

Sherlock - *hero or antihero?*



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Abstract

The television show *Sherlock* had its debut in 2010, and is only one out of many adaptations of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's beloved character, Sherlock Holmes. The creators of *Sherlock*, Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss have successfully created an adaptation of the 19th century classic into a modern 21st century television series. This project examines the relation between Moffat's and Gatiss' adaptation and the literary work of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The relation between these two works will be examined through a comparative analysis. The literary work in this project consists of the novel *A Study in Scarlet* by Doyle and a number of his short stories. Furthermore, this project aims to analyse significant characters as Sherlock Holmes and a few selected characters in the original and in the adaptation in order to conduct a characterisation. The characterisation of Sherlock Holmes serves as the basis point for our discussion, concerning whether Sherlock Holmes should be defined as a hero or a modern antihero. Moreover, the characterisation also serves to illustrate how and why the modernisation of Sherlock has enhanced some of the traits that the characters possess.

This project concludes that the BBC series *Sherlock* modernises the original stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, by enhancing personal features or traits of the characters, thus achieving new unexplored and intriguing interpretation to already famous characters.

Readers note:

For the sake of the reader, we will distinguish between the names of the characters that appear in both the original work of Doyle and the BBC adaptation. This distinction is only made in the comparative analysis, the discussion and the conclusion. This means that the character of Sherlock Holmes will be referred to as *Sherlock* when talking about the modern adaptation and as *Sherlock Holmes* when talking about the original literary work by Conan Doyle. Similarly, the other characters such as Dr. John Watson, Irene Adler and Professor James Moriarty will follow the same distinction.

This means that Dr. John Watson will be referred to as *Watson* in the adaptation and as *John Watson* in the original story. Irene Adler and James Moriarty will in the context of adaptation be referred by their surname *Adler* and *Moriarty*, while in the literary context they will be referred to as *Irene Adler* and *Professor Moriarty*.

When talking about the characters in general we will refer to them as Sherlock Holmes, John Watson, Irene Adler, and Professor Moriarty, and it will be clear from the context of the text, whether we are talking about the original character or the character in general.

Table of content

Abstract	1
Readers note:.....	2
1. Introduction.....	5
1.1 Problem Area	6
1.1.2 Problem Formulation and Research Questions	8
1.2 Definitions.....	8
1.2.1 Hero.....	8
1.2.2 Antihero	9
1.2.3 Archetype.....	9
2. Theory and methodology	10
2.1 Literary analysis.....	10
2.2 Characterisation	11
2.3 Adaptation theory.....	11
2.4 Hero and antihero.....	15
2.4.1 Hero.....	16
2.4.2 Antihero	18
2.5 Comparative analysis	20
3. Historical background	24
3.1 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930).....	24
3.2 Men and women's status in the Victorian age	25
3.3 Sherlock as a Victorian Saviour.....	26
4. Comparative analysis	29
4.1 Setting	29
4.2 Narration	32

4.3 Characterisation35

 4.3.1 Sherlock Holmes 35

 4.3.2 John Watson.....49

 4.3.3 Irene Adler55

 4.3.4 Professor Moriarty59

5. Discussion 63

6. Conclusion69

7. Bibliography..... 71

1. Introduction

In 1887, in the novel *A Study in Scarlet*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle first introduced the fictional detective who possessed the skills to solve any mysteries presented to him: Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock Holmes and his friend Dr. John Watson would in the following years entertain readers with their many adventures solving mysteries together. The Sherlock Holmes character has become an iconic character, and a name that everyone recognises. The amounts of adaptations of the original works are almost countless, and the popularity of the character does not seem to vanish any time soon. The stories of Sherlock Holmes have been made into movies, television series, plays and so on. The adaptations in terms of time are set in both the original Victorian age and today's modern world, and in terms of location, both in England and in America. To put it simply, the world of Sherlock Holmes has expanded. He can be a literal character in an adaptation, but he can also be traced as a form of inspiration for other characters such as Gregory House, from the television series *House* which aired in 2004.

In 2010 a new adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories about Sherlock Holmes premiered: the BBC series *Sherlock* starring actors Benedict Cumberbatch in the role as Sherlock Holmes, and Martin Freeman as Dr. John Watson (IMDb, 2017a). Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss are the creators of the series and they have made an adaptation very similar to many parts of the original stories, but with twists that bring out the relevance of the setting, today's modern London. They have adapted and modernised a 19th century literary classic into a 21st century television show, and they have made changes accordingly, such as including the important role of technology. *Sherlock* has become incredibly popular and this just proves that people's fascination with Sherlock Holmes has not decreased from when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle first published his stories. Since the first episode aired in 2010, the television show has created a community of fans worldwide – all admiring the legendary character of Mr Sherlock Holmes and creators Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss. We, as a group were also drawn to the show and found the phenomenon of adaptations interesting, therefore we decided to work within this topic. Furthermore, the modern take on the original character Sherlock Holmes and which traits of his that have been altered, is also a question that lead to the start of this project.

In present time there are many well-known literary works, either fictional or nonfictional that are adapted into visual media such as films or television shows. Many of these adaptations have one thing in common; they can be studied further in terms of how the transformation from the original

material to the new version has been carried out. Are they completely or to some degree faithful to the stories they are based on? What is changed and why? These questions can be asked about the BBC television show *Sherlock* as well and will be investigated in this project.

It is clear that Moffat and Gatiss have attempted to bring back the classic Victorian detective in a modern context. However, we are wondering if the character Sherlock Holmes still has elements of being a Victorian hero or is he into transformed to a modern day hero or even an antihero?

By focusing on the television show and the novel *A Study in Scarlet* as our main source in addition to other chosen short stories, we would like to investigate how the show has adapted and modernised the original Sherlock Holmes stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with a focus on the character types heroism and antiheroism.

1.1 Problem Area

Ever since Sir Arthur Conan Doyle first published his stories about the detective character Sherlock Holmes and his partner Dr. John Watson, his work has been adapted into various visual media such as films and television shows.

The character of Sherlock Holmes first appeared in the novel *A Study in Scarlet* published in Beeton's Christmas Annual of 1887. In a short amount of time, the interest in Conan Doyle's fictional stories increased and already in 1890, he published the second novel about Sherlock Holmes, named *The Sign of the Four*. Throughout his literary career, Doyle managed to write sixty stories concerning Sherlock Holmes, from which four are novels and fifty-six are short stories (Arthur Conan Doyle, 2017). The success spread even further when the Sherlock Holmes stories started being adapted and performed on-stage and eventually on-screen .

More than a century later, the success and popularity of Arthur Conan Doyle's literary work continues. One could say that he created a literary masterpiece or a fictional classic representing the Victorian era. Furthermore, one could argue that the character of Sherlock Holmes represents an archetypal character who possesses the incredible ability to solve complicated mysteries through the method of deduction. These character traits have been kept throughout decades and into present time adaptations. In recent time, the adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories have reached an interesting level. Various films and television shows involve the Sherlock Holmes character, either directly or indirectly in their adaptations. In these visual media the characters are often altered and

changed into new settings and situations where they encounter similar, but different problems from the original Sherlock Holmes stories. This is the case with the BBC television show *Sherlock* by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss.

In the adaptation by Moffat and Gatiss, the viewer may note the clear differences and similarities between the modern Sherlock Holmes character and the original Sherlock Holmes character and stories. Moffat and Gatiss have chosen to keep the original Sherlock Holmes character and his relations, with a modern take on the setting and storyline of the original stories. We would like to investigate this specific relation between the adaptation and the literary work by making a comparison. More precisely, we will focus on the novel *A Study in Scarlet* with the correlated episode *A Study in Pink* from *Sherlock*. However, we have also chosen to involve additional short stories and their correlating episode to be able to understand the character of Sherlock Holmes and his peculiar personality.

A Study in Scarlet is the first novel from the Sherlock Holmes story collection, and it gives us an insight into the environment and fictional world that the characters Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson are living in. Moreover, it is the best representative for the introduction of the two characters and their relationship. These factors have a big influence on the character analysis of Sherlock Holmes, both literary and adapted. Additionally, by comparing these two stories, we also gain an insight of the similarities and differences between the adaptation and the original story.

This project will be using theories on adaptations because they clarify the transition from literature to visual performance media, which will be useful when comparing the original Sherlock Holmes stories by Conan Doyle with the television show *Sherlock* by Moffat and Gatiss. By focusing on adaptation theory, we are able to investigate elements that have been kept or excluded in the adaptation of the Sherlock Holmes stories. Furthermore, we can question and discuss the idea of altering the Victorian Sherlock and making him fit into a 21st century modern context. Considering this, we have created the following problem formulation that defines the focus of this project.

1.1.2 Problem Formulation and Research Questions

How has the BBC series *Sherlock* modernised Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes character from the 19th century into a modern hero or antihero figure?

Research questions

- What are the main differences and similarities between Doyle's original work and the BBC adaptation in terms of setting and narration?
- What character traits of the main characters are changed in the modern adaptation of the original Sherlock Holmes stories?
- How are the concepts of hero or antihero depicted in the modern and original Sherlock Holmes character?

1.2 Definitions

Since this project will be working with concepts such as hero, antihero and archetype, these terms will be defined based on our understanding, and used throughout the project accordingly.

1.2.1 Hero

When we are using the term 'hero' in the project, we are referring to a character, person, or a figure that possesses specific qualities. These qualities categorise the hero within some specific frames, and separate him/her from the ordinary human being. Qualities as courage, morality and goodwill are the terms, we associate with a hero. A hero, in our perspective can appear in many different connections and situations, and does not only appear within fictional environments. The concept of a hero can be realised in real life depending on how beneficial a person's actions are. For example, a hero can be a person who is willing to sacrifice himself/herself mentally or physically for the sake of others. A modern day example of a hero could be a soldier, who is willing to fight for the sake of his/her nation and family.

1.2.2 Antihero

When using the term ‘antihero’ in this project, we are referring to a character or a person that has specific assets identical to an antihero. One may think that an antihero is the opposing meaning of ‘hero’. Nevertheless, our understanding and the lexical definition of an antihero involves traits from a hero. An antihero, similarly to a hero, is quite different from ordinary human beings, however on a different level. The nature of an antihero involves the notions of good and bad. An antihero can have good intentions but at the same time have actions that are bad, criminal, or simply immoral. This means that an antihero has other moral standards than a hero. An antihero is more probable to be willing to kill for the sake of goodness. Therefore, an antihero can be beneficial in terms of society, but one has to question his motives. In our perspective, an antihero is different from a hero because he is more likely to do things for the sake of himself and his personal reasons and not necessarily to benefit society.

1.2.3 Archetype

According to the online dictionary, Merriam Webster the definition of the term ‘archetype’ is: “the original pattern or model of which all things of the same type are representations or copies” (Merriam-Webster, 2017b).

In order to expand on this definition, M.H. Abrams’ work *A Glossary of Literary Terms* offers a broader perspective of the term. Although, the online dictionary presents a laconic definition on what an archetype is, Abrams expands on the term, adding other expressions such as: “[...] recurrent narrative designs, patterns of action, character-types, themes, and images [...]” (Abrams, 1999: 12). With Abrams’ additions to the term archetype, the definition of the term as a recurrent narrative design, describes archetype as being a universal pattern recognised by all, and a pattern that is not limited or changed by cultural differences (Abrams, 1999: 12). This universal pattern can be transferred to some recognisable hero types, and from those hero types, one could argue that the different kinds of heroes fall within the term archetypes. From this understanding of archetypes as either hero types or hero traits, we will be defining whether original and modern Sherlock Holmes can be seen as hero or antihero.

2. Theory and methodology

In the following chapter, we are going to introduce different theoretical approaches that will help us carry out the project's analysis and lead us to the answer of the problem formulation.

2.1 Literary analysis

This project is taking its approach to a literary analysis on the basis of the book *Analysing Literature: a guide for students* by Sharon James McGee. The term 'Literary analysis' refers to the overall use of analysing any literary work. In this project, we will conduct a literary analysis with an emphasis on a character analysis of the main character Sherlock Holmes. This project will do an extensive analysis on how Sherlock as a character meets the concepts of hero or antihero.

Furthermore, the project will also be looking at the interaction of the characters along with the setting, plot, and tone as a way of comparing the modernisation of Sherlock to the literary character, Sherlock Holmes. In order to do this, this project will be focusing on the imagery and language alongside other literary devices (McGee, 2002: 1).

A literary analysis is a process of examining the significant components in a text by taking it apart in order to reach a deeper and better understanding of the story. In a literary analysis, the key components are themes, characters, symbolism, setting, and plot (Thurah, 2010: 1). When conducting a literary analysis, it is imperative to know the overall theme of the novel, and which literary devices have been used to illustrate it. Finding themes and symbols in a text can be done by studying the language and plot to see how the themes are being illustrated, and how they affect the story. This along with the literary devices is used as evidence to support one's claims presented in the analysis. In addition to this, the relationship between reader and writer is vital since the writer has done his job of illustrating meaning through symbolism and language, and it is the job of the reader to unfold the meaning by interpreting. Afterward, one must complete the analysis and illustrate the interpretation by using the book as a basis for their claims (McGee, 2002: 1).

This project is aware of its limitation on finding new character traits, as this is not the purpose of the character analysis. The purpose, on the other hand, is to compare the BBC adaptation of Sherlock to the original Arthur Conan Doyle stories and to explore which character traits have been kept, enhanced or removed in the television show, and how it affects the story.

2.2 Characterisation

A character in literature is a person in possession of intellect and moral, which the readers interpret during their reading process. There are many types of different characters in literature. The two overall types are the 'protagonist' and the 'antagonist'. A protagonist is a character, which the overall story revolves around, while the antagonist is the opposing character or the obstacle the protagonist has to overcome (Thurah, 2010: 105).

A characterisation examines the representation of characters and their development throughout the story. When analysing a character there are many ways of doing this. The first way of approaching the text is the physical description of the characters. A direct characterisation is when the author informs the reader about a character, and an indirect characterisation is illustrated by action and through dialogue, which the reader interprets. Dialogue illustrates familiarity between the characters and further information by examining the words and tone used. Additional information can be gathered by the character's inner monologue and through dialogue. This shows the reader how the characters perceive the events of the plot. Furthermore, the dialogues give the reader a further indication of who the characters are and how they speak (Thurah, 2010: 107). The characters can be depicted as round or flat and this is determined in the characterisation. A round character refers to the manner in which they are described, these types of characters have more layers and are more complex whereas a flat character, is not described in many details and have little influence on the story (Lauge Hansen, 1998: 71). In a characterisation, character development can be illustrated by their actions and their reactions to the events in the plot. Moreover, the characters' personality traits are also shown by how they overcome an obstacle. The overall setting in the plot is also to be determined in the characterisation. The setting affects the language which can give an indication of the time the novel was written in (Thurah, 2010: 106-107).

2.3 Adaptation theory

Adaptation includes many different elements and there are several forms of adaptation; novel to film, film to musical, novel to television series, film to video game and many more. Overall one can talk about the adaptation from print to performance medium, like novel to film, and this form of adaptation will be the focus in the following part with an overall presentation of theory of adaptation. We will mainly be using *A Theory of Adaptation* by Linda Hutcheon, who is a specialist in postmodernist culture and critical theory. She currently works as a professor of English and

Comparative Literature at the University of Toronto. She has received fellowships, awards, and honorary degrees for her work within her field. Hutcheon's interest in postmodernism rises from her interest in irony, self-narrative consciousness and parody. Hutcheon seeks to challenge the, according to her, popular and academic denigration of adaptation, in her book *A Theory of Adaptation* (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013).

Additionally, Robert Stam is included in this project as a support to the adaptation theory. We will be using some of his definitions and theoretical terms in the analysis. Stam is a university professor in film studies at New York University (Stam, 2005b: 11). He has written several books concerning the theoretical and practical aspects of film adaptation – one of which we will incorporate in this project, namely the book *Literature and Film* from 2005. In his book, Stam analyses different literary works from different literary periods and connects them to their correlated adaptations. However, it is mainly his descriptions and definitions of technical terms such as 'narration' and 'point-of-view' that are that are relevant for this project, since they are tools used to analyse a literary work and its corresponding adaptation.

What is adaptation?

In adaptation there is a form of transpositions and change of works. The most noticeable change is the change of medium, often the written word to a visual performance. There can also be a change in genre, context, point of view, pace and so on. Adaptation involves a form of (re)interpretation and (re)creation of a work, which can be motivated by the desire to preserve a work and keep it relevant. Adaptation also includes intertextuality in the sense that it uses the audience's experiences with a work and the recognition. Simply put, intertextuality in itself is when there are parallels between a work and earlier work. Adaptation very much draws on recognisable elements in its product (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 7-8). In short, one can describe adaptation as the following: "Adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication" (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 7).

The adaptation of a work can use core-elements from the original work, and some elements are easier than others to adapt from one medium to another. Transporting a theme or characters can be crucial in the sense that they are specific elements in the receivers' recognition of a work in an adaptation. Especially characters are easily recognisable, but the adaptation can choose to focus on

other aspects of a character, or change the focalization. The point is that the adaptation can use recognisable elements from the original work, but put a spin on it and change it (Hutcheon, O'Flynn, 2013: 11). The changes made in an adaptation can also lead to a different conclusion than the original work, or have a different departure. This can depend on the focus point in the adaptation (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 12).

It has been called “a surgical art” to adapt for example a novel to a film. This is because of the many choices an adapter, like a screenwriter or director has to make when making an adaptation. It is the adapter's job to choose what should be included in the adaptation, what should be not, or what new elements should be added if so. When adapting longer novels it always involves some cutting of element, whereas when adapting a short story, it can involve an expansion of the story (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 19).

Telling – showing

Adaptations are often moving from telling to showing, and this movement brings some changes with it. “In the move from telling to showing, a performance adaptation must dramatize: description, narration and represented thoughts must be transcoded into speech, actions, sounds, and visual images” (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 40). As the quote entails there are many elements, which are not necessarily changed, but accentuated in a different way when moving from the written word to visual performance. The move can also be described as “the move from imagination to actual ocular perception” (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 40). This description is missing the aural element, sound or music, which is just as important an element in the move. The aural aspects include many things on films that are not possible in the same way in print. For example the music in a film can set a mood and accentuate certain emotions (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 41). Overall the film medium has a lot of possibilities within technologies that make give a lot opportunities to the directors. Measures like slow motion, lighting, cutting, camera-shots, and so on are all taken into into consideration when making an adaptation (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 59).

The challenges of adaptation

Adaptation from print to performance faces challenges due to the difference in telling and showing. Literature uses symbolic signs, but a screen adaptation uses tangible signs like specific people, things, places and so on (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 43). Furthermore, the film medium has a

harder time showing the inner-essence of a character and tries to overcome this issue by using other measures, for example by focusing on the appearance of a character: “External appearances are made to mirror inner truths” (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 58). Another challenge can be in the representation of a character. In a novel, a character may be described just once in details or maybe it is a point in the novel to not describe a person at all. As opposed to this, a character is seen and can be seen over and over again in a film, and what is significant about a character in the novel may be lost because the audience repeatedly witnesses it; “the significant particularities of their appearances are lost with repetition and naturalization” (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 62).

An overall challenge that all adaptations face is the so called “fidelity criticism”, which looks at an adaptation as a work that has to uphold some sort of fidelity towards the original work. However, the idea of fidelity has been criticized, due to the fact that some find it less relevant when talking about adaptation.

An adaptation is automatically different and original due to the change of medium. The shift from a single-track verbal medium such as the novel to a multitrack medium like film, which can play not only with words (written and spoken) but also with music [...] and moving photographic images, explains the unlikelihood, and I would suggest even the undesirability, of literal fidelity (Stam, 2005a: 3-4).

As stated in the quote above, comparing the original with the adaptation in a 1:1 scale does not make sense and therefore the question of fidelity should not be judged in such a scale.

Adaptation in context

A text or an adaptation does not exist in what you could call a vacuum where nothing has any influence on it or the way it is received. It is always part of and framed in a context, which can be a specific time, culture, place, society and so on. An adaptation has to overcome the “reality of reception” and the fact that context is very important. In short the adapters have to take the reception into consideration when making an adaptation. This is often done by updating the time of a work (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 142). The idea of adaptation in context includes measures like representation and reception. This includes thoughts and considerations on a concept that is referred to as ‘hype’ which contains elements such as press coverage, reviews, and so on, all elements that are surrounding an adaptation (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 143).

Another important element of adaptation is the so-called “readiness to reception and production”, which is related to the rightness of the historical moment and with especially the audience in mind. An adaptation can experience a bad reception if the timing is conceived badly or the adaptation is perceived provocative towards a historical moment. The timing of an adaptation therefore has a big importance, when it comes to for example the success of it (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 143).

No matter how an adaptation is expressed it is always understood within the particular time, place and society it is presented. An adaptation is flexible and can change to fit into multiple contexts, thus creating the possibility of numerous adaptations of one novel. This means that different adaptations of the same story can focus on and portray for example a character in a specific way in one adaptation, but have a different focus point in another adaptation. This all depends on the place and society it is presented in. Time is also an important element when talking about context, since a context can over time change within the same place and culture, and therefore time can change the meaning even within the same place (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 144-145).

“The reception context determined the changes in setting and style [...] In the name of relevance, adapters seek the “right” resetting or recontextualizing” (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013:146). When making an adaptation one usually takes the audience into consideration. This means that one makes changes in the adaptation that fit the demands of the audience. These changes can include setting, style, feelings and other elements. The adapters make changes to a story that can make it relevant to the audience, and understandable in the current context (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 146). There is a sort of dialogue between the society in which the work is produced and the society the work is received. In the context, there are many different considerations. These include economy, evolving technology and religion among other things (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 149). In adaptation ‘stories travel’. This means that a transformation is made of earlier work, to make it fit in a new context, so one ends up with something new and a ‘hybrid result’ (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013: 150).

As seen in the chapter concerning adaptation theory, it has many different aspects that need to be considered and will help us support relevant points in the analysis.

2.4 Hero and antihero

The notion of ‘heroism’ and ‘antiheroism’ will be described in the following. To be able to seize the definitions of hero and antihero, we have chosen to include the article *A Genealogy of Antihero* by Murat Kadiroglu from 2012. Throughout this theoretical section we will refer to this article which

gives an overview and particular understanding of the two terms and their variation in definition. The term 'antihero' is in many ways derived from the term 'hero' (Kadiroglu, 2012: 1). As mentioned earlier, the term 'hero' refers to a person or a character who possesses noble and admired qualities. While an antihero refers to a person or character that lacks the qualities of a hero. Instead he is known for his peculiar personality that can be beneficial for the society. Moreover, an antihero is also characterised as a person that has "a unique sense of heroism" yet, lower moral standards than a hero (Kadiroglu, 2012: 3-5).

It can be quite challenging to find theory that deals with the notion of heroes in connection to antiheroes, since the terms cover a broad field of definitions and explanations. Each of the terms have several meanings depending on the source. Since there is not only one particular understanding of the terms, we have chosen to present a reflection upon the broad definitions of the terms. By doing so, we can possibly move in the direction of theorising and understanding the 'nature' of these terms and therefore incorporate them in the project. Moreover, by presenting the varying definitions of these terms, we are able to show the ambiguity of them.

2.4.1 Hero

The classic hero character in literature is often portrayed as a human being in possession of one or more archetypical qualities such as humility, goodness, bravery and so on. One example of a classic literary hero is the character Atticus Finch from *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. Atticus Finch is a single father of two, a well respected lawyer and citizen. He has the role as the moral compass for the society he lives in, which is portrayed in his defense of Tom Robinson, a poor afro-american man, falsely accused (Lee, 1960). By acting as the defending lawyer of Robinson, Finch must endure scorn and contempt from some of the other citizens while shielding his children from the darker side of human nature. Due to the fact that Finch never changes, despite the scorn from the other citizens, he never gives up on the notion of saving Robinson. Therefore, Finch is in possession of some specific qualities that define him as a hero.

However, the term hero is a widespread term and there are numerous understandings of it, since some part of the definition depends on the time it was written in. Therefore, when attempting to understand what a modern hero is and where it originated from, this project will include the article

by Adrienne M. LaFrance from 2008 named *The Clash of Civilisations: Classical & Modern Definitions of Heroism in Vergil's Aeneid*. LaFrance has based her studies on the classical hero from ancient Greek, focusing on Vergil's *Aeneid*. In her studies, she concludes that although some of Aeneas' traits were considered heroic by that time it has changed in terms of modern understanding (LaFrance, 2008: 1).

The modern hero is described as heroic or someone who behaves in a heroic manner, displaying certain archetypical qualities recognised as heroic traits (LaFrance, 2008: 1). The term hero originated from ancient Greek, where it might have had a more definite meaning, compared to modern times where the term has numerous meanings (LaFrance, 2008: 1). LaFrance's main point is, that given our time and the modernisation of our society, the term hero is not limited to one definition, the modern hero can be anything and anyone (LaFrance, 2008: 2). This illustrates how problematic it can be to define a hero, however, with our definition of archetypes in mind, the procedure can be simplified when defining heroic character traits and thus defining a hero.

Another complication within the numerous definitions of a modern hero, is the term antihero, which we defined in the previous section (See 'Definition of terms'). Even though an antihero is considered a hero, despite their fewer heroic traits, s/he does not belong in the classical symmetry between a hero and a villain. The clear distinction between a hero and a villain is disappearing. The symmetry between a hero and a villain presents the hero as the embodiment of good, pure and righteous, while the villain embodies evil, crime and debauchery. Therefore, the presentation of a hero in possession of some typical villain traits, blurs the clear distinction between a hero and a villain.

Professor in mythology Joseph Campbell, similarly, defines the term hero and his particular understanding of the term:

A hero, for [Campbell], passes from the common world into a sphere of supernatural wonder. He encounters some forces but he wins in the end. He comes back home from this adventure with the power to give blessings to his fellow man [...] The heroic quest he goes through is thus completed and at the end, he returns as a mature wise man ready to lead his society (Kadiroglu, 2012: 9-10).

Campbell's description of a hero incorporates elements of supernaturalism. The hero according to Campbell is able to defeat major forces and returns from his adventure as a wiser man.

When we are using the term hero in connection to Sherlock Holmes, it is with the purpose of categorising whether or not he fits into the definition of a hero. Some of the qualities that characterise a hero can be applied to the character of Sherlock Holmes – both in the original stories and in the adaptation. However, the question is to which degree are they applicable, and where is a difference in the possession of heroic qualities? During the analysis and the discussion, we will use some of the archetypical character traits for a hero/antihero as a guideline, when discussing whether Sherlock is a hero or not.

2.4.2 Antihero

With the knowledge or the idea of what a hero is, it can seem like everything that opposes that knowledge can be defined as antiheroism. However, there are many opinions concerning the definition of an antihero.

The definition of an antihero from the dictionary, Merriam-Webster, is: “a protagonist or notable figure who is conspicuously lacking in heroic qualities” (Merriam-Webster, 2017b). This could be a simple and clear definition of an antihero. However, there is much more to be reflected on. When considering the fact that an antihero is derived from the definition of a hero, it is also important to think about which heroic qualities the antihero possesses or lacks. Moreover, the historical background of the antihero must also be reflected upon.

M. H. Abrams defines in his work *A Glossary of Literary Terms* the antihero as:

The chief person in a modern novel or play whose character is widely discrepant from that which we associate with the traditional protagonist or hero of a serious literary work. Instead of manifesting largeness, dignity, power, or heroism, the antihero is petty, ignominious, passive, ineffectual, or dishonest (Abrams, 1999: 11) (Kadiroglu, 2012: 3).

Although the two examples of a definition of an antihero are different, they both agree on the fact that a character or protagonist that exhibits less heroic qualities can be called an antihero. However, it is dangerously close to saying that a villain or antagonist can also be called an antihero, which complicates the whole hero and villain symmetry.

In the article by Kadiroglu, he presents a theory by the American scholar Victor Brombert, who states that the character antihero is a modern trend (Kadiroglu, 2012: 7). This trend could be transferred to a current phenomenon in films, where a classic known villain is set in a new or

altered story that deviates from the original, making the villain an antihero instead of a villain. A film example where the classic antagonist is portrayed as the antihero, can be seen in *Maleficent* (IMDb, 2017b), which portrays the villain from the classic *The Sleeping Beauty* as the antihero and main character. The villain Maleficent becomes the antihero due to a tragedy, and even though she is cruel through some of the story, the story also argues that she is only 'evil' because of the tragedy, thus forcing her into the role of a villain. The film ends happily and Maleficent has throughout the film acquired the sympathy of the audience, for the reason that she acted in an understandable way, because of her broken heart. By this the film has made Maleficent into an antihero, and the sequel explains why she was the villain in *The Sleeping Beauty*, which encourages the audience to rethink whether Maleficent is a villain or an antihero.

Another example on an antihero can be seen in the television series *Dexter* from 2006. The main character Dexter, a cold blooded killer who finds entertainment in killing, is a forensic technician for Miami Police. He is an admitted psychopath with homicidal tendencies who has learned how to control his needs and 'only' kills notorious criminals, such as rapists, child molesters and serial killers. Since Dexter is killing people who, in his own perspective, deserve punishment, he can perhaps be considered as a necessary evil. Therefore, he is, despite his murderous aptitudes, an antihero. His character is likeable and the audience supports and has leniency for him. Dexter as a character evokes ambivalent feelings in the audience since they condemn his actions, while they also relate to his motives as a vengeful vigilante, rooting for his escape when he is on the verge of getting captured (IMDb, 2017c).

In our search for a definition of the term antihero, we noticed that the term could also be related to a popular cultural phenomenon called 'Dark triad'. Dark triads is a term that covers the traits of psychological conditions as narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism. Machiavellianism refers to the psychological condition of being a "[...] manipulative, self-serving social strategy with three main components: cynicism, manipulateness, and a view that the ends justify the means." (Jonason, Webster, Schmitt, Li, and Crysel, 2012: 192-195). These traits can be used to understand the mindset of an antihero and to categorise an antihero within specific frames. There are various 'Dark Triad' characters in different types of fiction. For example, the character Gregory House from the television show *House M.D.* is categorised as an antihero with Machiavellian tendencies (IMDb, 2017d). An antihero like House is perceived in a different way in terms of society:

In this way, [...] an antihero [is], one we as a society are willing to tolerate and even cheer for because he takes risks to kill undesirable members of society. In this way, antihero characters may be popular and real-life people who are high on the Dark Triad traits may be granted special privilege and tolerance because they do something positive for the group (Jonason et al., 2012: 194).

This explanation of the societal view of the antihero is quite interesting. The antihero is a special character with a different mindset. He is allowed to do criminal acts for the sake of the good, namely sparing the society from evil. The antihero is in many ways 'trapped' between the good and the bad. He possess the heroic spirit, however, he uses alternative methods such as killing for the sake of justice. Therefore the nature of the antihero is quite ambiguous and changing in its meaning. The antihero phenomenon has changed throughout time and its popularity may have increased. The antihero is perhaps becoming more celebrated and appreciated by society as seen by the increasing interests in television shows like *Sherlock*.

2.5 Comparative analysis

The above mentioned theories will give us the tools to make a comparative analysis based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel *A Study in Scarlet* and the BBC series adaptation *A Study in Pink*. As mentioned in the introduction we will also include other elements such as some of Doyle's short stories and some episodes from the series that are somehow in relation to each other in order to gain deeper knowledge of Sherlock as a character and his surroundings.

The project's analysis is going to be built up on the framework of comparative analysis as introduced by Dr Kerry Walk. Dr. Walk has more than two decades of experience in teaching in higher education, where she has been working in writing pedagogy and developing students' writing. Her paper '*How to write a comparative analysis*' from 1998 gives a detailed insight into how one's writing should be structured, when working with comparative analysis.

According to Walk (1998) a comparative analysis compares two or more things, which can be theories, arguments, events, works of literature and so on. She emphasizes that in a good quality comparative analysis, the similarities and differences observed between the two ideas that are being contrasted, should be transformed into a coherent and meaningful argument. She introduces five

elements that make the core of a comparative analysis, which will be presented here and put into the context of this project.

Frame of reference

According to Walk, “the frame of reference may consist of an idea, theme, question, problem, or theory” (Walk, 1998). It is the umbrella under which the context of the comparison should be written. It is essential because it gives the project an angle, a focus to build up relevant arguments around. In this project the primary frame of reference is the problem formulation, furthermore the project’s sub-questions will provide a more specific frame of reference so the reader can get a clear and detailed analysis in contrast to just using the main problem formulation (Walk, 1998).

Grounds for comparison

This element in a comparative analysis explains the reason behind the choice of comparing ‘A’ and ‘B’, and not ‘C’ and ‘D’ for example. The rationale behind this, the *grounds for comparison*, lets the reader know why this choice is deliberate and meaningful (Walk, 1998). In this project we decided to use Doyle’s novel of *A Study in Scarlet* and its corresponding episode of the BBC show, *A Study in Pink* for comparison. The novel was chosen because this is the very first Sherlock story that was published. It gives an introduction to the life of Sherlock and includes crucial descriptions of him and other main characters, such as John Watson. In addition to this work, we are going to include and draw on the content of other short stories and episodes as well, in order to be able to build up a thorough analysis on the character of Sherlock Holmes and his relationship to the other characters.

Thesis

Once establishing the grounds for comparison and the frame of reference, it is revealed in the thesis how the two things (‘A’ and ‘B’) being compared relate to each other. “Do they extend, corroborate, complicate, contradict, correct, or debate one another?” (Walk, 1998). It is the relationship between them that is the heart of a comparative analysis. In this project, we are going to look at both similarities and differences between Doyle’s original literature (‘A’) and the BBC television series (‘B’). The relationship between these two sources will be examined based on the previously mentioned frame of reference.

Organisational scheme

According to Walk, when writing comparative analysis there are two different structures one can choose from when organising the body of the paper. One is the point-by-point comparison, when the two things compared (A and B) are alternating, creating more focus on the arguments and themes behind the comparison, drawing more attention to the conflict between A and B. Another way to structure the analysis is to go in depth first with A and then separately examine B. This method is called text-by-text comparison. In this project, we have decided to use the point-by-point structure because it gives the writing a better flow, bringing the main contrasts or similarities more to the attention of the reader than in the case of the text-by-text structure. In addition to this, the topics or ideas grouped together, under which the comparison will be carried out, gets more emphasis, which we find important in this project. Furthermore, in the comparative analysis we find it essential to have a good balance between the chosen BBC episodes and the original stories they are based on. Our goal is to pay equal attention to both parties, therefore resulting in a thorough analysis.

Linking of A and B

This is the final element that a comparative analysis should include according to Walk. She explains that linking the arguments back to the thesis gives the reader an understanding of how the new sections logically follow each other (Walk, 1988). Keeping in mind the project's problem formulation, within comparative analysis the focus will be on the character of Sherlock Holmes, including the concepts of hero and antihero. We are going to analyse whether the original character differs from the BBC series, and if so, how? In addition to comparing the character of Sherlock from Conan Doyle's original stories to the BBC television show, the differences and similarities of his relationship to the characters John Watson, Irene Adler and Professor Moriarty will also be examined. These three characters all play an important role in Sherlock Holmes's life, therefore it is essential to look into how the relationship between them are portrayed in the two formats. When comparing these various aspects, it is important to keep in mind the theories of adaptation, and characterisation as presented above. Referring back to Walk's theory on comparative analysis, in this project 'A' represents text, while 'B' stands for film, meaning adaptation has been carried out. In the project's analysis chapter, while using the method of comparative analysis, key aspects of adaptation, such as narration and setting will be implemented to examine how the character of Sherlock Holmes has been modernised in the BBC series. After looking at how the two sources

portray Sherlock and the other main characters, the even more interesting idea of why the alternations have been made is also going to be discussed.

All in all, the project's analysis is going to heavily rely on Walk's ideas on comparative analysis and draw on theories on adaptation and characterization.

3. Historical background

In this section, we will look into the Victorian society, its manners and environment and the historical time in which the character Sherlock Holmes was created. The life and other works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, as well as some 19th century technical innovations and societal changes will give us a better insight into the everyday life and struggles of British people and their need for a saviour figure.

3.1 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930)

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born on 22 May 1859 in Edinburgh, Scotland to Irish Catholic parents. At the age of nine, Doyle was sent to a Jesuit preparatory school in Lancashire and continued his further education at several other English and Austrian Jesuit colleges and universities. From 1876 to 1881, Doyle studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and he became the student clerk of surgeon and early forensic thinker, Joseph Bell (Booth, 2000: 10). During his medical and botanical studies, Doyle became interested in writing fictional stories. After some unsuccessful attempts to submit his early works, in 1879 the Chamber's Edinburgh Journal published his story, *The Mystery of Sasassa Valley*. Besides fiction, Doyle's interest in chemistry and botany induced him to write academic articles, and entrench himself in a very new field of pathology, forensic medicine. In 1879 the British Medical Journal published his *Gelsemium as a Poison*, one of his most famous medical studies, that was proven extremely useful for 21st century murder investigations (Edwards, 1984).

After graduating from medical school and two failed private medical practices, Doyle gave up any further attempts to earn money as a doctor and started to pursue his career as a writer. He refined Sherlock Holmes's character and finally managed to find a publisher for *A Study in Scarlet*, the debut of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. The novel and its rights were sold to British publishing house, Ward Lock & Co, and the story was published a year later, receiving good reviews (K. Wilson, 2014).

The sequel, *The Sign of the Four* was published in 1890 by Ward Lock. *A Study in Scarlet* consisted of one coherent story, however, the sequel was made up by fifty-six non-contiguous short stories, and this difference became the core of a quarrel between the publishing house and the author. After leaving Ward Lock, Doyle lost his interest in Sherlock Holmes' character. He decided to kill the

private detective with the help of a new character, Professor James Moriarty in the 1893 short story, *The Final Problem* (Edwards, 1984).

The struggling, penniless Doyle was not only asked by his fan base, but also by his mother to change his mind and resurrect the extremely popular character. Eight years after Holmes' death, Doyle agreed on reviving the character, and he published *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and continued to feature the well-known detective-doctor duo (Booth, 2000).

Beside the Sherlock Holmes stories, Doyle wrote several other well-known and acclaimed books. He became interested in portraying historical events in novella forms and published seven historical books and fictionalized true event based mysteries such as the *Marie Celeste* and *The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard*. His trips to Africa and encounters with the native tribes inspired him to write the *Lost World* and other Professor Challenger stories (K. Wilson, 2014).

3.2 Men and women's status in the Victorian age

The Victorian age, or the period of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), was a crucial era in the history of Britain and had its effect on the whole world. Cultural, philosophical, industrial changes took place and the pillars of modern societies started to be built.

One of the most influential aspects of the Victorian era was the Industrial Revolution. The great revolution changed the systems of production, brought technological innovations and began to increase both the working and living conditions of the society (Evans, 2011).

As Kathryn Hughes, Professor of Lifewriting at University of East Anglia points out, the consequences of the rising standard of living deepens the differences between the two genders. The main tasks for both working and upper class women were to take care of the household and educate the next generations, while their husbands, the breadwinners, worked in factories, shops, offices, and the two sexes met only at the breakfast and dinner table (Hughes, 2017).

The Angel in the House is a poem by the highly popular Victorian poet, Coventry Patmore. The poem was written to Patmore's wife, the leader of the household who kept the house, raised their children and who gave inspiration for the ideal Victorian wife. The poet emphasizes the role of women being the morally superior within the household, however, physically weaker in terms of

biology compared to men (Kühl, 2016). The poem gives a great reflection to the traditional roles in the 19th century society in the United Kingdom.

On the other hand, we have to mention the situation of Victorian men. The breadwinner, who had to accomplish the unreal demands and enrich and protect, to act like a pater familias. Men were under extreme pressure by the society to gain as many manly traits as possible and to be recognized and respected by women. To fulfill these requirements, men had to have a stable, relatively high income to be able to marry and become the breadwinner and sole provider of a family. It was not unusual for a man to be unmarried by his mid/late 30's, or to have an extremely long engagement period. Men were only allowed to marry when they accomplished the mentioned traits (Marsh, 2017).

3.3 Sherlock as a Victorian Saviour

The Victorian London was an immensely growing city, its population had increased from one to six millions in less than a century, and the rift between the lower and upper classes deepened drastically. The fast increase in the population negatively affected the environment and the health of the residents. The city was not prepared for a huge wave of people and the living conditions dropped. Families of ten and even more people lived in tiny rooms and because of the lack of sanitary sewers, the waste and clean water went and came from the same place, the Thames. Britain, extremely rich in fossil fuels and metals taken from the colonies, processed the stock in mainland factories. The yellowish gray fog in London caused by the coal remained on the city for decades (stanford.edu, 2017).

Doyle, as a medical doctor saw the solution of gruesome environmental, sanitary, and social problems in technology and science, and men who are able to cope with these issues. He created the character of Sherlock Holmes on the pure reality of the Victorian age and squarely grounded in Victorian London, “a man of science, undistracted by the gentler passions, who moved easily through the disquieting urban space, using his wits to solve its moral and practical dilemmas” (stanford.edu, 2017).

London was a criminals' paradise. The streets were owned by different criminal gangs, wars between them were frequent, murders belonged to everyday life. As an answer to the dire situation, Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel founded the Metropolitan Police. Doyle portrays the Metropolitan Police as a highly bureaucratic and old-fashioned institute that depends on the help of a super detective as Sherlock Holmes. This portrayal is not very far from the reality. The officers of the

police were unpaid, plodding and tried to solve their cases ‘by the book’, often unsuccessfully (Banerjee, 2008).

Public hangings and police brutality happened on daily basis on the streets of London. The police failed to protect the citizens from criminals, and provoked great resentment from London commoners. On August 31, 1888, Jack the Ripper, the world famous serial killer, started his series murders of prostitutes of the East End. The corrupt Victorian police was not able to catch him and London was drowning in a criminal flood (Banerjee, 2008).

The fact that the police failed the citizens, made the fictional character of the freelance detective Sherlock Holmes more popular among the Victorian readers. They saw a hero, an answer to their situation in Sherlock Holmes. He solved all his mysteries, he was an amateur detective, not a member of the police. He relied on his own knowledge and intuitions, and he protected the good from the bad. The stories of Sherlock Holmes became extremely popular among the Brits. One of the reasons of the success is that the stories were available to most of the classes. Working class people mostly read cheap “penny weeklies” with the short and simply written articles. As a result of the industrial revolution, innovations in printing made mass-production possible. Mass-producing magazines and newspapers made them cheaper and widely available (stanford.edu, 2017). A *Scandal in Bohemia* was published in the newly founded monthly magazine, *The Strand Magazine*. The stories became immediate hits and Doyle suddenly became an acclaimed, popular writer in all classes.

Sherlock Holmes is doubtlessly Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s most famous character, a mastermind, a man who is familiar with chemistry, medicine, botany and many other fields of science, as well as logical reasoning and proficiency with observation (Booth, 2000).

As a university student, Doyle attended lectures and became a clerk to the Edinburgh University professor, Dr. Joseph Bell. Bell, an outstanding doctor and scientist, a consulting surgeon at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, writer of several textbooks and the editor of the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*. According to Martin Booth, English novelist and poet who studied the life and works of Doyle and summed up his researches in *The Doctor and the Detective*, Bell might have been the great inspiration for Sherlock Holmes’ character. Doyle wrote about his professor in a personal letter:

Joe was a sparse, lean man with long and sensitive fingers of a musician, sharp gray eyes, an angular nose with a chin to match, unkept dark hair and high-pitched voice. Blessed with a wry sense of humor. His dictum that a doctor had to be not only learned but also immensely interpretative of all relevant features of a patient. Diagnosis was not made just by visual observation but also by the employment of all the senses (Booth, 2000).

Another possible inspiration for Holmes's character can be the fictional character of C. Auguste Dupin, created by American writer, Edgar Allan Poe in 1840. Dupin was the first fictional character in literature, and the portrayal of a criminal investigation was a true invention by Poe (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017).

Doyle created a unique and immortal detective figure who served as savior for the Victorian people and nowadays readers as well. While analysing the main characters and their relations in the following section, the inspiration, history and society behind Sherlock gave us a better insight into the Victorian time and its attitude of mind.

4. Comparative analysis

The following analysis will focus on certain aspects in the novel *A Study in Scarlet* and the *Sherlock* episode *A Study in Pink*, including some of Doyle's short stories. Our analysis will focus on aspects like setting, narration, characters and their relationships in order to gain a broad knowledge on both the original work and the adaptation. These aspects are of importance when comparing the novel and short stories with the television series and it will help us find an answer to the project's problem formulation.

4.1 Setting

The setting or the context in which the novel and the television series take place is of great importance in this project. It is especially significant in terms of adaptation theory. Linda Hutcheon uses the term 'context' instead of 'setting' in her theoretical descriptions – however, we have chosen to use the term 'setting' due to our particular understanding of this term. The term is a technical term that refers to the time, place and environment in a specific literary or cinematic work. By analysing the setting of Doyle's original work *A Study in Scarlet* and the corresponding adaptation, *A Study in Pink*, we will gain a deeper understanding of how the adaptation has altered the original setting – and to which degree it shows fidelity towards the original setting.

The time aspect is significant when comparing the setting between the novel and the adapted television series. Hutcheon describes the importance of time as "Time [...] can change the context even within the same place and culture." (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 144). This means that the timeframe can have an impact on the specific understanding and development of a place, culture and its environment. In terms of the setting, the timeframe has been through a process of updating. Hutcheon also theorises this matter: "Most often adaptations are not backdated but rather are updated to shorten the gap between works created earlier and contemporary audiences [...]" (Hutcheon and O'Flynn, 2013: 146). This is something that will be discussed further on in the analysis.

The setting in *A Study in Scarlet* is presented in the first chapters of the novel. From John Watson's point of view, the reader is introduced to the place and time of the novel, namely London in the 19th century. Already in the first paragraphs, John Watson expresses his view of London: "I naturally gravitated to London, that great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are

irresistibly drained” (Doyle, 2011: 6). By expressing a negative attitude John Watson describes the city of London as urban, wild, and crowded. Moreover, he thinks of the people in London as “loungers and idlers”. This indicates that John Watson can see a significant contrast between where he recently came from, namely the war zone in Afghanistan, and London. Presumably in Afghanistan a lot of action happened on a daily basis, which is opposing to the situation in London, where the loungers and idlers do nothing but ‘hang around’.

We see traces of this description visualised in the first scenes of *A Study in Pink*. In the first scenes of the episode, the viewer may already note the setting or more precisely the place of the series. The introduction show glimpses of contemporary London, where famous constructions such as Big Ben, London Eye and 30 St. Mary Axe appear. The introduction is presented in a hasty motion illustrating the busy life in the big metropolis. The image of the city has grey undertones giving the viewers a feeling of a dark and mystical environment (BBC, 2010: 00:02:12 - 00:02:45). This visual presentation of London is to some degree similar to the description of the city in *A Study in Scarlet*, where London is also crowded and wild. However, there is a difference in how the citizens are presented. The introduction of London shows they are no longer “idlers and loungers”, but instead people that are always on the go and rush from one place to another. Nevertheless, the character of John Watson is persistent in his search for accommodation in the big metropolis and it is not before he meets Sherlock Holmes, that he truly becomes an inhabitant of London.

The well-known flat on Baker Street No. 221B is in many ways the address in which the different adventures begin for Sherlock Holmes and John Watson – in both the original and adaptation. In *A Study in Scarlet* John Watson describes the flat with great enthusiasm:

[The rooms] consisted of a couple of comfortable bed-rooms and a single large airy sitting-room, cheerfully furnished, and illuminated by two broad windows. So desirable in every way were the apartments, and so moderate did the terms seem when divided between us [...] (Doyle, 2011: 15).

By describing the flat with positive adjectives and an enthusiastic tone, contrasting to the description of London, Watson exposes his joy of settling into Baker Street. However, this description does not fit with the image of the flat in the adaptation. In the episode *A Study in Pink*, Watson sees the flat on Baker Street for the first time after his meeting with Sherlock, that very same afternoon – just like in the novel. However, the flat is far from a visual delight. Instead of an airy sitting room, it is a dusty and dark room filled with boxes and other personal items belonging to Sherlock. The portrayal of the flat can be reflected onto Sherlock's character, and it could be seen as

a symbol for inside his mind: A messy, dark place filled to the breaking point filled with various stuff. In his speech, Watson tries to show some kind of enthusiasm, but is presumably demoralised by the untidy condition of the flat (BBC, S1, E1 00:13:50-00:14:45).

The flat on Baker Street is in many ways the main scene for the characters both in the original stories and in the adaptation. It has become the starting point and the ending point for various Sherlock Holmes adventures. Although, the characters are moving from one scene to another, inside and outside of London, the flat remains the most significant one for the characters both in the novel and in the series. It is their individual home that often represents the cosmos before and after the chaos. The fact that the flat is placed in the heart of London, means easy accessibility to both clients and the lodgers, Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. They are placed in the centre of problems and within the reach of different connections, like the police. The environment of London is thereby described as a place in which good and bad happens, and with the help from Sherlock Holmes, a place where justice is established.

Another significance of the flat is the fact that Sherlock Holmes often uses it as an office: “I have to use this room [the sitting-room] as a place of business [...] and these people are my clients.” (Doyle, 2011: 21). He meets and consults his clients on this address in order to solve their problems. This happens quite often in the television series, especially, in the episode *A Scandal in Belgravia*. In this episode, the viewer may note the various clients that visit the flat on Baker Street (BBC, S2, E1, 00:04:47-00:06:12). It is interesting how Sherlock Holmes chooses to consult his clients on this particular location. One could say that one’s home is a private place in which only few people are allowed to visit. However, Sherlock Holmes has allowed many clients to enter these private frames. Maybe to keep private matters within private frames? Nevertheless, the flat on Baker Street has eventually become the go-to address for people with problems, both in the 19th century and in the 21st century.

In terms of the setting we can observe clear signs of an updated timeframe, as we mentioned earlier. This is clearly depicted in the episode *A Study in Pink*. The development from Victorian London to modern London is something that requires further analysis. The update of the Victorian timeframe, in terms of the setting is depicted by the use of technology in the series. For instance in the presentation of London (the beginning prelude) the viewer may note the big buildings with widescreens attached to their surfaces, London Eye spinning and cars buzzing through the city – all of which represent the modern technological century we are living in. Moreover, technology is

depicted through the characters, especially in their use of different technological devices such as a mobile, a microscope, and the internet.

Furthermore, the development of the timeframe also means an update of the environment or the society in which the original stories take place. This means that because *A Study in Pink* takes place in a modern time and setting, the society and its particular ideas and perceptions are also updated. When considering this we can understand how a character as Sherlock Holmes is perceived in modern time compared to Victorian time. As it is displayed in a scene from *A Study in Pink*, Sherlock is called a “psychopath” which he himself corrects to “a high-functioning sociopath”:

Anderson “According to *someone*, the murderer has the case, and we found it in the hands of our favourite psychopath”.

Sherlock “I’m not a psychopath, Anderson. I’m a high-functioning sociopath. Do your research” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:57:56-00:58:03).

When analysing this minor conversation, it is clear that the character of Sherlock is perceived in a completely different way than in Victorian time. Instead of being admired for his exceptional skills, he is criticized for being different. This is something that will be discussed later on.

As seen from the analysis above, the city of London and the flat at Baker Street are still the main settings in both the original and adapted version of Doyle’s work, however due to the big time gap between the two sources, differences are occurring on technological and societal level. The modern society is represented in the adaptation through the technological development. Moreover, the difference in the timeframe between the original story and the adaptation has had an impact on how Sherlock Holmes in general is perceived within society.

4.2 Narration

After looking at the setting, the narration in *A Study in Scarlet* and *A Study in Pink* will be analysed in the following. The focus will be on the changes of the narrator. Especially on the shift of focalisation between the original stories and the adaptation. By incorporating theories and terms from Linda Hutcheon and Robert Stam we will analyse and compare the narrative techniques in both works.

The transition from literature to visual media often affects the narration. Adapting a novel into a film, or other visual media, can therefore complicate the narration. Instead of ‘just’ telling, visual

media as film “[...] both tell stories (narration) and stage them (monstration) [showing]” (Stam, 2005a: 35). This means that the narrators in films are not characters or certain persons as it is in literature, “but, rather, the abstract instance [...] that regulates the spectator’s knowledge.” (Stam, 2005a: 35).

Within his descriptions, Stam mentions Gerard Genette’s theoretical terms in the field of narration. According to Genette, a narrator can be “auto-diegetic (the narrator generates and tells his own story [...]), homodiegetic (the narrator is part of the story but not the protagonist [...]), or heterodiegetic (outside the story told [...])” (Stam, 2005a: 37). Furthermore, Genette separates the two terms “narration (who speaks or tells) and focalisation (who sees)” (Stam, 2005a: 39). These terms and theories will be taken into account, when comparing the narration in *A Study in Scarlet* versus *A Study in Pink*.

The narration in *A Study in Scarlet* is determined through the character John Watson and is a first-person narrator or homodiegetic narrator as Genette would claim, and narrates every Sherlock Holmes story from his own point of view. This is exemplified in the following sentence: “I had imagined that Sherlock Holmes would at once have hurried into the house and plunged into a study of the mystery. Nothing appeared to be further from his intention.” (Doyle, 2011: 32). In the novel, John Watson has a significant role due to his ability of narrating the story and being the ‘major focalizer’: “[...] the major focalizer [is] the one who determines what we know” (Hutcheon, 2013: 55). The reader only knows of the character Sherlock Holmes through John Watson’s detailed descriptions and particular characterisation. In this example, John Watson describes Sherlock Holmes just after he moved into the flat on Baker Street:

Holmes was certainly not a difficult man to live with. He was quiet in his ways, and his habits were regular. It was rare for him to be up after ten at night, and he had invariably breakfasted and gone out before I rose in the morning (Doyle, 2011: 15-16).

When comparing this first hand narration to the adaptation in *A Study in Pink* the viewer may immediately notice the difference in narration. The narration in *A Study in Pink* is opposing to the narration *A Study in Scarlet*. There is a shift from first-person narrator to a third-person narration. Hutcheon theories this: “Most films use the camera as a kind of moving third-person narrator to represent the point of view of a variety of characters at different moments” (Hutcheon, 2013: 54). The shift from first-person to third-person narrator means that the viewer only knows of the character of Sherlock through his actions, behaviour, and personality in the television series. We do

not ‘hear’ what Watson has to say about him, and we are therefore not a part of Watson’s personal universe and thoughts. However, the idea of the first-person narrator is kept in the adaptation to a minor degree. The blog that Watson writes in occasionally, is the adapters’ way of keeping the idea of Watson as the narrator of Sherlock’s adventures. The blog gives Watson a chance to narrate the stories about Sherlock from his own account – exactly as he does in the original stories. The only difference is, as earlier mentioned, the time frame and therefore the readers of these stories. An interesting detail however is the entire purpose of this blog. Watson uses the blog as a therapeutic method to improve his mental health since returning from war. This is something recommended by his therapist in the very beginning of the episode *A Study in Pink*.

Therapist “How’s your blog going?”

John “Yeah, good. Very good”

Therapist “You haven’t written a word, have you?”

John “You just wrote, ‘Still has trust issues’.”

Therapist “And you read my writing upside down. Do you see what I mean?”

Therapist “John, you’re a soldier, and it’s gonna take you a while to adjust to civilian life, and writing a blog about everything that happens to you will honestly help you”

John “*Nothing* happens to me” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:01:31-00:02:12).

When thinking about the fact that the entire literary Sherlock Holmes stories are narrated from John Watson’s account one cannot help but reflect upon the reliability of this narrator. In some of Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes short stories, the narrator, John Watson chooses to hide or simply not tell some details from the storyline:

I have found out who our client is,” I cried, bursting with my great news. “Why, Holmes, it is—” “It is a loyal friend and a chivalrous gentleman,” said Holmes, holding up a restraining hand. “Let that now and forever be enough for us (Doyle, 1924: 11).

The fact that John Watson chooses to hide some details of the story makes the reader wonder about how trustful he is as a narrator; to which degree can the reader trust him if he chooses to hide some information? And to which degree is he then narrating the truth? These evoking questions appear when reflecting upon this matter. When comparing this with the adaptation some similarities can be seen. In the second episode of season one, the viewer does not know of the ‘mastermind’ that causes all the trouble. The person is simply hidden from the viewer and we only know of him through the conversation he has with one of his criminal associates (BBC, S1, E2, 01:26:45-01:28:03). By hiding some details of the story, the reader may question the faithfulness or reliability

of the narrator. However, the fact that something is hidden from the storyline could also result in an increasing interest or suspense in both the adaptation and the original stories.

As earlier mentioned, the reader identifies the character of Sherlock Holmes through John Watson's narration. However, it is important to understand that because the narration in *A Study in Scarlet* is a first-person narrator based on the focalisation of John Watson, it is also his own personal thoughts and ideas of Sherlock Holmes that is presented. Therefore, one may be critical in the assessment of the original stories. Was Sherlock Holmes really a Victorian hero? Or is this something the narrator wants us to think? This will be deliberated in the discussion. In addition we can question the portrayal of Sherlock Holmes in the adapted television series. One could assume that the adapters of the original Sherlock Holmes stories have tried to illustrate a more dimensional character. Based on John Watson's narration of Sherlock Holmes' character, personality and behaviours, we could claim that the adapters have tried to present these attributes in the most contemporary way. In terms of narration, this is portrayed through a third-person narrator that is heterodiegetic, namely outside of the story.

As it appears in the analysis above, there is a change in the narration due to the adaptation of the original Sherlock Holmes stories. The change in narration happens, especially, when literature is adapted into a visual media such as television series. It is from John Watson's first-person narration that we, as readers know the character Sherlock Holmes. Therefore, the focalisation is limited to only John Watson's thoughts and descriptions of Sherlock Holmes and his adventures. While in the adaptation, there is a third-person narration, which gives the viewer a clear picture of the characters and their whereabouts.

4.3 Characterisation

4.3.1 Sherlock Holmes

Sherlock Holmes is the main character of both the literary series by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the modern television series *Sherlock* by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss. We will make a characterisation of the Sherlock Holmes' character in both the literature and the television series in the following section of our analysis. We will compare the two by looking at similarities and differences, and consider the question of Sherlock Holmes, both modern and original, as a hero or antihero. The characterisation will be based on the BBC episode *A Study in Pink* and on the original

work of Doyle, the novel *A Study in Scarlet* and some other short stories in order to support the characterisation.

Meeting Sherlock Holmes

In the episode *A Study in Pink* we are first introduced to Sherlock via mobile-texts. We do not actually see him, instead this is an indirect presentation of his character. The first few texts are received by both the police and press that is present, as a respond to what the police say at the press-conference, concerning the assumed suicides.

Lestrade “There’s no link been found yet, but we’re looking for it. There has to be one”

Text “Wrong!”

Donovan “If you’ve all got texts, please ignore them”

Reporter 1 “Just says, ‘Wrong’”

(...)

Lestrade “As I say, these...these suicides are *clearly* linked. Um, it’s an ... it’s an unusual situation. We’ve got our best people investigating...”

Text “Wrong!”

(...)

Lestrade “Obviously this is a frightening time for people[...] We are all as safe as we want to be”

Text ”Wrong!”

Text “You know where to find me SH” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:05:14-00:07:05).

From this we can derive that Sherlock can be somewhat impertinent and he does not care if it hurts the police-image. This leaves the audience with the idea of Sherlock as a sort of rude and know-it-all character. Therefore in the adaptation the first introduction of Sherlock is different than in the original story. Instead there is an introduction involving technology which reflect the overall modernisation of the series.

The episode *A Study in Pink* cuts to a scene with Watson encountering a college acquaintance, Stamford, from his time at Bath. Watson and Stamford discuss their current life and the first indicator of Sherlock appears when Stamford has a person in mind that might be a possible roommate for Watson. Watson is in doubt whether anyone would want to live with him, and the viewers learn that it is the same case with Stamford’s acquaintance.

Stamford “I dunno, get a flatshare or something?”

Watson “Come on, who’d want *me* for a flatmate?”

(Stamford laughs a bit)

Watson “What?”

Stamford “Well, you’re the second person to say that to me today”

Watson “Who was the first?” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:08:17-00:08:32).

This is also an indirect introduction of modern Sherlock and it tells the audience that both Sherlock and Watson consider themselves difficult to live with. In the BBC series this is the second indicator the audience receives before experiencing the man himself in the next scene. However, in Doyle’s novel *A Study in Scarlet*, in the conversation between John Watson and Stamford concerning Sherlock Holmes, the reader receives more information about Sherlock Holmes than the audience does watching the series.

In *A Study in Pink* we are visually introduced to Sherlock before he meets Watson, which is possible because of the change in narration. The audience does not only see what Watson sees. It is also an important part of the adaptation process that there is a shift from telling to showing. So instead of telling and describing Sherlock as it is done in the novel, the adaptation shows the physical and behavioural appearance of Sherlock in order to introduce him to the audience.

Furthermore, in the novel the problem is not about finding a tolerable roommate but rather finding a comfortable flat that is not too expensive. In the novel, after John Watson has expressed his concerns whether it is possible to find a flat at a fair price, similarly to the BBC episode, Stamford mentions an acquaintance of his, who has found a flat but can not find someone to share the rent with (Doyle, 2011: 7). John Watson is overjoyed and says that he would gladly be that flatmate. “Young Stamford looked rather strangely at me over his wine-glass. “You don't know Sherlock Holmes yet,” he said; ”perhaps you would not care for him as a constant companion” (Doyle, 2011: 8). In the novel this is the first indicator that Sherlock Holmes might be different from other people, since Stamford hesitates to convince John Watson that he should be Sherlock Holmes’s flatmate. Though nothing negative is said about him, Stamford continues to give the reader hints that indicate that Sherlock Holmes is more than just an ordinary man. Especially when Stamford distances himself and tries to avoid responsibility concerning whether or not John Watson and Sherlock Holmes will be able to live together: “It is not easy to express the inexpressible,” he answered with

a laugh. “Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes – it approaches to cold-bloodedness.[...]” (Doyle, 2011: 9). Then, Stamford continues and gives an example on the cold-bloodedness of Sherlock Holmes, an incident where he beats a corpse with a stick in order to verify how bruising appears after death (Doyle, 2011: 9-10). This clearly describes to which degree Sherlock Holmes is willing to go in order to prove his scientific deduction and theories. This incident with Sherlock beating a corpse with a stick in order to examine how bruises appear post mortem can also be seen in the adaptation and it is a significant scene because this is where the viewers see him for the first time (BBC, S1, E1, 00:08:33-00:09:01). Although the audience can not be sure that the man is indeed Sherlock, he can be recognised by clues of his physical appearance such as his curly, dark hair and the collar of what seems to be a formal jacket or coat. The next shot shows the audience that the man is wearing a long dark coat and is fairly tall, given how much he is bending down over the bodybag and also in comparison to the female assistant standing next to him. The next scene is when the first meeting between Sherlock and Watson takes place. It is quite different from their first meeting in the novel *A Study in Scarlet* where Sherlock Holmes is in the middle of a discovery in the laboratory when Watson and Stamford enter. He greets them enthusiastically and he shakes hands with John Watson with more strength than Watson had imagined, despite looking fragile. Meanwhile, in the television episode, when Watson and Stamford enter the laboratory, Sherlock is looking in a microscope and seems occupied. Although Sherlock is somewhat polite, he still seems a bit abrupt in his manner. He appears to be more distanced and aloof than in the novel. Even though he is borrowing Watson’s mobile he makes no eye contact with him when he asks whether Watson has been in Iraq or Afghanistan (BBC, S1, E1, 00:09:54). In the novel, he also mentions that John Watson has clearly been in Afghanistan, however, it is done in a lighter mood:

“You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive.”

“How on earth did you know that?” I asked in astonishment.

“Never mind,” he said, chuckling to himself [...]” (Doyle, 2011: 10-11).

This is the first time he makes a deduction, but it is yet unknown to the viewers and the readers that it is his special method of gaining information. After that, Sherlock Holmes continues to ask and answer questions concerning the flatshare which has not even been brought up yet in their conversation, which also shows the audience and the readers how impressive Sherlock Holmes is, knowing this information beforehand.

An aspect of Sherlock Holmes that is important both in the original work and in the adaptation is his physical appearance. Considering that a television series is visual, it is no longer left to the reader's imagination to visualise the appearance of Sherlock Holmes since the television series shows instead of tells. Benedict Cumberbatch, playing the role of Sherlock has a similar look to how his character is described in the stories of Doyle. He is tall and lean with sharp facial features. Furthermore, Sherlock's character in the adaptation is associated with certain accessories that make up his image. He often wears a hat, which plays a symbolic role in the television show, as it represents his fame and popularity. His long coat is also well-known to the public and contributes to his detective image. He cares about how he presents himself to people and his outfit serves as a uniform, it is a way for Sherlock to present himself as a professional and serious person. Therefore, his physical appearance could be a way for the creators to emphasize the focus on Sherlock's personality, and not necessarily his appearance. It is interesting that he is not the only detective in the fictional world who is associated with wearing a long coat. This piece of clothing seems to be a trademark for other detective characters, such as the popular homicide detective, Colombo in the 1970s series (IMDb, 2017e).

Rude and selfish

In the episode *A Study in Pink* Sherlock does not greet people when entering a room. He simply ignores them and the first interaction comes out of the blue. When he first meets Watson he simply states a few facts about himself, because he concludes that Watson is there because he wants to be Sherlock's flat-mate.

Sherlock "How do you feel about the violin?"

Watson "I'm sorry, what?"

Sherlock "I play the violin when I'm thinking. Sometimes I don't talk for days on end. Would that bother you? Potential flatmates should know the worst about each other"

Watson "Oh, you ... you told him about me?"

Stamford "Not a word"

Watson "Then who said anything about flatmates?"

Sherlock "*I* did. Told Mike this morning that I must be a difficult man to find a flatmate for. Now here he is just after lunch with an old friend, clearly just home from military service in Afghanistan. Wasn't that difficult a leap (BBC, S1, E1, 00:10:24-00:10:58).

He does the same thing later on when Lestrade enters the flat. Sherlock does not greet him, he just starts asking questions.

Sherlock “Where?”

Lestrade “Brixton, Lauriston Gardens”

Sherlock “What’s new about this one? You wouldn’t have come to get me if there wasn’t something different”

Lestrade “You know how they never leave notes?”

Sherlock “Yeah”

Lestrade “This one did. Will you come?”

Sherlock “Who’s on forensics?”

Lestrade “It’s Anderson” (BBC, S1, E1,00:15:31-00:15:50).

In the novel however Sherlock Holmes seems much less rude and when he first meets John Watson, he shakes his hand and the adjective “cordially” is used to describe their meeting (Doyle, 2011: 10). Overall he comes across as more polite in the novel, especially towards John Watson. For example he apologises for any annoyance he could inflict with his violin-playing (Doyle, 2011: 20). This character trait of being considerate is something that evolves in the series throughout the seasons, specifically, in his relationship to Watson, but in the literature it is a trait that is presented already in the very beginning. The adaptation focuses on the development that Sherlock goes through by downplaying some more “humane” traits, that are present in the novel, but not in beginning of the series.

Furthermore in the series Sherlock does not always keep eye contact when talking to people. From this we can conclude that Sherlock can appear as an impolite person. This is something we cannot know in the novel, because it is only expressed visually in the series. One can say that Sherlock does not interact unless there is something of his interest, for example when he borrows Watson’s phone (BBC, S1, E1,00:09:40-00:10:04). He does not smalltalk, he asks clear questions and expects to get clear answers. His rudeness also comes across in the fact that he does not answer other people's questions if he does not want to. He simply ignores them. When the morgue assistant Molly attempts to make smalltalk in the morgue he ignores her and moves on to something that he has an interest in.

Molly “So, bad day, was it?”

Sherlock “I need to know what bruises form in the next twenty minutes. A man’s alibi depends on it. Text me”

Molly “Listen, I was wondering: maybe later, when you’re finished...”

Sherlock “Are you wearing lipstick? You weren’t wearing lipstick before”

Molly “I, er, I refreshed it a bit”

Sherlock “Sorry, you were saying?”

Molly “I was wondering if you’d like to have coffee”

Sherlock “Black, two sugars, please. I’ll be upstairs” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:08:56-00:09:22).

In this sense he prioritises his own needs before everyone else’s. He manipulates people and even though he has no legal authority at the crime scene, he ignores this fact in order to solve the mystery. Overall he is much more rude in the series, because it is shown in more situations than in the novel. In the novel it is appearing in small elements, like when he interrupts and corrects people (Doyle, 2011:49, 56).

Superior with a lack of inhibitions

Sherlock himself expresses a sense of superiority over the people around him. He says things like: “Look at you lot, you’re all so vacant. Is it nice not being me? It must be so relaxing” (BBC, S1, E1,01:00:12-01:00:22). He points out multiple times that he does not understand how they can be so “stupid”, when everything seems so logical to him. His thoughts of himself as superior also comes across in his actions.

This superiority is also depicted in the novel, where he explains his profession and why he is the only consulting detective in the world:

Well, I have a trade of my own. I suppose I am the only one in the world. I’m a consulting detective, if you can understand what that is. Here in London we have lots of Government detectives and lots private ones. When these fellows are at fault they come to me, and I am generally able, by the help of my knowledge of the history of crime, to set them straight (Doyle, 2011: 23).

Note how Sherlock Holmes says ‘when they are at fault’ and not ‘if they are at fault’, which strongly indicates his high thoughts of himself.

He also does not understand why other people do not store knowledge as he does, and at one point John Watson directly calls Sherlock Holmes conceited (Doyle, 2011: 18-26). In the series Sherlock does not obey the rules and he does not hesitate to break them to get answers. This is shown when he brings Watson to the crime scene and insists on examining the body even though in theory he has no authority to do so.

Sherlock (*to Watson*) "You need to wear one of these"

Lestrade "Who's this?"

Sherlock "He's with me"

Lestrade "But who *is* he?"

Sherlock "I *said* he's with me"

Watson "Aren't you gonna put one on? (*coverall*)"

Sherlock "So where are we?"

Lestrade "Upstairs" (BBC, S1, E1, 00:23:14-00:23:24).

Furthermore, Sherlock keeps legal evidence such as a suitcase in his own home (BBC, S1, E1, 00:45:00). This also expresses his distrust in the police, which is also present in the novel. He believes he is better than the police and he can find clues and answers they can not (Doyle, 2011:30-31). This character trait of Sherlock Holmes being superior is expressed by action and words in a stronger way in the modern adaptation than in the original literature. It may not be the most charming trait to have, but by including it in the adaptation, the creators emphasize that they think it is an essential trait in Sherlock. In this way Sherlock becomes a more round character, due to the extended facets to his personality making him more interesting and entertaining for the audience.

Sherlock showcases a lack of inhibitions as a result of his search for answers. When we first meet him he is aggressively beating a dead body with a whip (BBC,S1,E1,00:08:41-00:08:56). He runs out in front of cars and into people when chasing a taxi (BBC, S1, E1, 00:52:12), he steals police badges from Lestrade (BBC, S1, E1, 00:55:00), he says what he wants and makes deductions on people even if they do not want him to. In the novel this lack of inhibitions is present, but to a much lesser degree. It can be seen for example, when he tries to lure the killer to his apartment by using John Watson's name (Doyle, 2011: 53). In the series his lack of inhibitions is much more action based as seen in the scene where Sherlock beats a corpse (BBC, S1, E1, 00:08:41-00:08:56).

Sherlock's lack of inhibitions also links to him not having any sense of situational judgment, which comes across in the series especially when he states something in front of others. For example he embarrasses Molly in the morgue, and says that her mouth is too small, in front of others.

Sherlock "Ah, Molly, coffee. Thank you. What happened to the lipstick?"

Molly "It wasn't working for me"

Sherlock "Really? I thought it was a big improvement. Your mouth's too small now"

Molly "...Okay" (BBC, S1, E1, 00:10:14-00:10:24).

It also comes across when he expresses how the victim should get over her dead child in front of Watson, Lestrade and other people from the police.

Watson “You said that the victims all took the poison themselves, that he *makes* them take it. Well, maybe he...I don’t know, talks to them? Maybe he used the death of her daughter somehow”

Sherlock “Yeah, but that was *ages* ago. Why would she still be upset?”

(...)

Sherlock “Not good?”

Watson “*Bit* not good, yeah” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:58:40-00:58:59).

In the novel it also appears when for example John Watson sees him smiling and laughing at the crime scene (Doyle, 2011: 32).

Overall he can appear insolent, without it being intentional. These features emphasize why and how he is different from ordinary people. In the novel he seems much more poised and better at acting normal in social situations, whereas these mentioned features seem to be more enhanced in the television series. This again makes him a more round and complex character, but it also shows some humor in the portrayal of Sherlock. The audience can be amused by these traits in the series, because they are almost over the top in some sense.

Humorous and teasing

On several occasions in the series Sherlock shows humour. When he meets Watson for the first time, Sherlock introduces himself by winking at him (BBC, S1, E1, 00:11:51). He also uses sarcasm when speaking to Anderson and teases him by using his deduction skills.

Sherlock “[...]And is your wife away for long?”

Anderson “Oh, don’t pretend you worked that out. Somebody told you that”

Sherlock “Your deodorant told me that”

Anderson “My deodorant?”

Sherlock “It’s for men”

Anderson “Well, of *course* it’s for men! *I’m* wearing it!”

Sherlock “So’s Sergeant Donovan”

(...)

Sherlock “Ooh, and I think it just vaporised. May I go in?”

Anderson “Now look: whatever you’re trying to imply...”

Sherlock “I’m not implying *anything*”

Sherlock “I’m sure Sally came round for a nice little chat, and just happened to stay over. And I assume she scrubbed your floors, going by the state of her knees” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:22:30-00:23:04).

Sherlock is therefore presented as a man who does possess humour. He is capable of making the viewers laugh, with for example his repeated digs at Anderson. This feature makes Sherlock much more relatable and easier to like, despite the fact that he does have several unattractive traits when he is first presented to the viewer. He is made more “normal” by possessing this character trait.

Similarly in the original stories by Doyle, Sherlock Holmes is presented as a character with humour. In the novel *A Study in Scarlet* where Sherlock Holmes first meets John Watson, he does not restrain his personality and celebrates his achievement on coming up with a new method of detecting blood in a way that can make the reader laugh: “His eyes fairly glittered as he spoke, and he put his hand over his heart and bowed as if to some applauding crowd conjured up by his imagination.” (Doyle, 2011:12). He seems to be very entertained by his own success which he does not hide, but rather shows in a humorous way, acting as if being applauded by a crowd. Not much later on in the novel Sherlock Holmes and John Watson are having a discussion about the solar system, where Sherlock Holmes argues for the reason behind his lack of knowledge on the topic the following way: “What the deuce is the solar system to me?[...] You say that we go round the sun. If we went round the moon it would not make a pennyworth of difference to me or to my work.” (Doyle, 2011: 18). Here as well, both the reader and John Watson can get a glimpse of Sherlock Holmes’ sense of humour and his witty way of expressing that he wants to focus on his work, and not care about other outside factors. Sherlock Holmes’ teasing attitude towards the detectives at Scotland Yard is also portrayed in the novel. When he describes Gregson and Lestrade, even though he mentions their good qualities, he emphasizes their simple way of working which is too ordinary for him: “They are both quick and energetic, but conventional -- shockingly so. They have their knives into one another, too. They are as jealous as a pair of professional beauties. There will be some fun over this case if they are both put upon the scent.” (Doyle, 2011:30).

The viewers and readers can see many more examples on Sherlock Holmes’ sense of humour in both the original and adaptation version. A reason for the adapters to have preserved this character trait could be because it is entertaining and because it is a trait, that is almost the opposite of many of Sherlock’s other more negative traits. Sherlock Holmes generally takes himself very serious and thinks highly of himself, but that does not mean that he can not have humourous side. This is also a

trait that makes Sherlock Holmes an iconic character making him popular and loved by people both during the Victorian age and the 21st century. It is a heroic feature that boosts his image in a positive way.

Clever, curious and logical

Sherlock Holmes can be characterised as very intelligent which is shown through his incredible deduction skills. He manages to solve crime cases by relying on deduction. Therefore it can be seen as his signature skill. The first time the viewers of *A Study in Pink* gain an insight to this skill is at the meeting between Sherlock and Watson. Sherlock quickly makes a deduction on Watson, coming up with information about his life that is hardly possible to figure out by an average person.

Watson “We don’t know a thing about each other; I don’t know where we’re meeting; I don’t even know your name”

Sherlock “I know you’re an Army doctor and you’ve been invalided home from Afghanistan. I know you’ve got a brother who’s worried about you but you won’t go to him for help because you don’t approve of him – possibly because he’s an alcoholic; more likely because he recently walked out on his wife. And I know that your therapist thinks your limp’s psychosomatic – quite correctly, I’m afraid.
(...)

Sherlock “That’s enough to be going on with, don’t you think?” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:11:22-00:11:46).

Similarly in the original work, Sherlock Holmes notices signs that tell him that John Watson has been in Afghanistan: “You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive.” (Doyle, 2011: 10). This proves how significant his skills on deduction are, and the fact that it appears in the very beginning of the story also contributes to its importance. The deduction skill is so iconic for the Sherlock Holmes character in general that it is almost presented in a 1:1 scale in the adaptation. His skills are not expanded or reduced in any way, and the methods and techniques which he uses are the same in both the original and the adaptation. The only difference is the series’ illustration of his deduction. The adaptation uses slow-motion, zooms in on items, and Sherlock’s observations appear as words on the screen for the audience (BBC, S1, E1, 00:24:32-00:25:41). So in the adaptation it is a much more visual experience, and one can say that it is presented in a way that makes the audience think of it as a form of “superpower”.

Furthermore, Sherlock’s knowledge is very much based on facts and especially on logic. He separates emotions and is only interested in tangible facts which is presented in the BBC show, for

example in the scene where he examines the victim in *A Study in Pink* (BBC, S1, E1, 00:24:17-00:29:20). The following is one example:

Sherlock “[...] She’s had a string of lovers but none of them knew she was married”

Lestrade “Oh, for God’s sake, if you’re just making this up...”

Sherlock “Her wedding ring. Ten years old at least. The rest of her jewellery has been regularly cleaned, but not her wedding ring. State of her marriage right there. The inside of the ring is shinier than the outside – that means it’s regularly removed. The only polishing it gets is when she works it off her finger. It’s not for work; look at her nails. She doesn’t work with her hands, so what or rather who *does* she remove her rings for? Clearly not *one* lover; she’d never sustain the fiction of being single over that amount of time, so more likely a string of them. Simple” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:27:32-00:28:02).

Also in the original text he argues for the value of logic: “No, no: I never guess. It is a shocking habit - destructive to the logical faculty.” (Doyle, 1890: 5). However, occasionally his logic and intelligence fails him, which he combats by turning to drugs since they give him inspiration and ideas. His drug addiction is present both in Doyle’s literature and in the television series, and this destructive habit of him can make him appear as an antihero.

Based on both the original version and the adaptation, Sherlock Holmes is obsessed with solving mysteries. He considers murder cases a thrill and he expresses his excitement with no filter, almost like a child. There is a clear shift in his portrayal, from when he is so-called bored, not working on any cases to when he is presented with a mystery. His monotonous way of talking is put to a halt, when an interesting crime case comes his way, and a voice full of excitement can be detected instead (BBC, S1, E1, 00:16:00-00:16:24). In the following quote from the novel *A Study in Scarlet* his enthusiasm on detective work is also clear: “There is nothing like first hand evidence,” he remarked; “as a matter of fact, my mind is entirely made up upon the case, but still we may as well learn all that is to be learned.” (Doyle, 2011: 42).

Many of Sherlock Holmes’ character traits have roots in his curiosity. It is a goal for him to get answers and be right about things, while being smarter than others. Even the killer in the episode *A Study in Pink* notes that Sherlock needs answers and always needs to be right.

Sherlock “Is this a confession?”

Cab driver “Oh, yeah. And I’ll tell you what else: if you call the coppers now, I won’t run. I’ll sit quiet and they can take me down, I promise”

Sherlock “Why?”

Cab driver “Cause you’re not gonna do that”

Sherlock “Am I not?”

Cab driver “I didn’t kill those four people, Mr Holmes. I spoke to them, and they killed themselves. And if you get the coppers now, I promise you one thing. I will never tell you what I said”

Sherlock “No-one else will die, though, and I believe they call that a result”

Cab driver “And you won’t ever understand how those people died. What kind of result do you care about?”

Sherlock “If I *wanted* to understand, what would I do?”

Cab driver “Let me take you for a ride” (BBC, S1, E1, 01:03:52-01:05:30).

The above mentioned character traits that all originate from Sherlock Holmes’s high intelligence and humour put his character in a heroic position. Having good qualities, which he uses to contribute to the society by helping the police solving crimes makes him a heroic character.

High-functioning sociopath

In the television series the viewer meets the terms ‘sociopath’ and ‘high-functioning sociopath’ in relation to Sherlock. This section focuses on defining the aspects of Sherlock being a high-functioning sociopath.

A sociopath is person that is highly antisocial and has a weak conscience. S/he is not capable of having a deep connection with other people. S/he will have no problem lying in his/her pursuit of getting what s/he wants. A sociopath has no empathy and can not see other people’s perspective, or care about their feelings. S/he is unreliable and will not take responsibility for his/her own actions. A sociopath is very antisocial in the form that his/her world revolves around himself/herself. S/he does not care about rules or norms and can come across a juvenile (Peterson, 2016).

A high-functioning sociopath is a form of describing a sociopath. S/he is good at adapting to his/her surroundings and at portraying what people want to see. A high-functioning sociopath is extremely intelligent, can exude charm and has social skills. S/he is very driven, and calculating with patience in the sense that, s/he will spend a long time “working” to make a situation just right for him/her to make a move (Peterson, 2016).

This definition of a high-functioning sociopath correlates to the character of Sherlock in the adaptation.

Throughout the first episode of the BBC show, the viewer gets to witness people's opinions of Sherlock. Some people think that Sherlock is crazy, annoying, a freak and he is even called a psychopath which he himself corrects to a high-functioning sociopath:

Anderson "According to *someone*, the murderer has the case, and we found it in the hands of our favourite psychopath"

Sherlock "I'm not a psychopath, Anderson. I'm a high-functioning sociopath. Do your research" (BBC, S1, E1, 00:57:51-00:58:05).

Lestrade also calls him a child, which actually is not that far from the truth when considering some of Sherlock's character traits, including his lack of patience.

Lestrade "Or you could help us properly and I'll stand them down".

Sherlock "This is childish"

Lestrade "Well, I'm dealing with a child. Sherlock, this is our case. I'm letting you in, but you do not go off on your own. Clear?" (BBC, S1, E1, 00:57:17-00:57:30).

By classifying himself as a high-functioning sociopath, Sherlock manages to separate himself from ordinary people. Meanwhile in the original texts, he does not appear to be a controversial figure, who is criticised in the same strong way.

To sum up, the similarities and differences of the first scenes between the television series and the original stories, lead to the fact that some of Sherlock Holmes' character traits are enhanced in the adaptation, while others, such as his passion for science and deduction skills, and physical appearance remain true to the original work.

Both the original and modern Sherlock Holmes character possess heroic and anti-heroic traits. However, the adaptation has chosen to enhance some 'negative' traits, compared to the original story. The traits that have been enhanced concern Sherlock's difficulty in interacting with people, his arrogance, his lack of inhibitions, his drug abuse, and his selfishness - which overall make him appear as an antihero.

4.3.2 John Watson

Following the analysis of the protagonist Sherlock Holmes, in this section we are going to carry out a characterisation on the second most important character of the stories and the television series, Dr. John Watson.

In the stories John Watson is one of the main characters that Doyle created. Sherlock Holmes and John Watson are almost always associated as partners, hardly existing in the minds of people without each other. If someone knows the character of Sherlock Holmes, one can be almost entirely sure that they know John Watson, too. John Watson's role among many others, is especially important because he is the narrator in the original texts, while in the television show his storytelling of Sherlock is portrayed through his online blog.

It is challenging to analyse the character of John Watson due to him being the narrator, few words are written on his physical and personality traits in Doyle's original texts. Therefore, the reader can not find much proof that contribute characterising his character traits, as in the case of Sherlock. Hence, the structure of this section of the analysis, unlike the previous one on Sherlock, will not follow the main characteristics presented as headlines, but will follow the development of John Watson's relationship with Sherlock Holmes and based on that, will present character traits. Doyle's texts do not provide a detailed description of John Watson, as the texts do on Sherlock Holmes. In the BBC television show the viewer automatically gets an idea of his appearance, thanks to the visual character of a movie, from the novels and the short stories the reader still gains some information about John Watson. In the very first text on Sherlock Holmes, in the novel *A Study in Scarlet*, the first few pages introduce the reader to the character of John Watson in his own narration. He explains his professional career, emphasizing his experience serving for the British army as Assistant Surgeon (Doyle, 2011: 5-6).

I was duly attached to the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers as Assistant Surgeon. The regiment was stationed in India at the time, and before I could join it, the second Afghan war had broken out[...] The campaign brought honours and promotion to many, but for me it had nothing but misfortune and disaster (Doyle, 2011: 5).

After returning to England, he is looking for a place to live in London at a reasonable price, in which process his acquaintance Stamford can provide help. The reader additionally learns about his physical condition. John Watson is "Worn with pain, and weak from the prolonged hardships"

(Doyle, 2011: 6), which is also noticed by his friend Stamford, who makes a remark “You are as thin as a lath and as brown as a nut” (Doyle, 2011: 7).

Furthermore, John Watson makes a point of his preferred roommate by saying “[...] I should prefer a man of studious and quiet habits. I am not strong enough yet to stand much noise or excitement” (Doyle, 2011: 8), referring to his rough days in Afghanistan from which he has not fully recovered and where he was shot in the arm. Meanwhile in the BBC television show’s corresponding episode, *A Study in Pink*, the viewer lacks such precise and compact information coming from Watson directly. Here, the viewer slowly gets to know Watson through his conversation with Stamford and later during his first meeting with Sherlock. However, his appearance is instantly revealed when the first pictures of Watson are shown on the screen and it is also clear that he is greatly affected by the war, since the opening scenes show him having a nightmare and him meeting with his therapist (BBC, S1, E1, 00:00:00-00:02:05).

The scene where Watson meets Sherlock for the first time, through the mutual friend Stamford, is essential since this is the first time Sherlock makes a deduction in the television show. Later on it is revealed that deduction is Sherlock’s expertise, but the deductions also function as a way for the adaptation to show the character Watson.

Sherlock “I know you’re an Army doctor and you’ve been invalided home from Afghanistan. I know you’ve got a brother who’s worried about you but you won’t go to him for help because you don’t approve of him – possibly because he’s an alcoholic; more likely because he recently walked out on his wife. And I know that your therapist thinks your limp’s psychosomatic – quite correctly, I’m afraid” (BBC, S1, E1, 00:11:10-00:11:40).

This means that the viewers get introduced to the character of Watson through Sherlock’s words, which is in contrast to the novel, where the readers get to know John Watson through his own description, through his narration.

In the adaptation Sherlock Holmes’ deduction leads to the earlier mentioned fact about John Watson’s condition as found in Doyle’s original work with the exception that he was shot in his leg and not arm, therefore he is limping and needs a cane.

In the following section we are going to elaborate on John Watson and Sherlock Holmes' relationship and how it developed from acquaintanceship to friendship, both during the course of Doyle's original texts and throughout the episodes of the BBC television series.

As described above Watson and Sherlock met through a mutual acquaintance and made a deal about sharing rooms at Baker Street 221B. In the novel *A Study in Scarlet*, John Watson shows a clear interest in his new flatmate. "As the weeks went by, my interest in him and my curiosity as to his aims in life, gradually deepened and increased" (Doyle, 2011: 16). He slowly but surely learns more and more about the character of Sherlock Holmes and most importantly, he discovers that Sherlock Holmes is a "consulting detective" (Doyle, 2011: 23), which leads them to their first adventure together, starting in chapter 3 – The Lauriston Garden Mystery (Doyle, 2011: 28). This is the first case the reader is introduced to and it is where John Watson becomes a companion to Sherlock Holmes in his investigation and assists him in Sherlock's work to solve the mystery. Similarly, in the television episode *A Study in Pink*, Sherlock introduces Watson to his world as a detective, taking him out and about to work on a case that involves four mysterious suicides. Watson is clearly fascinated by this world, and longs for adventures this can be concluded in the following scene:

Sherlock "Seen a lot of injuries, then. Violent deaths"

Watson "Well, yes"

Sherlock "Bit of trouble, too, I bet"

Watson "Of course. Yes. Enough for a lifetime, far too much"

Sherlock "Want to see some more?"

Watson "Oh, God, yes" (BBC, S1, E1, 00:17:05-00:17:25).

Basically, this is where their adventure as a team begins, working on solving cases together throughout the following episodes. As we can see, both the original and modern work give the readers and viewers a very similar idea of how their relationship started.

As the story of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson evolves later in the original texts and modern adaptations, the two characters get closer to each other and develop a friendship. John Watson refers to Sherlock Holmes as a friend for example in *The Adventure of the Norwood Builder*: "Familiar as I was with my friend's methods, it was not difficult for me to follow his deductions" (Doyle, 1979:18). From this quote one can also perceive that they have spent so much time together that John Watson is able to see the deductions himself, being a useful companion to Sherlock Holmes when it comes to solving cases. Meanwhile, in the BBC adaptation, already in the very first episode Watson proves to be a useful assistance to Sherlock and proves that Sherlock is an

important person in his life. In this episode Sherlock is in a life threatening situation, but Watson is ready to step in and save his life (BBC, S1, E1, 01:20:24-01:20:44). Another important episode from which we can conclude how close Watson and Sherlock are, is the third episode from season two, namely *The Reichenbach Fall*. This episode sets after the pretence death of Sherlock and presents how much Watson has struggled with grief. In the opening scene he has difficulty saying out loud to his therapist the reason he came, which is that Sherlock, his best friend, is dead.

Watson “Mmm, and you watch telly? You *know* why I’m here”

(Groane in Watson’s voice)

Watson “I’m here because...”

Therapist “What happened, John?”

Watson “Sher...”

Therapist “You need to get it out”

Watson “My best friend...Sherlock Holmes...is dead” (BBC, S2, E3, 00:00:00-1:14).

In the following episode, the scene where Watson and his girlfriend, Mary, visit Sherlock’s grave also indicates the doctor’s misery on losing his friend (BBC, S3, E1, 00:5:00-00:5:22).

The Empty Hearse, the first episode of season three includes the scene of Sherlock’s and Watson’s reunion. Here, Watson and the public is still in the belief that Sherlock is dead. In one scene, Mary and Watson are having dinner in a restaurant, and Watson is about to propose to his girlfriend. Being distracted by his speech, he hardly notices that the waiter at their table is Sherlock himself disguised. When Watson does realise who the waiter really is, the viewers can see a violent, upset reaction. He slaps Sherlock on the face three times, and is furious with his friend.

Watson *(whisper)* “Two years”

(Watson moans and leans on the table)

Watson “I thought...you were dead...Hmm?”

(Watson starts to get angry)

Watson “Now, you let me grieve, hmm? How could you do that?”

(...)

Watson “*How?*”

(...)

Watson “*One Word*, Sherlock. That is *all* I would have needed. One word to let me know that you were alive”

Sherlock “I’ve nearly been in contact *so* many times, but...”

Sherlock “I worried that, you know, you might say something indiscreet”

Watson “What?”

Sherlock “Well, you know, let the cat out of the bag”

Watson “Oh, so this is *my* fault?!”

(...)

Watson (*shouting angrily*) “Why am I the only one who thinks that this is wrong – the only one reacting like a human being?!” (BBC, S3, E1, 00:20:32-00:22:50).

On the other hand, in Doyle’s corresponding original short story, *The Empty House*, there is much less drama for the readers. Here, similarly to the adaptation, Sherlock Holmes is disguised, however the reaction of John Watson when he realizes his friend is alive differs a lot from the television episode. He is so astonished that he faints and when he wakes up he requires an explanation from Sherlock Holmes about how it is possible that he is alive.

When I turned again Sherlock Holmes was standing smiling at me across my study table. [...] it appears that I must have fainted for the first and the last time in my life.[...] Holmes!” I cried. “Is it really you? Can it indeed be that you are alive? Is it possible that you succeeded in climbing out of that awful abyss? (Doyle, 1979: 4).

Another difference between the original and adapted version is within Sherlock Holmes’ character traits. In *The Empty House* the detective apologises for his actions: “My dear Watson,” said the well-remembered voice, “I owe you a thousand apologies. I had no idea that you would be so affected” (Doyle, 1979: 4). He also admits how much shock he has caused: “I have given you a serious shock by my unnecessarily dramatic reappearance” (Doyle, 1979 : 4). Meanwhile, in the *The Empty Hearse*, Sherlock does not try to apologise, instead he is enjoying his strange moment of coming back to life again, which gives the scene a comic element (BBC, S3, E1, 00:20:32-00:22:50). So this leads to the fact that Sherlock Holmes in the original version is a much more sincere and sympathetic character, while in the BBC series he seems to not understand how much he has hurt Watson.

As seen from above, even though they have their disputes, with time they find a way to reconcile. A milestone in the two character’s relationship can be regarded in the *The Sign of Three*, the second episode of season three. This episode is set at Watson’s and Mary’s wedding, where there are also clear indicators that Watson and Sherlock are not only flatmates or colleagues anymore, but best friends, indeed. Sherlock, being the best man, has to deliver a speech, which is unconventional in some terms, yet honest, emotional, reflecting his feeling towards their friendship.

Sherlock “The point I’m *trying* to make is that I am the most unpleasant, rude, ignorant and all-round obnoxious arsehole that anyone could possibly have the misfortune to meet. I am dismissive of the virtuous...unaware of the beautiful... and uncomprehending in the face of the happy. So if I didn’t understand I was being asked to be best man, it is because I never expected to be anybody’s best friend”

(The guest are all silent looking at Sherlock)

Sherlock “Certainly not the best friend of the bravest and kindest and wisest human being I have ever had the good fortune of knowing. John, I am a ridiculous man...redeemed only by the warmth and constancy of your friendship. But, as I’m apparently your best friend, I cannot congratulate you on your choice of companion”
(Sherlock then smiles)

Sherlock “Actually, now I *can*. Mary, when I say you deserve this man, it is the highest compliment of which I am capable. John, you have endured war, and injury, and tragic loss[...] so know this: today you sit between the woman you have made your wife and the man you have saved – in short, the two people who love you most in all this world. And I know I speak for Mary as well when I say we will *never* let you down, and we have a lifetime ahead to prove that” (BBC, S3, E2, 00:25:10-00:26:41).

Watson and the guests are overwhelmed by the speech, and the groom even expresses his gratefulness and love by giving Sherlock a hug. This is an essential scene that reveals how strong the bond is between the two characters, and we can also call this moment the peak of their friendship (BBC, S3, E2, 00:23:53-00:27:15). When it comes to the analysis of their close friendship in the original text, it is challenging to pick one part where there is such momentous event taking place that greatly signifies their friendship. In the original works of Doyle, it is general knowledge to the reader that the two main characters have a strong bond. Based on their conversations, and John Watson’s narration, the reader can see that they are kind, warm and supportive of each other, which are the signs of true friendship.

One could wonder if their relationship is healthy at all, giving the fact that these two characters are spending a lot of time together. Sharing a flat together and working together, gives very little time and opportunity for them to develop other relationships. This of course does not seem to bother Sherlock Holmes, as both in the original texts and in the adaptation he is known for his strange social habits, and prefers to spend his free time alone playing the violin, studying, or reading the paper. However, in the modern adaptation their relationship is put in the spotlight. There have been some speculation from other characters whether Sherlock Holmes and John Watson are more than ‘just’ friends, which derives from them spending the majority of their time together. These speculating assumptions gives the scenes a comic atmosphere, and the assumptions are often denied by Watson and Sherlock.

Angelo “On the house, for you *and* for your date”

Sherlock *(to John)* ”Do you want to eat?”

Watson *(to Angelo)* “I’m not his date”

Angelo “This man got me off a murder charge”

Sherlock “This is Angelo”

(...)

Angelo “I’ll get a candle for the table. It’s more romantic”

Watson “I’m not his date!” (BBC, S1, E1:00:49:23-00:49:59).

All in all John Watson is a very important character in both the original and the adapted version, and plays a great role in Sherlock Holmes’ life, not only by assisting him in different crime cases, but also by being there for him as a true friend. These character traits can be observed by the readers of Doyle’s original work, and they are also well portrayed in the BBC television series.

4.3.3 Irene Adler

In this section we are focusing on the most notorious woman in Sherlock Holmes’ life, Irene Adler. The unique relationship between Sherlock Holmes and Irene Adler gives us a better insight into Sherlock Holmes’ private life, sexual activity or inactivity. The character of Irene Adler also helps us understand the diverse roles of a woman in the Victorian age and in the modern times, as well as showing the differences between Doyle’s short story and adaptation portrayal and why the changes were necessary.

“To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. I have seldom heard him mention her under any other name. In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex.” (Doyle, 1979: 1). The description by John Watson tells a lot about Irene Adler and her prominent role in Sherlock Holmes’s life, despite the fact that she played a major role only in the short story *A Scandal in Bohemia*.

In the novel, Irene Adler is not entirely unknown to Sherlock Holmes, since the basic information of her is available in Sherlock Holmes’ “index”, a collection of data about people Sherlock has somehow encountered. According to the index, Irene Adler is a New Jersey born contralto, who performed in La Scala, Milan, became a celebrated prima donna in the Imperial Opera of Warsaw and was the former lover of von Ormstein, the King of Bohemia. As the king describes her in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, she is a “well-known adventuress”, with “the face of the most beautiful of women and the mind of the most resolute of men” (Doyle, 1979: 6). The word adventuress had quite a different meaning in Victorian times than nowadays. It was used to refer to courtesans, promiscuous women or generally a young woman who was kept and supported by a rich and

married man (Wordnik, 2017). It is not precisely known how von Ormstein meant his description of Irene Adler, but the root of their feud is a past relationship and a photo taken of the two of them. Sherlock Holmes is hired to investigate the whereabouts of the picture and steal it from the American opera singer before she can use it to threaten the king's upcoming wedding. Irene Adler, who retired from singing, lives in London and made great efforts to prevent the photo from being taken by the king.

Irene Adler is a free spirit, a working, powerful woman who owns and maintains a high standard of living, a big house in a posh part of London and does not want to adapt to the moral norms of her historical era. Irene Adler with her enviable features, like her voice and beauty and her cunning intelligence, might represent an idealistic female who owns everything what a woman can have, but for the prude Victorian society she is worthless. She earned more than a woman in her age could, however, as it was also mentioned in the novel, she gained negative attention because of her numerous love affairs and had to leave Warsaw (Pal-Lapinski, 2005).

For Sherlock Holmes, Irene Adler has always been 'The Woman'. The one who is the most beautiful and smartest of all women. Irene Adler undoubtedly had a special and unseen effect on Sherlock Holmes. It is questionable whether his admiration for Irene Adler was of romantic nature or out of professional interests. Irene Adler is the only female character and among a few of all characters who is able to intellectually challenge Sherlock Holmes (Redmond, 2002). The fact that Irene Adler is a strong, independent and highly intelligent woman and she does not only tolerate Sherlock Holmes' rudeness, but she also admires his intellectual capacity.

The BBC's modern Sherlock adaptation portrays Adler in a different way. The power and wit remains, while the old-fashioned promiscuous woman characteristic is turned into something more modern. To keep the character updated to nowadays' sexually quite liberal society, Adler became a dominatrix. Both in the short story and the modern adaptation, Adler has some royal connections. She became the dominatrix of some members of the British royal family and a security service threat, with her compromising photos and information.

In the BBC's adaptation, Adler as 'The Woman', is the notoriously intelligent and insidious femme fatale who blackmails the Royal Family with indecent photos of her and a female member of the Family. Sherlock is hired by his brother Mycroft and the MI5 to investigate the security risk, Adler, and to get her smartphone with the compromising information. The two masterminds can not defeat each other and they end up in a unique cat and mouse game (BBC, S2, E1).

Adler is the embodiment of a free and sexually liberated 21st century women, their rights, power to become what they really want to be and to reach what they want. Through the very scandalous dominatrix profession, we get an understanding of how much women's rights has changed in the past centuries. Adler's character needed this bit to preserve her eccentric nature from the original text and in one way or another to delimitate herself from the everyday women (Jeffery, 2011).

Despite the fact that both the modern and original Irene Adler is 'The Woman', the modern adaptation applies the title not as an intimate title, reserved only for Sherlock, but it is a well-known profession title. In the adaptation Adler's title is received more broadly, and is known by many more in the elite-society: 'The Woman' who takes the dominant role in humiliating and causing physical pain to her submissive clients.

In the adaptation we see different signs and allusions that can lead us to believe that there is not just a platonic relation between the private detective and Adler, but also some emotional connection. In the original Doyle short story, there is no direct evidence, except for a photo of Irene Adler kept as a souvenir by Sherlock Holmes. No real attraction can be depicted and as John Watson points it out, Sherlock Holmes is simply unable to have romantic feelings or lust (Doyle, 1979: 1).

In the episode *A Scandal in Belgravia*, the relation between the two is portrayed differently. There is an invisible, but strong sexual tension. To baffle Sherlock's deduction skills, Adler wears nothing during their first meeting (BBC, S2, E1, 00:24:14-00:26:18), but as he correctly concludes from her pupil dilation and elevated pulse, she is indeed attracted to him.

Adler "Sentiment? What are you talking about?"

Sherlock "You"

Adler "Oh dear God. Look at the poor man. You don't actually think I was interested in you? Why? Because you're the great Sherlock Holmes, the clever detective in the funny hat?"

(Sherlock steps closer to her)

Sherlock "No"

(Sherlock slowly wraps his fingers around her wrist, then leans forward, bringing his mouth close to her ear)

Sherlock "Because I took your pulse"

(Flashback)

Sherlock "Elevated, your pupils dilated" (BBC, S2, E1, 01:20:19-01:21:04).

Whether Sherlock is infatuated with Adler or not, is difficult to determine. However some of his actions indicate possible emotional and physical attraction which appears when he travels to Pakistan to rescue her from her beheading.

The attraction between Sherlock and Adler is also peculiar in the sense that she confesses to Watson that she is gay and possibly in a relationship with her assistant.

Watson “Who...Who the hell knows about Sherlock Holmes, but, for the record, if anyone out there still cares, I’m not actually gay.

Adler “Well, I *am*” (BBC, S2, E1, 00:55:15-00:55:30).

It is a perfectly new addition since in the original story Irene Adler is seemingly happy with her husband and as it is suggested, she has been intimate with several men previously (Doyle, 1979: 14). Being gay in the adaptation, can be seen as a tool symbolising Irene Adler’s unattainability as a married woman in the short story. Due to this approach, we can consider her beyond the reach of Sherlock and a possible relationship even in theory could be impossible with him. Irene Adler in the short story is cheeky and cunning, but compared to the modern Adler, she is less seductive and does not make sexual allusions. Even though her behaviour in the short story is considered to be outrageous and it is lacking the 19th century morality, she does not oppose to the era’s strict dressing requirements. Adler in the adaptation though, is clearly not shy and has no problem with being naked or being photographed while chastising her clients as dominatrix.

In the original Arthur Conan Doyle stories, we can not get any precise information on Sherlock Holmes’ relation with women. He is clearly not interested in them and shows some asexual traits. In the novel, *The Valley of Fear*, Sherlock Holmes confesses "Women have seldom been an attraction to me, for my brain has always governed my heart" (Doyle, 2017). Another hint for his possibility can be his speech in the short story, *The Adventure of The Mazarine Stone*: “I am a brain, Watson. The rest of me is a mere appendix.” (Doyle, 2014). The short story portrays the attraction between him and Irene Adler as a more intellectual connection. In the BBC’s adaptation though, the attraction is portrayed on both intellectual and physical levels. Adler only appears in one episode but in that one, she has a very crucial role, she is the woman with whom Sherlock has his first sexual intercourse, allegedly. We cannot get a clear idea about this fact, however, the creators and even Benedict Cumberbatch, the actor who portrays Sherlock Holmes in BBC’s *Sherlock*, stated that the two characters had a wild night after the rescue in Pakistan (Brog, 2014).

After analysing Irene Adler and her relation to Sherlock Holmes, we came to the conclusion that the traits discovered in the original story, such as her willfulness, self-dependency, and outrageousness are also portrayed in the adaptation. Despite some minor distinction and the difference between the classical and modern character’s profession, we agreed on the fact that Irene Adler is still that

assertive and highly intelligent woman. 'The Woman' who can compete with Sherlock Holmes and who attains his true admiration.

4.3.4 Professor Moriarty

This section of the analysis will focus on the villain character Professor Moriarty who first appears in the short story *The Adventure of The Final Problem* (1893) by Arthur Conan Doyle. We will compare the character traits portrayed between the short story and the adaptation in order to understand the changes made between the two versions.

The Adventure of The Final Problem is narrated by John Watson. The narration is told from a retrospective standpoint of the events. He explains that he feels compelled to tell the story of Sherlock Holmes' last adventure and introduces the events leading up to Sherlock Holmes' death: "It is with a heavy heart that I take up my pen to write these the last words in which I shall ever record the singular gifts by which my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes was distinguished" (Doyle, 1979: 145). The urgency in which John Watson feels he needs to tell the truth, is driven by the information Professor Moriarty's brother, Colonel James Moriarty, has told the public. "My hand has been forced, however, by the recent letters in which Colonel James Moriarty defends the memory of his brother, and I have no choice but to lay the facts before the public exactly as they occurred." (Doyle, 1979: 145).

Arthur Conan Doyle's character Professor Moriarty is famously known as the archenemy of Sherlock Holmes. However, Professor Moriarty only appears in two short stories. Meanwhile the character of Moriarty has in general come to be one of the most prominent figures when discussing Doyle's Sherlock universe. In the BBC adaptation Moriarty's role is significantly larger and has been expanded throughout several seasons of the show. He can be referred as a palimpsest, which is applied to characters who have been given a more significant role in an adaptation (Oxford Dictionaries, 2017).

In the short story, the information on Professor Moriarty is provided through a dialogue between the two main characters, John Watson and Sherlock Holmes. During their conversation, Sherlock Holmes continues to explain Professor Moriarty as a "[...] man pervades London, and no one has heard of him. That is what puts him on a pinnacle in the records of crime[...]" (Doyle, 1979: 145).

Due to John Watson's lack of knowledge on Professor Moriarty, he represents the readers by seeking more information on him.

Moreover, in the short story Sherlock Holmes describes Professor Moriarty as a person who comes from a wealthy family, who has received a great education and not to mention, an extraordinary career as a professor in mathematics. In addition to this, he is also described as having a brilliant mind and therefore referred to as a genius (Doyle, 1979: 146). However, Professor Moriarty as mentioned previously, is described as the "Napoleon of crime" (Doyle, 1979: 147) which is a term that refers to his involvement in criminal activities. Nonetheless, Professor Moriarty never partakes in the criminal activities. His role consists of leading the organisation that executes his plans. As mentioned in the short story, his involvement in the crimes committed can not be traced back to him. "He sits motionless, like a spider in the center of its web, but that web has a thousand radiations, and he knows well every quiver of each of them. He does little himself. He only plans." (Doyle, 1979: 147). His lack of involvement in criminal activities could be explained by his social status as a professor in the Victorian era, however his reasoning might be his intellect and his ability to manipulate others to engage instead. Therefore, Professor Moriarty might not have any incentives to be physically involved. In the adaptation, Sherlock's self-proclaimed title as a consulting detective is in contrast to the title of Moriarty as a consulting criminal.

Professor Moriarty's archetype in the short story is the villain, however, the reader is provided with background story on how his involvement in crime came about. This is exemplified in the following lines:

[...] But the man had hereditary tendencies of the most diabolical kind. A criminal strain ran in his blood, which, instead of being modified, was increased and rendered infinitely more dangerous by his extraordinary mental powers (Doyle, 1979: 146).

This illustrates that Professor Moriarty was genetically predisposed to become the villain that he is described to be. It also suggests that it could have been avoided if someone had intervened.

Professor Moriarty's huge intellect also shaped him into the person he has become. Additionally, Professor Moriarty is the antagonist in the story, since he is the most complex and difficult rival of Sherlock Holmes. Due to his intellect, he has managed to foresee every step Sherlock Holmes has taken in order to find him and thus managed to avoid him. "[...] Never have I risen to such a height, and never have I been so hard pressed by an opponent. He cut deep, and yet I just undercut him[...]" (Doyle, 1979: 147). Furthermore, the element that distinguishes Professor Moriarty apart from the other villains Sherlock Holmes has faced, is that he is an evil genius who is equal to

Sherlock Holmes in terms of intelligence and deduction abilities: “[...] that this man may be taken as being quite on the same intellectual plane as myself[...].” (Doyle, 1979: 151).

While Sherlock Holmes acknowledges how much of a challenge it will be to take Professor Moriarty down, he feels that it is his job to make sure that a person like him does not go unopposed:

[...] if I could beat that man, if I could free society of him, I should feel that my own career had reached its summit [...] But I could not rest, Watson, I could not sit quiet in my chair, if I thought that such a man as Professor Moriarty were walking the streets of London unchallenged (Doyle, 1979: 146).

The BBC adaptation *Sherlock* expanded on the character of Jim Moriarty, so that he appears in all four seasons of the show. A noticeable difference is the nationality of the actor portraying Moriarty, since he has a Irish accent. Whereas in the short story there is no mention of Professor Moriarty being Irish. The adapters have maintained some of the recognisable features from the original character, such as his intellect, criminal tendencies, and his lack of remorse, though, increasingly enhanced. In both versions, he is depicted as being highly intelligent and as a criminal mastermind, and as Sherlock Holmes’ biggest antagonist. In the episode *A Study in Pink*, the viewers get a brief and indirect introduction to the character of Moriarty the following way:

Sherlock “Okay, tell me this: your sponsor. Who was it? The one who told you about me, my ‘fan’. I want a name”

Cab driver “No”

Sherlock “You’re dying, but there’s still time to hurt you. Give me a name”
(*Sherlock steps his foot on the cab driver’s shoulder. Cab driver gasps in pain*)

Sherlock “A name”

(*Cab driver is in pain*)

Sherlock “Now”

(*Still cab driver gasps in pain*)

Sherlock (furiously) “The NAME!”

Cab driver (agonised) “MORIARTY!” (BBC, S1, E1: 1:21:00-1:22:00).

The information presented to the viewers about Moriarty is that he is a criminal sponsor to the cabdriver and furthermore it has been implied that he is also a fan of Sherlock. The character makes his first physical appearance in the episode *The Great Game*. The viewers also learn Moriarty is good at manipulating people around him, especially Sherlock. When Moriarty and Sherlock first meet, it is under the false pretence of Moriarty being Molly’s boyfriend. In the interaction, Sherlock deduces Moriarty to be a harmless office worker who is secretly gay, which Sherlock confirms by

showing the note with a telephonenumber that Moriarty has left behind (BBC, S1, E3: 00:18:15-00:19:46). It is not until later in the episode *The Great Game* when Sherlock realises who he truly is. This illustrates Moriarty's abilities to deceive Sherlock in his deduction, an ability he relies heavily on. Furthermore, Moriarty enjoys taunting and creating puzzles for Sherlock to solve, while putting the people Sherlock loves in danger in the television series, (BBC, S1, E3: 1:21:05-1:21:20). Moriarty is depicted to be more criminally insane than in the original story.

Moriarty "No, don't be obvious. I mean, I'm gonna kill you anyway some day. I don't wanna rush it, though. I'm saving it up for something special. No-no-no-no-no. If you don't stop prying, I'll *burn* you"

(Moriarty looks Sherlock up and down)

Moriarty "I'll burn the *heart* out of you" (BBC, S1, E3: 1:25:33-1:25:55).

In the episode *The Reichenbach Fall*, Moriarty has laid out a final plan for Sherlock to solve, and their very last conversation looks like the following:

Moriarty "Naah. You talk big. Naah. You're ordinary. You're ordinary – you're on the side of the angels"

Sherlock "Oh, I may be on the side of the angels, but don't think for one second that I am one of them"

Moriarty "No, you're not"

Moriarty (*softly*) "I see. You're not ordinary. No. You're me"

Moriarty "You're me! Thank you!" (BBC, S2, E3: 1:16:00-1:16:55).

Realising how similar they truly are, Moriarty finds solace in this, and soon after shoots himself in the head. Moriarty's death in the adaptation is different than in the original short story. In *The Adventure of The Final Problem* Professor Moriarty ends up in a physical fight with Sherlock Holmes, and falls to his death in Reichenbach Hill (Doyle, 1979: 154-156). In addition to this Moriarty plays a role in generating more of Sherlock's heroic features such as his loyalty, devotion and love for his friends. Moriarty does this by posing as a threat for Watson and Mrs. Hudson safeties which motivates Sherlock even further to defeat him (BBC, S2, E3: 1:27:57-1:13:45).

To sum up the character of Moriarty represents the physical manifestation of an obstacle Sherlock Holmes has to overcome, as the protagonist of the story. Additionally Moriarty's role as the villain is set to challenge the brilliant detective Sherlock Holmes.

5. Discussion

The following section will provide a discussion concerning the results from the analysis. We will discuss significant aspects that, possibly, can lead us in the direction of answering the project's problem definition. The aspects we have chosen to discuss are heroism, antiheroism, and adaptation. Within the discussion of these topics, we will reflect upon the relation between hero and antihero and how the character of Sherlock Holmes can be placed within this relation. Moreover, we will discuss the need for an adaptation in terms of today's society.

Based on the analysis, we can determine that the character of Sherlock Holmes in the modern adaptation has many similarities with the definition of a hero as well as antihero. Therefore, one could argue that the character is placed somewhere in between being a hero and an antihero. He possesses a heroic spirit, however, lacks in morality. Even though the character holds traits from both terms, we find it interesting to discuss to which degree Sherlock Holmes is a hero, and to which degree he represents an antihero. By doing so, we can understand whether the original Sherlock Holmes reflects more of a hero compared to the modern Sherlock Holmes and vice versa.

Sherlock Holmes, highly intelligent, cleverly intricate, proficient in observation, the man of mysteries who investigates and solves the most twisted cases, is he a hero? Or Sherlock, a high-functioning sociopath, repeat offender, who breaks the law without hesitation to solve a case, a supreme investigator who solves cases for his own entertainment, is he an antihero?

In this project we are investigating the hero and antihero traits the character Sherlock Holmes possesses in the original short stories and novel, as well as in the BBC's modern adaptation. We found it very interesting and beneficial for our research to look at the possibly disregarded and sometimes enhanced features of Sherlock in the adaptation compared to Conan Doyle's stories. The changes that might occur in the portrayal of the character can lead us to a better understanding of the differences in eras, societal norms and their approach on heroism or antiheroism.

We found a lot of similarities and differences in the portrayal of Sherlock in our literary and visual materials. We think that the character of the private detective reflects on the contemporary needs of a saviour figure. In the Victorian era, where murder, rape, robbery and inadequate living and health conditions were part of the everyday life, Sherlock Holmes might have been a typical hero. He was

the archetypal saviour figure, who helped people and served justice when the police was incapable of providing safety for the citizens. Based on the attributes that we have presented in our analysis we realised that the 19th century Sherlock had more heroic features than antiheroic. For the average people, Sherlock Holmes was a well-mannered, highly educated man who believed in the importance of science and the development of technology. It is never mentioned in the short stories and novels, but it is very likely that he came from a higher social class and his family was wealthy enough to see to his education. Despite his social background, he undertook cases of poor people without demanding payment and sometimes turned down the cases of aristocrats, depending on how interesting the case was. Sherlock Holmes actually did something for the people who, at that time, could not rely on the police. However, this act of kindness alone is not enough to categorise him as a hero, but due to the fact that Sherlock Holmes possesses other heroic traits such as being benevolent, beneficial for the society, and being the embodiment of justice, he is considered a hero.

In the Victorian era, religion had an important role, even among scientists and philosophers. Holmes in this sense fitted completely and was a “good person” for the devout society. In several short stories Holmes proves his generosity in the name of God. In *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* the detective solves a murder case, and when he realises that the murderer is an old man who was blackmailed into the murder, he even says that he is not entitled to send an elder to prison, and that we are all equal in front of God who decides on the punishment (Doyle, 1979: 57). Being religious does not necessarily make someone a good person, but the way Holmes acted in that situation shows that he was gracious. Moreover, it also depicts that he has a higher level of morals which do categorise him as a hero, even though he still possesses ‘negatives’ traits. These ‘negative’ traits in the literary work are shown by his drug abuse, eccentric and antisocial behaviour, which has been enhanced in the adaptation. Despite having these negative characteristics, they are not significant enough to classify him as an antihero. However, the portrayal of Sherlock in the adaptation seemingly chooses to enhance and highlight the ‘negative’ traits, thus depicting Sherlock with more antiheroic features.

As we learnt from the analysis, in the adaptation the creators focused more on Sherlock’s eccentricity, and enhanced his ill-tempered and moody personality features as well as his imponderability. We believe that in the original stories the darker sides of Sherlock Holmes’ personality were disregarded and the good ones were highlighted in order to present a hero, a hope for the society. In the series though, it seems that the opposite phenomena has occurred. The flawed

sides of Holmes are emphasised, such as his moodiness, arrogance and rudeness, and these characteristics give a very entertaining and funny aspect to the show. It is disputable why he is portrayed in this way, but one can wonder whether these exaggerated properties make his character more interesting and relatable. He differentiates himself from ordinary people on the level of intelligence, but we also feel closer to him with his foibles. The modern Sherlock seems less of a hero on one hand, while on the other hand he is portrayed as the mastermind who saves many people and solves almost impossible cases. We have to mention that the modern Sherlock has access to the higher society through his brother Mycroft, since Mycroft sometimes hires him on cases. Another point worth mentioning, is the complete devotion Sherlock expresses towards Watson and his fiancé Mary in the the episode *The Sign of Three* (BBC, S3, E2) and *His Last Vow* (BBC, S3, E4). In the latter episode, Sherlock kills a man in order to protect Watson and Mary, thus complicating the defining process of Sherlock as a hero or antihero. Killing a man in cold blood, even to save a friend or loved one, is that despicable or justified?

On the streets of 21st century London there is a prominently smaller need for a hero figure, while there is a bigger necessity for such a character, who has access to the higher circles, closer to the government and has a free hand in state security issues and in the fight against terrorism. The reason could be the differences in the environment and society. Nowadays the police is more capable of serving justice. The public safety is an existing term and for us, the contemporary people, a hero must be more than a skilled private detective. We still want our heroes to save our lives, defend our country and avoid future world wars, but we also want them to be more human, and relatable.

The original Sherlock Holmes character has been through a process of modernisation, which has had an impact on how he is perceived in modern time. The character is often described by his heroic abilities in solving mysteries, and discovering the masterminds behind the crimes. Although, these traits have been kept in recent time adaptations, an interesting twist to Sherlock's personality has been enhanced, namely, his sociopathic tendencies that reflect his complex personality. In the original stories, Watson does narrate Sherlock Holmes' unusual habits, such as his anti-social behaviour and reclusiveness, which in modern context could be interpreted as sociopathic behaviour. However, the overall narration in the original stories is most concerned about Sherlock Holmes' heroic actions that benefit society instead of his personal issues. In this way, the image of Sherlock Holmes as a Victorian hero is kept in the spotlight, while his flaws are concealed. The

narration therefore has a major impact on how a character is perceived. From John Watson's first-person narration in the original stories, the character of Sherlock Holmes is portrayed mainly as a hero than an antihero. The reason for this might be because Watson to some extent is Sherlock Holmes' companion and friend, therefore being biased in his narration. John Watson is one of the only characters that has personal ties to him, and he can therefore see beyond the flaws that Sherlock has. John Watson in the original stories therefore narrates and perceives Sherlock Holmes as a hero because Sherlock rescues people from different segments of society by solving their problems without the expectation of getting credit for his work. In this way, the original Sherlock Holmes is presented as an archetypical hero.

When looking at Sherlock as an archetypical hero in the modern adaptation some further factors need to be considered. One could argue that even though Sherlock Holmes is beneficial on a societal level, this does not mean that we should overlook the earlier mentioned personal traits that classify him as an antihero. In the modern adaptation of Sherlock, his personal issues such as his sociopathic tendencies and his drug habits are presented. These 'negative' traits are more in the spotlight in the modern adaptation than in the original stories. When considering this, we could discuss how selfless the modern Sherlock really is compared to the original Sherlock Holmes. In the television series Sherlock's intentions in helping the police with the cases is difficult to assess. One could claim that he is offering his help for his own sake. He wants to be challenged on a psychological level. As a sociopath, he needs something that occupies him and challenges him on all sorts of aspects. Most importantly, he needs to solve these cases in order to have a sense of accomplishment and to feel superior. His psychological needs and sociopathic tendencies that leads him in the direction of engaging in different cases – and not the fact that he is selfless and values others' needs before his own. Therefore, Sherlock is only interested in helping the police and the society, not only to accommodate their needs, but certainly also to accommodate his own in order to relieve boredom. Considering these aspect, the modern Sherlock character is more likely to be classified as an antihero. The adapters of the original Sherlock Holmes stories have successfully enhanced the character's antiheroic traits in a modern setting. This have resulted in the portrayal of an antihero more than a hero. So even though the character does have similarities with both of the definitions - hero and antihero- we see the traits of an antihero is depicted more greatly in the modern adaptation than the traits of a hero.

Besides the enhancements of the different character traits of Sherlock Holmes, we find it necessary to discuss the topic of adaptation in order to understand why there is a need for adapting literary work into visual media such as a film and television series.

Since the publication of *A Study in Scarlet* in 1887, the character of Sherlock Holmes is one of the most famous and adored characters, so much in fact that he is the most adapted literary character until today (Guinness World Records, 2017). The story of Sherlock Holmes has been adapted over 200 times in film and television (Meslow, 2011). The character of Sherlock Holmes has been able to set himself apart from all the other detectives in literature, television, and film. However, this raises the question of how the Victorian detective, from the 19th century has managed to maintain his popularity throughout 130 years? Adapting the Sherlock Holmes adventures has played a vital role in preserving the popularity of the character. The popularity has only seemed to increase over the years, which can be tied to the phenomenal success of the BBC television show *Sherlock* from 2010. The television show was so widespread that it managed to surpass the queen of England's Christmas speech (BBC News, 2017).

One could argue that the popularity of Arthur Conan Doyle's character originates from the notion of Sherlock Holmes being ahead of his time by using forensic science and methods to solve cases, which were not yet available for the regular police in the Victorian era.

Another reason for the Sherlock Holmes stories for becoming such a common material to adopt can derive from the concept of nostalgia, in the sense that it reminds the audience of their first encounter with the character Sherlock Holmes in literature. It brings them back to their own personal memories.

In addition to this, another reason many are fascinated by the Sherlock Holmes character comes from the fact that he represents an archetype with darker traits. His character is complex since while trying to help solving cases, he struggles with his own morals. Moreover, his archetype represents the 'detective hero' that often has been adapted into various other visual media where his archetype has become more of an antihero.

After discussing the relevance of Sherlock Holmes's adaptation, it is also important to think about adaptations in a bigger perspective and try to find out why there is a need for adaptation in the first place. In the recent years, it has become more and more popular to turn literature onto the screen.

Many novels have been adapted by screenwriters and made into successful blockbusters and therefore made the original form of the story, most times a novel, more popular than before the new production came out. Often these novels were not well-known to the public or at least much less widespread than before their adaptations were made. The authors of these literary works consequently also receive more recognition, once their names appear on the screen. It is interesting to consider what the reason could be for such productions to become so widely-viewed, just like the BBC television show, *Sherlock*. When it comes to adaptation that deals with transforming a genre from literature to film or television series, there are numerous aspects that make a difference for the consumer. In literature, the reader's imagination is put to the test, as it is the reader's fantasy that is constantly working to picture the words written on the pages. It is up to the reader, how the characters and settings look like based on the description of the author. Meanwhile, a film or television show gives an already made picture for the viewers' minds, taking away the opportunity to use their own vision. It is the director that has the control over the viewer's imagination, because it is mainly his or her ideas that determine how a scene looks, and which actors play the characters of the work. This means that while watching a motion picture one has to think far less than when reading a book. One can argue that today's society sees this as a positive factor, since they can unwind on the couch in front of the screen after a hard day at work. Most of us are always on the rush, our days are packed, therefore many of us pick a freetime activity that requires as little effort as possible, which is part of the reason adaptations are so popular. They provide the well-needed entertainment to the audience in a way that literature can not. Furthermore, a film or television series has the ability to tell the story in a much shorter time, than the audience would read its corresponding original text. Reading a book can take weeks or even months for many people, but the adaptation can wrap up the same story in a couple of hours. This means that the aspect of time also plays a very important role when it comes to the popularity of adaptations.

Sherlock Holmes is undoubtedly a character that people seem to adore even today, and several adaptations prove that. While some may be unsatisfied with them steering too far off the original track, in our opinion the adaptations are beneficial because they help maintain and keep the literary work alive. The BBC's *Sherlock* adaptation brings entertainment to many people's lives by preserving the famous characters of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson.

6. Conclusion

After carrying out the analysis and discussing the most important points of Sherlock Holmes' character considering the aspects heroism and antiheroism, we are going to make a conclusion to the project in the following section.

In the analysis we chose to focus on different characters in order to understand the significant role they play in connection to Sherlock Holmes. The character analysis of John Watson, Irene Adler, and Professor Moriarty revealed different character traits that helped us classify and determine how the character of Sherlock Holmes has evolved from being a Victorian hero to a modern antihero. In the characterisation of John Watson we discovered that Sherlock does care about other people, and values his friendship with Watson to a high degree, which especially comes through towards the end of the series. In the analysis of Irene Adler, we unravelled that the character of Irene Adler has been greatly enhanced in terms of sexuality and her outrageous behaviour. The characterisation of Adler illustrates some of the hidden sides of Sherlock such as his inexperience with the opposite sex and his ideas on the entire notion of love. In the characterisation of Professor Moriarty, we discovered that his role is to stand against Sherlock as an archenemy, which is encouraging Sherlock to become smarter and to essentially defeat him.

The BBC series *Sherlock* has modernised the original Sherlock Holmes character by Arthur Conan Doyle in terms of character traits and personal appearance. The creators of the television series have chosen to enhance or alter some of Sherlock Holmes' original character traits, which results in a different perception of the character in present time. In *A Study in Scarlet* the reader discovers Sherlock's peculiar personality and drug habits, however, this is not something that overrules his heroic traits. He is described as a character that possesses high morality, showing benevolence to the poor and is truly beneficial for the society due to his ability to solve mysteries and crimes. In this way, the heroic traits of Sherlock Holmes dominates the narration in the original stories instead of his other 'negative' traits. The heroic traits have been kept in the adaptation *A Study in Pink*. Modern Sherlock, like the original one, has the will and courage to investigate challenging cases, therefore he is a valuable member of the society. However, the creators have decided to highlight his flaws, therefore we can conclude that he is less of a heroic character. We found out that his arrogance, eccentricity, lack of inhibitions and morality have been enhanced, turning him into a modern antihero. Moreover his drug habits and antisocial behaviour in the adaptation also classify him as an antihero instead of a Victorian hero. Therefore, the original character of Sherlock Holmes

has been through a process of modernisation where focus is placed on his personal struggles as well as his societal accomplishments. The viewers can gain entertainment from his often outrageous behaviour, meanwhile they can admire his skills of deduction that make him a contributing member of society. The series *Sherlock* has successfully interpreted the iconic figure of Sherlock Holmes, through the added enhancements that turns him into a modern antihero.

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