, threatens and controls innumerous people - from security guards, to jury-members, to snipers - resulting in several scenarios. He also manipulates the media – and through them the public – and individuals close to Holmes. He is, as the detective states "a spider at the centre of a web, a criminal web with a thousand threads, and he knows precisely how each and every single one of them dances"[157] Even though Holmes also describes him as "a criminal consultant", this applies more to his involvement in previous cases and previous episodes. Here, in *The Reichenbach Fall*, Moriarty's personal involvement is tangible, making the mission to destroy Holmes his own.

Secondly, he is the "good old-fashioned villain". [158]The recognition that he plays the villain to Holmes's heroic character helps underline Moriarty's psychotic and (self)-destructive nature. What we know from so many influential literary works, including the Bible and other religious texts, there often is a distinct tug and pull between Good and Evil.

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[155] *The Great Game* and *A Scandal in Belgravia*
[156] E.g. the kidnapping case or the Watson/Mycroft conflict
[157] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:16:12- 00:16: 22)
[158] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:22:36 – 00:22:40, 00:39:56- 00:40:00).

In naming himself the villain, Moriarty not only manifests the nature of the battle between Moriarty and Holmes; he also reemphasizes their connection to the literary world and his propensity for utilizing intertextual references. In using this term, Moriarty is underlining the postmodern tendency to self-reference, simultaneously defamiliarizing and utilizing the idea. By constantly referencing other literary works and notions, Moriarty is reiterated in his role as a great literary villain. Simultaneously, the character is detaching himself from the literary world by indirectly juxtaposing "the reality" that happens on the screen, and the fantasy associated with literature.

An extension of this is Moriarty's role as The Storyteller. As a part of his disguise as Richard Brook, Moriarty gives this moniker to himself as he professes to be an actor hired by Holmes to play a villain. "I'm on TV. I'm on kid's TV. I'm The Storyteller." [159] By dictating the course of the kidnapping case by leaving clues related to the fairytale, Moriarty actively lives up to this moniker. Similarly, he also dictates the course of his own trial and media-coverage concerning both himself and Sherlock Holmes. It is in the role of The Storyteller that Moriarty tells Holmes the story of Sir Boast-a-lot, and it is in his role as Richard Brook that he plans to destroy Holmes' life and reputation. Moriarty's choice of words and names emphasizes his propensity for using intertextual references in his speech and actions – particularly those pertaining to fairytales. Becoming aware that "the German for Rich Brook is Reichenbach" [160] it becomes evident to the audience that the downfall of Sherlock Holmes will be at the hands The Storyteller, due to the specific role the Reichenbach fall has in the franchise. This name supports and underlines Moriarty's role as the plotter, enhancing the three-dimensionality of his character. It also has distinct meta-connotations to it, as adaptations deal with "telling someone else's story" and therefore is related to storytelling in a way that non-adaptations are not. This is also intensified when the actors on the screen, in lines riddled with self-commentary, make allusions related to being actors.

The existence of Richard Brook accentuates Moriarty's tendency for leaving intertextual clues, the thematic focus on franchise myth, and the episode's meta-construction. In making the change of letting Moriarty adopt disguises, the pastiche quality of the franchise is being reiterated. The iconic meaning of the Reichenbach achieves an ambiguous meaning with the apparent death of both Holmes and Moriarty at the episode's end. Holmes' reputation as "The Reichenbach Hero", the sleuth detective from the Reichenbach case, is being destroyed by Moriarty. His downfall in the eyes of the public (though not in the eyes of the

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[159] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:00:42- 01:00:46)
[160] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:09:42 – 01:0047)

audience) is a symbolic one; a fall from grace. Simultaneously, there is an actual fall, as Holmes jumps off the roof of St. Barts hospital. With the implementation of Richard Brook, whose name translates to "Reichenbach", the apparent death of Moriarty also lends meaning to the title. In *The Final Problem*, both Holmes and Moriarty die at the end. Even though they, in *The Reichenbach Fall,* do not suffer an actual fall together, the creation of Richard Brook makes the death of Moriarty stay true to the spirit and events of the original story. The iconic nature of the events and settings in *The Final Problem* is, by this adaptational change, enhanced through the symbolic context of their deaths. In this respect, the notion of "Reichenbach" creates a circular structure as it utilizes the multilayered nature of intermediality by echoing the three-dimensionality of the episode opening:

Opening:

1) The visual of Turner's Reichenbach painting

2) The verbal announcement of the painting's title: "Falls of the Reichenbach"

3) The opening title spelling "*The Reichenbach Fall*"

Ending:

1) The downfall of Holmes' reputation

2) Moriarty's/Richard Brook's death

3) Holmes' fall off St. Barts.

We are reminded of an excerpt from *The Valley of Fear:* "Everything comes in circles – even Professor Moriarty. […]. The old wheel turns, and the same spoke comes up. It's all been done before, and will be again.[161]" The iconic status of the falls is being transferred onto the individual characters of Holmes and Moriarty. Each of the character's death is caused by the other in combination with the fall, as is the case in the Conan Doyle work.

In *The Final Problem* the exposition of Moriarty's character in is almost entirely Holmes' work; impressions of him constitute 1/3 of *The Final Problem.* Holmes relates story and circumstances of Professor Moriarty, and how he is a man of "good birth and excellent education, endowed by nature with a phenomenal mathematical faculty. [162]" Holmes also mentions Moriarty's success concerning the Binominal Theorem. Ed Glinert comments:

"Though daunting, the theorem is crucial to understanding permutations and is used in a watered-down form by bridge player for calculating the likelihood of how the opponents' cards might fall, by those who make multiple bets such as "Yankees" on horse-races, and by those who want to delve into the intricacies of the

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[161] Doyle, Roden, Roden (1924), *The Complete Sherlock Holmes, The Valley of Fear, p 741*
[162] Doyle, (2001), p 490

football pool.[163]" This emphasizes the villain's propensity for playing games, as well as his skills concerning calculating probability and risk. The ultimate conflict in *The Final Problem,* and consequently *The Reichenbach Fall,* is the power-struggle between Holmes and Moriarty which comes in the nature of a game. Their interaction, though permeated with peril, can be compared to a game of chess between two great minds: Strategize, plan, check, deduce and prepare for imminent attack is something they both do. This particular interpretation of their relationship and the nature of their characters have been depicted e.g. in the Guy Ritchie adaptation *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (2011) where the two opponents sit down to a game of chess.[164] Holmes himself refers to his and Watson's battle against Moriarty as "playing a double-handed game."[165] He also uses a fencing-analogy, suggesting that the sport-like nature of the game between them is a potentially lethal one: "[…] if a detailed account of that silent contest could be written, it would take its place as the most brilliant bit of thrust-and-parry work in the history of detection."[166]

The postmodern Moriarty is also a player of games. Amongst other things, this is accentuated by the fact that the villain was physically introduced to the audience in the episode aptly named *The Great Game* where the two characters engage in a perilous and heedless battle of wits. Moriarty himself also this notion as he refers to Holmes committing suicide as the final act of his play: "Shall we finish the game?" [167]

Allusions to this part of his nature, and indeed the nature of his relationship with Holmes, is repeatedly accentuated in dialogue:

> Holmes: "Well, obviously, I lost that round" [168] […]
>
> Watson: "[Why is he] doing this, then? Playing this game with you?"[169]
>
> Moriarty: "I have loved this. This little game of ours"[170]

Much like the Conan Doyle Holmes, this Holmes shows fascination and admiration of Moriarty's mind[171], and for a time they both indulge in a battle of wits that they both enjoy. However, Holmes later refers to their struggle thus: "Moriarty's game. […] He wants to destroy me inch by inch. It is a game, Lestrade, and not one I'm willing to play." [172] This indicates a shift in mindset, suggesting that Holmes recognizes the seriousness of the

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[163] Doyle, (2001), p 550
[164] *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (01:40:31) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1515091/
[165] *Doyle, (2001),* p 496
[166] *Doyle, (2001),* p 492
[167] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:11:23)
[168] *The Great Game* (00:48:41 – 00:49:58)
[169] *The Great Game* (00:49:51 – 00:49: 54)
[170] *The Great Game* (01:23:58 – 01:24:04)
[171] "*My horror at his crimes was lost in my admiration at his skill*", Doyle, (2001), p 492
[172] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00: 49:56 – 00:50:10)

situation. The loss of Holmes apparent joy of his interaction with Moriarty makes "the game" become more similar to a war.

There is a certain ambiguity related to the word "play". As Moriarty and Holmes are natural opponents, and because the canon gives the authority to interpret it thus, the association to games is easily brought. There adaptation lends itself to the interpretation of the word "play" being associated with the interaction of children. This is evidenced by the phrasing the two characters use in texting each other:

"Come and play. Tower Hill. Jim Moriarty x.[173]"

"Come and play. Barts Hospital rooftop. SH.[174]"

There are also the many connections between the word "play" and the world of dramatic performance. There is close relation between the performance of a theatre play, and what is being the art of the kind of cinematic performance we see in the adaptation. To assume various roles, to manipulate, to stage or plan a performance, and even to flirt, are all actions that are part of the many definitions of the word. [175] Though he engages in a power-play with Holmes that might seem similar to the intelligence-jousting of a chess-match, this postmodern Moriarty behaves more like a choreographer. He is setting everything up, plans out everything, "places" everyone and "tells" them what to say.[176] He stages the three break-ins which, from the very beginning take on an operatic nature as dancing, classical music and dramatic flair are utilized.[177] He is said to be the villain that overlooks "how all of the [criminal threads] dances" and professes to be the award-winning actor Richard Brook whose main role is that of The Storyteller. He also shows connotations to the entertainment world as he messages his heist cooperators "It's showtime!" Indeed, Moriarty operates in a world permeated with the spirit of entertainment. Fairytales, riddles, and clues, staged "shows" manipulating the public, disguises and acting; it all feeds into Moriarty's role as the destroyer of Holmes's reputation. Their power-struggle is ultimately about who can play the most convincing role, who is more persuasive and who can tell the most convincing story.

The two great entities have engaged in a stalemate game that ends in them both erasing each other. Moriarty's desire to destroy Holmes' reputation is being fulfilled as he decides to sacrifice his reputation in order to save his friends. It comes, however, at a cost to Moriarty who kills himself in order to ensure Holmes's downfall. How great this cost actually is to Moriarty, who shows signs of being a tormented soul with suicidal tendencies, and who is

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[173] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00: 09:47)
[174] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:06:53)
[175] http://www.thefreedictionary.com/play
[176] This is particularly noticable in *The Great Game*
[177] More on this in "Intermediality" chapter

ready to sacrifice his own life if it means ensuring the death of Holmes is debatable. Though Holmes is initially believed to have indeed committed suicide, he is shown to be alive at the end of the episode. If Moriarty's game were to have a winner, Holmes would be it, considering he is still alive. He is the best performer as he convincingly fools the snipers, Watson, and Moriarty himself. His reputation, however, remains ruined. The symbolism of this is effectively ensuring that the adaptation adheres to both the spirit of *The Final Problem,* where Holmes dies at the end, and the later Conan Doyle works where he is still alive.

 In his theatrical performance of the "magic trick" of feigning his own death, Holmes takes on supernatural connotations. In the end, John Watson is the ultimate storyteller. The story appears as a narrative back-flash, indicating that it is structured around his experiences. He also refuses to believe Moriarty's story concerning Holmes' reputation. His attitude and his role echoes the sentiment the Conan Doyle Watson utters in The Final Problem; that he "alone knows the truth"[178] In the end, his wish by Holmes' grave, "don't be dead", is immediately fulfilled – leaving him as the true magician of the piece.

Despite committing suicide on the roof of St. Barts in *The Reichenbach Fall,* Moriarty is still present throughout the series after his death. He features in *The Empty Hearse* as several characters are back-tracking the events of Holmes' death. He also appears personified in Holmes' psyche in *His Last Vow.* In a padded cell of the detective's "mind-palace" Moriarty is chained and wearing a straight jacket; still "living" in the cellar of Holmes' mind as an even more bestial version of his former self; scary, dirty, snarling and insane. This transformation seems to confirm the notion of Moriarty as the bestial id in the Freudian analysis above. At the end of the season 3, Moriarty reappears; showing up on television screens and electric billboards all over London, he is displayed in a mechanical loop eerily repeating the phrase "Did you miss me?[179]" As this serves as a form of season cliffhanger, it strongly leaves the audience with the impression that "Moriarty is back" despite his obvious and very final death at the end of *The Reichenbach Fall.* As he is still clearly implemented into the story, a Lazarus-notion similar to that of Sherlock Holmes is now being utilized to iconize and eternalize Moriarty.

All these elements combine to a "rebooting" of Moriarty as an iconic character. In choosing a faithful style of adaptation, rather than a literal or loose style, the creators of the series get to define and redefine the characters in a process of deconstruction and construction by choosing from a conglomeration of references rooted in both the original Conan Doyle

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[178] "*I alone know the absolute truth of the matter [...]*", Doyle, (2001), p 488
[179] *His Last Vow* (01:27:18-01:28:14)

works, in other texts and media, and in the semiotic language shared by a large group of people. This causes a discursive and active dialogue between all the intertwined components. As a postmodern work, the adaptation has a license for self-commentary that is uses both to defamiliarize and reiterate the myth permeating the franchise. By this repetition, the myth is expanded because this forces the audience to add another interpreting level. Also, by blurring the lines and diffusing the material and its meaning, certain gaps are created – gaps which invoke and create an active audience as they are forced to fill these out. In a process of estrangement the audience is invited to view familiar concepts of the Sherlockian universe in a new light. However, we are using the language of the myth - the references of the franchise, literature and other media – that we are defamiliarizing in order to do this. In rebooting the established tenets of the franchise, it discards some of its authority. However, the adaptation is dependent on the authority and language of the franchise in order to do this. This creates further repetition and multiple interpreting levels, effectively expanding the franchise.

3. Intermediality in The Reichenbach Fall . The Peculiarities of Storytelling

3.1. The Final Problem

In the opening lines of *The Final Problem,* which was originally supposed to be the last short story of the life and work of Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle emphasizes the oncoming and inevitable end of the adventures of the famous detective. Briefly touching on the many adventures shared between the two characters and Watson's self-proclaimed inadequacies as a writer, the introductory paragraph bears marks of finality when proleptically hinting at Watson's "heavy heart" and the "void" in his life. The opening lines' emphasis on Watson's narration simultaneously carries a distinct "meta"- feel to it. One gets the impression that Conan Doyle's voice merges with that of John Watson, and that Watson's comments on the nature of his capacity as a writer are intertwined with Conan Doyle's own sentiments. There is also the notion that Watson's, and consequently also Conan Doyle's, memoirs concerning Holmes will come to an end with *The Final Problem.* Watson is an intrinsic part of the Sherlockian franchise in his role as Holmes' constant companion and chronicler. Though Holmes claims to be "lost without his Boswell" in *A Scandal in Bohemia*

[180], Watson is often reduced to an admiring bystander to his brilliance. *The Final Problem,* however, emphasizes his truly important role of Watson as an observer. Being called away on a medical emergency, he is not there to witness the struggle between Professor Moriarty and Sherlock Holmes, and no one is there to witness the fall.

"And then what had happened? Who was to tell what had happened then?"[181]

Watson is attributed with a new authority in *The Final* Problem similar to that of Conan Doyle – a kind of omniscience: "I alone know the absolute truth of the matter" [182] Watson and Moriarty pose two different ideas in this aspect; Watson is the iconic chronicler of Holmes' words while Moriarty wants to "silence Holmes' tongue[183]" *The Final Problem* poses to exist as a text only due to Watson's need to clear Holmes' name and to refute the statements made by Moriarty's brother.

3.2 The Reichenbach Fall

3.2.1. The Visual and Auditory References in The Reichenbach Fall

In the opening of the episode, the camera pans out from JMW Turner's 1804 painting "Falls of the Reichenbach", a curator in a museum proudly declares its title. Simultaneously, the episode title *The Reichenbach Fall"* glides across the screen in the white font that is, by now, so recognizable to the audience. By utilizing three different types of media (text, image and the spoken word), the opening introduces a three-dimensionality that will permeate the entire episode. The curator in the museum goes on to narrate how Sherlock Holmes, with the aid of John Watson, is responsible for retrieving this valuable piece of art after it was stolen. This incident is in this episode referred to "the case that made Sherlock Holmes" and the detective is several times referred to as "the Reichenbach hero". Newspaper articles flash across the screen and together with scenes of grateful clients thanking Holmes, they tell the story of the detective's rising fame. As a semi-mocking thank-you from the Scotland Yard, Holmes is given a deerstalker hat.[184] This is in relation to the previous episode *A Scandal in*

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[180] Doyle, (2001), p 7
[181] Doyle, (2001), p 504
[182] Doyle, (2001), p 488
[183] "*The only conceivable escape for him lay in silencing my tongue*", Doyle (2001), p 493
[184] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:02:56)

Belgravia [185] where he uses the randomly chosen deerstalker to hide his appearance from the importunate news-media. Here, Holmes' attempt at disguise fails miserably as the deerstalker hat ultimately becomes an unwanted focus of attention and identification. In the wake of this attention, the journalist Kitty Riley (Katherine Parkinson) poses as a fanatic Holmes follower, donning a deerstalker and an "I love Sherlock"- button in order to get a "scoop". Though ultimately a serious and important part of the plot, her character, by this physical portrayal, immediately invokes comedy.

Unlike most traditional uses of the deerstalker, in this television series the deerstalker is utilized mostly for ironic, self-reflective effect. Being an iconic prop for the detective, the deerstalker has become such an intrinsic part of the franchise that its implementation in an adaptation will reaffirm the rendition of the character as being "a true Sherlock", and by extension "a true adaptation". In *The Reichenbach Fall*, Watson emphasizes the iconic connection between the costume and the detective comment: "This isn't a deerstalker now; it's a Sherlock Holmes-hat[186]" This television series has adapted the Victorian works to fit the modern age, which complicates the use of the deerstalker in that it is not a natural part of this society. However, as a part of a referential language through its connection to the Sherlockian franchise, the deerstalker can be used for ironic and self-reflect effect in its transfer. Consequently, the icon is both a source of franchise reaffirmation and comedy; simultaneously used for emphasis and parody.

Not entirely unlike the deerstalker, the city of London is regularly and traditionally featured in portrayals of the Sherlockian franchise. Famous London landmarks and recognizable exterior settings are heavily embedded in this television series, and perhaps never more so than when featured in Moriarty's plan to establish himself to the world as a criminal mastermind. The Bank of London, Pentonville Prison and The Tower of London are all high-security buildings, and seen as impenetrable. This, along with their history, makes them icons that both the character Moriarty and the writer Steve Thomson use to enhance Moriarty's role as a criminal mastermind with the intellectual capability to out-play Sherlock Holmes. The London landmarks cease to be limited to the role of physical settings that emphasizes the franchise, and instead become component parts of the plot.

As mentioned, The Tower of London is central to Moriarty's heist, and given particular relevance due to the fact that it is the only place that he breaks into where he appears in person. Being renowned for storing and displaying the crown jewels, and its

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[185] *A Scandal in Belgravia* (00.07.54)
[186] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:03.48)

consequent high security, The Tower of London contributes to elevating Moriarty's status as a redoubtable villain.

The Trafalgar Square has, during the course of the series, been depicted numerous times. The easily recognizable of Nelson's Colum which was erected in the honour of naval war hero Admiral Lord Nelson is placed at its centre. In an instance of intermedial communication, this is depicted as Watson and Holmes prepare for the trial of Moriarty, subtly creating the association that they are going to war.

In this episode, plot relevance is given to The Old Bailey, the central criminal court house of England and Wales. It is the scene of Moriarty's trial, as well as the site where numerous reporters gather to cover the case. A distinguished building with a long history, the Old Bailey still serves as a place where justice is served and judgment is delivered. The well-know statue of Lady Justice placed at the top of the building is notably not blindfolded as many other versions of the statue are. At the trial Moriarty is, in spite of being guilty, released. In the light of this event, the old notion that "justice is blind" is eradicated, attributing a symbolic meaning to the statue that coincides with the plot of the adaptation.

In addition to this is the St Bartholomew's Hospital, better known as St. Barts. As previously mentioned, this building achieves an elevated status through its role in this adaptation, and this episode in particular.

Due to their age, these landmarks create a physical link between the modern and the Victorian London. This contributes to the notion of fidelity, and the prodigious deal of care that is attributed to heritage, both historical and fictional, in the adaptations. By being implemented into the plot, the landmarks enhance the notion that Moriarty strikes at the very core of the British society.

Indeed, there is a promotion of the sense of the intrinsically British throughout the entire heist-segment.[187] At The Tower of London, we see the well-known beefeaters show tourists around the historic castle, and among these tourists is also Moriarty, whom by now is easily recognized by the audience. Clad in a cap decorated with the Union Jack and the word "London", the slightly comical-looking villain photographs security guards and an arrowed sign that simply says "crown jewels". All the characters representing the institutions which are subject to a security-violation are having tea at the time of the breach. The security guards at The Tower take their tea in Styrofoam cups. The posh manager of The Bank of England has his tea served on a tray by his assistant. The warden at Pentonville Prison has his tea in a cup

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[187] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:04:21- 00:09:21)

that displays the famously British slogan "Keep Calm & Carry On" made popular during WWII. As a consequence of them learning the news of their security systems being under attack, they all spill their tea. By disrupting this cultural epitome related to the renowned British stoicism and calm routine, Moriarty's role as an agitator, destroyer, and antagonist is highlighted and reinforced. The subject and style of his attacks enhances Moriarty's status as a villain in the eyes of the public - including the audience. This enhanced focus and attention his actions get from the media, and by extension the public, will later prove an important part of his scheme to destroy Holmes' reputation.

At (00:06:00) the episode also takes on an operatic nature as Gioacchino Rossini's overture "La gazza ladra" accompanies the break-ins. This title translates to "The Thieving Magpie"; a musical work that features the black and white bird that is known for cheekily purloining shiny objects. That this particular piece of music accompanies the black-haired and white-clad Moriarty while he is stealing the crown jewels seems, therefore, fitting. The association between Moriarty and a magpie is reiterated as the envelopes Moriarty leaves as clues are sealed with the image of a magpie (00:39:10). The heists all happen simultaneously, at 11 o'clock. Combined with its intrinsically theatrical tendencies and the sheer *delight* of the scene, this creates some minor associations to the "11 o'clock numbers" known from the world of musicals. Moriarty's gleeful and playful approach to this monumental crime is not only expressed through the choice of music, but also by the fact that he is dancing. The speed and urgency at which the police-force operates are juxtaposed to the suspended tension of the slow-motion scenes. The 3 minutes and 8 seconds that feature the "La gazza ladra" combine elements associated with ballet, theatre, musicals and opera, ultimately creating a permeating sense of dramatic and epic action. At their confrontation on the rooftop of St. Barts, Moriarty brings back this idea of the theatrical and dramatic when he refers to Holmes' death as "One final act.[188]" Not only does this scene lead to Moriarty being reestablished as a slightly deranged and comical criminal mastermind, but he is reintroduced as a formidable character and a force to be reckoned with. By implementing these acts of grandeur into the plot, the creators, writers and actors are given license to operate on an epic scale not regularly featured in a television series. A memorable scene featuring humour, celebrated icons, devious and outrageous plotting, sets the stage for a proper challenge for the hero detective. This not only elevates Moriarty and Holmes as characters, but it also enhances the series in terms of its part in the Sherlockian franchise.

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[188] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:11:23)

Other auditory references are also being utilized in this episode, predominantly the previously mentioned "Staying Alive" by the BeeGees, and "Sinnerman" – the Nina Simone recording. The latter is originally an African American spiritual with clear religious connotations. The lyrics are imploring the listener to confess their sins and pray as there is no hiding from the retributions of the Lord unless[189]. The song has been utilized in numerous films and television series where criminals or crimes are heavily featured in the plot. These include *Homicide: Life on the Street* (1993-1999), *The Thomas Crown Affair* (1999), *Crime and Punishment in Suburbia* (2000), *High Crimes* (2002), *Miami Vice* (2006), *Life on Mars* (2006-2007), and *A Very British Gangster* (2007). The continued use of the song in relation to other films and series, as well as the contents of the lyrics, emphasize Moriarty's role as a criminal and a sinner in the eyes of morality, society and the law.

3.2.2. Texts and further intertextual references in The Reichenbach Fall

The adaptation deals with the idea of storytelling and the focus on narration somewhat differently than *The Final Problem.* Due to the change in format, from textual to visual, the notion of Watson as a narrator has been diminished. The emphasis has shifted somewhat as to his role; the focus as to his value lies in his role as witness - a position he only holds because of his close friendship and loyalty to Holmes. As a consequence of the change in format, there is distinct focus on the implementation of intertextuality in the adaptation as a means of staying faithful to the notion of storytelling that is so tangible in the original work.

When it comes to this implementation of intertextual references, concepts, and ideas that exists outside the body of the franchise, some examples are minor; e.g. when Holmes quotes Medgar Evers: "You can't kill an idea.[190] [191]" Though the statement in itself renders meaning and relevance to the context of the story, the quote is a carrier of a history and a component of a referential chain that may be accessible to some. The knowledge of Medgar Evers, his work in the civil rights movement, and his subsequent assassination may provide another layer of meaning to the story. The quote in the context of Evers' death and the prevailing of the ideas he stood for speaks to the power of ideas. Having Moriarty's lies compared to a quote linked to what is generally perceived as right and true makes for a dissonance that impresses upon the audience a defamiliarlization of the concept of truth.

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[189] http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/ninasimone/sinnerman.html
[190] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:49:25)
[191] http://www.biography.com/people/medgar-evers-9542324.

President John F. Kennedy echoed Evers in his speech in Greenville, N.C. Feb.8th 1963: "A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on. Ideas have endurance without death.[192]" As both Kennedy and Evers were assassinated, and both had great legacies, this quote is applicable to Holmes in relation to this particular story, and the franchise as a whole; he is a character that embodies and endorses certain ideas and will endure. It also works as foreshadowing of his death, as well as his resurrection, as Holmes is both a man *and* an idea.

This particular quote and the notion that it conveys is also used as a basis for a quote from the character V from *V for Vendetta* (2005); a character that also personifies an idea

V: "Beneath this mask there is more than flesh. Beneath this mask there is an idea, Mr. Creedy. And ideas are bulletproof.[193]" Though not a clear analogy to the *Sherlock* television series, the link between Moriarty and V, who has a flair for the theatrical and the violent, is tangible. As certain plot related elements from the graphic novel and movie has been imitated in a pastiche in *The Empty Hearse*, one can argue that the implementation is an intentional one.

Moriarty cheekily rewrites Desiderius Erasmus' famous quote into "In the land of locked doors, the man with the key is king."[194] The proverb "In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king" is often used to emphasize that strength and ability is a matter of context. Multiple times it has been impeded into speeches, films, texts etc, making it a renowned saying. In using it, Moriarty is not so much focusing on the implied weakness of "the one-eyed man", but rather on the notion that he is superior to everyone else; he uses the quote to elevate himself. The rewriting, or paraphrasing, of the quote is to give emphasis to the power of the computer key code. The implementation of the quote also high-lights Moriarty's tendency to utilize intertextual references.

Other references, though obvious enough, carry multiple meanings e.g. when Moriarty, on the top of St. Barts exclaims "Sherlock, your big brother and all the king's horses couldn't make me do a thing I didn't want to" [195]

This is a nod to the nursery rhyme of Humpty Dumpty:

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

All the king's horses and all the king's men

Couldn't put Humpty together again" [196]

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[192] http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/75938-a-man-may-die-nations-may-rise-and-fall-but
[193] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0434409/quotes
[194] "In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king." - Desiderius Erasmus
Bruce, Elyse (2011) Web.article
[195] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:15:25 – 01:15: 30)
[196] http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/176327

Moriarty's intended meaning with this reference is a matter of blurred and vague links to other ideas from the series. As the audience is likely familiar with the rhyme, and is also likely to extrapolate the remainder of the quote, the analogy between "the king's men" and Mycroft becomes tangible. This emphasizes Mycroft's connection to the government, and his subsequent. In utilizing the quote is such a way, Moriarty reiterates and emphasizes his own power as he claims to be more powerful than the government and the heavily connected Mycroft. It is also a way of conveying the sense of hopelessness and a battle lost to Holmes. As Moriarty has previously made an analogy where Lestrade is being compared to a "king" of the police force "knights", it also stands to reason that this quote reflects Moriarty's conviction that he is above the law. The rhyme also features Humpty Dumpty who fell off a wall and got broken, which ultimately is the plan Moriarty has for Holmes' death. The rhyme also includes the mention of "a great fall" which makes its connection to *The Reichenbach Fall* even more tangible.

Other intertextual references are even more prominent, like the implementation of the Grimm brothers' fairytales. The famous fairytale about Hansel and Gretel is implemented into the plot as Moriarty abducts two children as a part of a scheme to destroy Sherlock Holmes. When Watson opens an envelope filled with breadcrumbs, the audience might have slight associations to the well-known story. When Holmes, is called in to help locate the kidnapped children, the link to Grimm is more definite. When he discovers a book of Grimm's Fairy Tales in one of the children's bedrooms, the connection is beyond all doubt[197]. Much like the children in the fairytale are leaving a trail of to find their way back from the forest, the kidnapped children are leaving a trail of linseed-oil for people to find them. Moriarty is also leaving clues; the first being the breadcrumbs, the second being the book of Grimm fairytales, and the third being the burnt gingerbread-man the gingerbread has clear connotations to the story of Hansel and Gretel where the children encounter a witch who lives in a gingerbread house. The fact that the cookie is "burnt to a crisp" creates associations to a previous episode in the television series -*The Great Game*- where Moriarty threatens to "burn the heart out of "Holmes. The detective himself references this when he asks "So how are you going to do it? Burn me?[198]" For members of the audience familiar with the story, the implementation of a gingerbread-man into an episode that features fairytales and storytelling so extensively may trigger associations to the folklore fairytale of the Runaway Gingerbread Man who was

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[197] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:33:11).
[198] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:23:18)

caught by the clever fox[199]. Interestingly, the case also offers a link to the canon in as we are reminded of the Conan Doyle story "The Adventure of the Priory School" where Holmes is hired to solve a kidnapping case of the Duke of Holdernesse's son.

Besides the more or less explicit mention of fairytales and other intertextual references, Moriarty is using the form and structure of the fairytale when he, in the role of The Storyteller, relates the "legend" of Sir Boast-a-lot[200]. In addition to this, there are fairytale-like traits featuring both in Conan Doyle's *The Final Problem* and its adaptation equivalent; e.g. the triple repetition of a character, thing or occurrence, the implementation of the red apple, and the tug-of-war between hero and villain[201].

In the episode, Moriarty attacks three buildings and he leaves three envelopes as clues for Holmes. As a part of Moriarty's plan to get him to take his own life, he has three gunmen standing by ready to assassinate the hero's friends. In Moriarty's own words: "Three bullets. Three gunmen. Three victims. There's no stopping them now. [202]" The practice of repeating or manifesting something three times is a common trait of rhetoric; which in turn is linked to the practice of persuasion. This practice translates easily to Moriarty's actions to convince everyone of Holmes being a fraud. As it is also a trait commonly used by writers; is occurs several times in the episode, ranging from subtle usage (like the reiteration of "Reichenbach falls" at the beginning of the episode, or the "three little words" Holmes tells Kitty Riley [203], to the more noticeable occurrences, like Moriarty's mentions of "the final problem" or Holmes' near-death experiences.

Because of the vast influence of the Christian mythology on the Western society, "the fall" also offers the notion of a symbolic meaning. The referential language rooted in the Christian faith makes the Bible a source of literary intertextual reference shared by many. When Conan Doyle had Holmes fall to his death, and then later revived him, the character took on a mythic nature with biblical connotations. The notion of "a fall" being synonymous with death is in part related to us through the biblical story of Adam and the fall of man. Likewise, the resurrection of Christ is synonymous with surviving death. When looking at Holmes' death in relation to the Bible, there are a few common denominators. Both the Victorian and the postmodern Holmes are willing to sacrifice themselves in order to save someone; the Victorian Holmes being more concerned with saving humanity from the

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[199] http://www.storybus.org/stories_and_activities/the_gingerbread_man/story
[200] *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:45:24 – 00:47:14)
[201] Franz, (1996), p 89
[202] *The Reichenbach Fall* (01:13:07 – 01:13:13)
[203] "You. Repel. Me." – *The Reichenbach Fall* (00:15:12).

villainous acts of Moriarty – the postmodern Holmes being more concerned with saving the lives of his friends. As Holmes takes on the role of Christ, Moriarty, who serves as his opposite, takes on the role of a devil. The Conan Doyle Holmes describes him as physically resembling a reptile[204] which, in this analogy, is comparable to the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Like the serpent brought about the downfall of man, so Moriarty brings about the downfall of Holmes. In the postmodern adaptation, the same notion is present as Moriarty emphatically gives Holmes an apple – mirroring Eve's handing Adam an apple which causes the downfall of man. By accepting the fall and sacrificing themselves, both Holmeses – each in their way – not only save people, but also defeat Moriarty. As Holmes is "resurrected", he takes on a status of immortal. As Leitch points out, in Holmes' death and resurrection, he becomes a timeless character that can transcend the temporal and spatial limitations of the original Victorian Holmes.[205] This displacement is in effect making the character – and by extension, the franchise – eternal. This biblical analogy emphasizes the importance of Moriarty as Holmes' nemesis, as he is made eternal, in part, by the fall. He is embodies the evil that needs to be defeated and whose effects needs to be overcome in order to survive.

The fact that *The Reichenbach Falls* is an adaptation of a well-known and beloved work of popular literature permeates the entire episode in that the comments, examples or allusions connected to storytelling can be transferred to the writing of the show. This episode in a very clear way adheres to the postmodern tendency for self-reference. This in combination with the postmodern propensity for fragmentation causes a multilayered and web-like construction where referential language and meta-commentary is concerned.

The building of legend and creating a myth

    - Newspapers + media

    - Fairytales

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[204] "[…] his face protrudes forward, and is forever slowly oscillating from side to side in a curiously reptilian fashion", Doyle , (2001), p 492
[205] Leitch, (2007), p 219, 220, 223

- The nature of Moriarty

    - The plotter/storyteller

    - The King

    - The good old-fashioned villain

- Meta-language?

Conclusion

The concept and practices of adaptation is a difficult matter to decipher. A beloved literary character like Sherlock Holmes has been adapted for the screen multiple times, and in many renditions, with varying degrees of success. The corpus of work that belongs to the Sherlockian franchise is great in size, and contributes to the mythologization of the character: Because of the variety that already exists within the franchise, it can include multiple interpretations and renditions. As a consequence of this, there becomes an increased concerned with what is a "true" adaptation of Holmes and the Sherlockian universe. Because of this, the notion, idea and practice concerning fidelity become important.

In dealing with antagonists in the Sherlockian universe, a certain adherence is necessary. However, with the move from the Victorian to the modern, from the universal to the individual, the villains change somewhat. An increased focus is given to the interpersonal relationships between Holmes and his antagonists.

As the short stories are being adapted for an age and medium particularly influences by postmodern ideas and ideals. These include a "narcissistic" self-reflexive focus, and a language of intermediality used to convey meaning. Due to the nature of the medium, the adaptation for the screen allows for a multilayered and multipronged realization of the adaptation, this meaning can be delivered through several elements repeatedly or simultaneously, without exhausting the narrative with it.

Because the original works of Conan Doyle are short stories and consequently limited compared to the content necessary for an adaptation, the adding of new material proves vital. The era in which we live, a concern for fidelity and our understanding and interpretation of the franchise are some of the notions that decides the nature of this material.

Through a constant decantation of the iconic elements and ideas attached to the character, Holmes has become a legendary character recognizable to most people. With the many renditions of the character, he has also been taken out of the Victorian era to which he initially belongs. His iconic death in the Reichenbach Falls in Conan Doyle's The Final Problem, and his subsequent resurrection provided the notion of an "eternal character". This causes endless possibilities as Holmes is no longer limited by temporal or spatial boundaries.

In reinventing and modernizing Holmes, the antagonist challenging him follows. Irene Adler, though originally not a villain, has been turned into an example of ideas permeating the postmodern society as she willfully deviates from the Victorian norms and standards of morality and decency. This is particularly noticeable in the unconventional focus that is given to sex and sensuality that permeates the episode as well as her personality. As a female antagonist she has, in the adaptational transfer become rather regressive where feminist issues are concerned.

Where Holmes has been modernized, Moriarty is bound to follow. As Holmes' nemesis, he is an intrinsic and natural part of the franchise, and has consequently been given extended exposure in the adaptation. The postmodern qualities in the villain are many, but the propensity for utilizing intertextual clues and self-reference is striking. Their conflict, in a postmodern move from the universal to the individual, takes on a personal realization.

Though the adapted episodes based on *A Scandal in Bohemia* and *The Final Problem* are mainly concerned with deconstructing and constructing the myths surrounding Holmes and his antagonist – particularly Moriarty - there are few things about the characters and their interaction that do not, in some form or another, subscribe to a fidelity to the spirit of the literary works by Conan Doyle and/or the franchise. Ultimately, the deconstruction leads to a work that simultaneously reiterates, mocks, inverts, utilizes and defamiliarizes its own connection to the franchise. Being a product of a postmodern age, a self-referential language naturally appears. This includes several notions and ideal from the Victorian society that constitutes a part of the Sherlockian franchise. This adaptation series does not only utilize this language but gives it active focus, creating a multilayered structure of meaning and reference. As a consequence, the language itself is being treated much in the same way as the franchise. The end result is a work that is both familiar and foreign to the audience; that has forms and

qualities that are simultaneously well-known and surprising. Looking at the success of the series[206] in the light of this information, one is tempted to agree with Cartmell and Whelehan in their theory concerning financial and critical success in adaptations. The process of deconstructing and constructing the work, and the language used to do this, ultimately leads to a virtual melting pot of material. Components are not designated to merely one role or one space, but bleed into each other, creating a variety of meanings, interpretations and emotions that are being expressed or invoked simultaneously.

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Appendix

The 1939 US poster for
The Hound of The Baskervilles (1939)

Appendix 2a

Lara Pulver as "Irene Adler"
A Scandal in Belgravia

Appendix 2b

Lara Pulver as "Irene Adler"
A Scandal in Belgravia

Appendix 2c

Lara Pulver as "Irene Adler"
A Scandal in Belgravia

Appendix 2d

Louise Brealey as "Molly Hooper"
A Scandal in Belgravia

Appendix 3a

"The Old Bailey"
 The Central Criminal Court
of England and Wales

Appendix 3b

"Lady Justice" on
 The Old Bailey"
 The Central Criminal Court
of England and Wales
- Notably not blindfolded

Appendix 3c

Benedict Cumberbatch as
"Sherlock Holmes"
Falling off the St.Barts
building
The Reichenbach Fall

Appendix 3d

St. Bartholomew's Hospital

Appendix 3e

"Nelson's Column"
at the centre of Trafalgar Square

Appendix 4a

Andrew Scott as "Jim Moriarty"

The Reichenbach Fall

Appendix 4b

Jon Hamm as "Don Draper"

Mad Men (TV series 2007 -)

Appendix 4c

Sean Connery as "James Bond"

Goldfinger (1964)

http://media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/18/de/ed/18deed76ab63e82cf78addf1aee45ec7.jpg

Appendix 4d
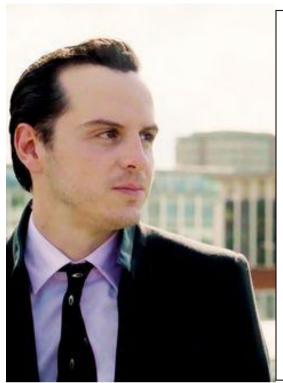
Andrew Scott as "Jim Moriarty"

The Reichenbach Fall

http://www.ruthlessreviews.com/wp-content/uploads/2006/03/godfather21.jpg

Appendix 4e

Al Pacino as "Don Michael Corleone"

The Godfather Part II (1974)

Appendix 4f

Andrew Scott as "Jim Moriarty"

The Reichenbach Fall

Appendix 4g

Andy Garcia as "Vincent Mancini"

The Godfather Part III (1990)

Appendix 5a

Andrew Scott as "Jim Moriarty" wearing a wolf's head tie pin

The Reichenbach Fall

http://www.sherlockology.com/ImageGen.ashx?image=/media/18036/jimstie.jpg

Appendix 5b

The polka-dot skull tie
Andrew Scott ("Jim Moriarty") is seen wearing in
The Reichenbach Fall

<u>Appendix 6</u>

JMW Turner's
"The Falls of the Reichenbach"
1804

Referenced and visible in
The Reichenbach Falls