

**The Victorian Middle Class, Imperialist Attitude and  
Women in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes  
Adventures**

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Pro gradu –tutkielmassani tarkastelen miten brittiläiseen imperialismiin kytkeytyvä menneisyyden taakka ja rikollinen menneisyys sekä naisen asema, naiset ja avioliitto esitetään Arthur Conan Doyle'n Sherlock Holmes –tarinoissa sekä miten viktoriaanisen ajan keskiluokan arvot ja ideologia heijastuvat näissä kysymyksissä. Analyysini kohteena ovat Arthur Conan Doyle'n vuosien 1887 ja 1894 välillä kirjoittamat Sherlock Holmes –tarinat.

Tutkimuskysymyksessäni pyrin vastaamaan ensinnäkin siihen, miten imperialistinen ja/tai kolonialistinen asenne ilmenee tarinoissa. Tämän lisäksi tutkin miten rikokset tai jotkin muut viktoriaanisen keskiluokan arvoista poikkeavat menneisyyteen liittyvät rikkomukset tai poikkeamat yhdistyvät kolonialistiseen menneisyyteen. Toiseksi pyrin vastaamaan siihen, miten naiset sekä naisten asema mielletään yhteneväiseksi miesten omistaman ja hallitseman yksityisomaisuuden kanssa ja miten naisiin ja avioliittoon lähes poikkeuksetta yhdistetään raha; lisäksi pohdin myös kuinka tietyt naishahmot Sherlock Holmes –tarinoissa poikkeavat viktoriaanisesta ihanteellisesta naiskuvasta. Tutkielmassani käsittelen myös lyhyesti sellaisia käsitteitä kuten salapoliisikirjallisuuden genre sekä ideologia, keskiluokka, viktoriaaninen yhteiskunta ja näiden suhde salapoliisikirjallisuuteen.

Sekä salapoliisikirjallisuuden genren muodostumisen 1800-luvulla, että Sherlock Holmesin saavuttaman suosion katsotaan johtuvan siitä, että järkipäisyyteen ja johdonmukaisuuteen havainnointinsa perustava etsivä loi illusion siitä, että jatkuvassa muutoksentallassa olevaa yhteiskuntaa voidaan kontrolloida ja luoda siihen vakautta. Pyrin osoittamaan, että Sherlock Holmes –tarinat pyrkivät määrittelemään mitä viktoriaaninen keskiluokka on, missä sen rajat ovat ja millaiset henkilöt siihen kuuluvat. Tämä tapahtuu tarinoissa kriminalisoimalla ja ”toiseuttamalla” tietyt yhteiskuntaluokat, henkilöt ja toimintatavat. Sherlock Holmes tehtävänä on paljastaa ne, jotka eivät sovi viktoriaanisen keskiluokan ihanteisiin ja ideologiaan, ja erityisesti ne, jotka väärin motiivein ja joko rikollisilla tai muuten keskiluokan ihanteita vastaan sotivin keinoin ovat omaksuneet keskiluokkaisen aseman, sekä ne, jotka rikollisin keinon estävät keskiluokkaisten ihanteiden toteutumisen. Huomattavaa kuitenkin on, että kaikki tarinoiden ”rikollisista” eivät ole rikollisia lain tai aina edes yhteiskunnan moraalisaantöjen mukaan, vaan joissain tapauksissa epäillyn rikoksen takaa paljastuu väärinkäsitys.

Avainsanat: ideologia, imperialismi, keskiluokka, menneisyyden taakka, naiset, Sherlock Holmes, viktoriaaninen aika

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## 1. Introduction

In this thesis my aim is to examine how the underlying ideology of Victorian middle class is represented in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes adventures. Derek Longhurst argues in "Sherlock Holmes: Adventures of an English Gentleman 1887-1894" that Holmes stories revolve around two main themes: guilty, usually colonial, past history and women on the marriage market.<sup>1</sup> During the nineteenth century Britain, middle class was in a constant state of flux. There was uncertainty on how to define middle class, what were its values and who were part of it. Moreover, Marxist literary theory maintains that a writer's social class and its prevailing ideology influence the writing of a member of that class, in other words, writer is seen as formed by his or her social context and sometimes the writer may not even know what he or she is revealing in the text.<sup>2</sup> What I try to do is to show that the adventures attempt to draw a line between respectable middle class, that is, the representatives of Arthur Conan Doyle's own social class and the primary audience of his writings, and those who are not considered to be part of this group, in other words, the other classes and the ones who challenge the sanctity of Victorian middle-class values and transgress their rules and codes. As a theoretical frame I will mainly be relying on Marxist criticism. I will be reading the Sherlock Holmes adventures as a manifestation of Victorian middle class, firstly, to establish its position as a hegemonic group in relation to the other groups in the stories, and secondly, as products of a certain class that seeks to validate and impose its ideology and morality not only to the subordinated classes, but also to the class itself.

Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle (1859-1930) was born in Edinburgh in Scotland and studied to become a doctor at the Edinburgh University. During his studies significant changes were taking place, not only in society, but also in the minds of the people towards

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Longhurst, "Sherlock Holmes: Adventures of an English Gentleman 1887-1894," *Gender, Genre and Narrative Pleasure*, ed. Derek Longhurst (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989) 53.

<sup>2</sup> Peter, Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) 158.

science and scientific ideas. He was part of the new generation that mostly ignored the theological implications on their work and lifestyle and instead relied on empiricism and expertise that defied the old conventions. This was called as “scientific bohemia,”<sup>3</sup> and on this tenet Doyle based the methods of Sherlock Holmes, creating a scientific, modern detective. After graduation Doyle set up a small practice. The practice turned out to be an unsuccessful one and left him plenty of time to pursue his literary ambitions. The first Sherlock Holmes adventure, *A Study in Scarlet*, appeared in 1887 and was followed by *The Sign of Four* in 1890. *The Sign of Four* turned out to be an enormous success and Doyle began to produce Sherlock Holmes short stories that were published in *The Strand* magazine. *The Strand* was mainly aimed at the white-collar audience of London and their families. The magazine oriented towards the family and respectable success in life and its contents reflected the bourgeois sentimental morality: there were biographies of successful men, stories about courage and adventure, popularised features on advancements in technology and science, and sections for housewives and children.<sup>4</sup> Although Sherlock Holmes adventures were primarily aimed at the middle-class audience, they found a large readership among other classes as well.

Much of the popularity of Sherlock Holmes adventures has been attributed to the fact that the adventures address some of the issues that occupied the minds of the Victorians in the increasingly fragmented society, such as the Empire, the woman question and the problems caused by the urbanisation. Several critics have observed the relationship between detective fiction and class. For example, Stephen Knight has studied the relationship of class and detective fiction in his book *Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction*; he sees a clear connection between the structure of the story and the ideology of the audience that consumes it,<sup>5</sup> and Rosemary Jann argues that by reading the external signs of the body, Sherlock Holmes

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<sup>3</sup> Charles J. Rzepka, *Detective Fiction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005) 117.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Knight, *Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1980) 70.

<sup>5</sup> Knight, *Form and Ideology* 2.

defines what it is to be a Victorian middle-class person.<sup>6</sup> Lesli J. Favor notes that imperialism and the woman question are central themes not only in Sherlock Holmes adventures, but also in all of Arthur Conan Doyle's writings.<sup>7</sup> Jasmine Yong Hall suggests that the role of the female clients in Sherlock Holmes adventures is to establish him as "a rational detective" and "a powerful, patriarchal hero."<sup>8</sup> Jon Thompson has studied how the experience of empire and imperialism are represented in British and American crime fiction; in his discussion of Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes, he reads Doyle's detective fiction as a manifestation of *fin-de-siècle* Victorian mass culture of imperialism.<sup>9</sup> Thompson relies heavily to the second Sherlock Holmes novel in his analysis, *The Sign of Four*, and as a matter of fact, when discussing imperialism and colonialism in Holmes adventures, critics have paid much attention especially to this particular novel. For instance, Christopher Keep and Don Randall see a connection between Sherlock Holmes's drug abuse in *The Sign of Four* and the Indian Mutiny of 1857; according to Keep and Randall, the body and health of the detective is as much threatened as the body and health of the Empire,<sup>10</sup> while Lawrence Frank sees the novel as one participant in the construction of the image the Victorians had of India and the female body.<sup>11</sup>

John Cawelti states in *Adventure, Mystery and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* that formulaic literature, such as detective fiction, is a cultural product that in turn presumably has some kind of an influence on the culture that has produced it.<sup>12</sup> He

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<sup>6</sup> Rosemary Jann, "Sherlock Holmes Codes the Social Body," *ELH* 57.3 (1990): 692.

<sup>7</sup> Lesli J. Favor, "The Foreign and the Female in Arthur Conan Doyle: Beneath the Candy Coating," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 43.4 (2000): 398.

<sup>8</sup> Jasmine Yong Hall, "Ordering the Sensational: Sherlock Holmes and the Female Gothic," *Studies in Short Fiction* 28 (1991): 295.

<sup>9</sup> Jon Thompson, *Fiction, Crime, and Empire: Clues to Modernity and Postmodernism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993) 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> Christopher Keep, and Don Randall, "Addiction, Empire and Narrative in Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of the Four*," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 32.2 (1999): 208.

<sup>11</sup> Lawrence Frank, "Dreaming the Medusa: Imperialism, Primitivism, and Sexuality in Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*," *Signs* 22.1 (1996): 80.

<sup>12</sup> John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976) 20.

suggests four interrelated hypotheses about the relationship between formulaic literature and the culture that produces and consumes it: firstly, Cawelti suggests that formulaic stories confirm the existing conventional views and thus help to maintain them. Secondly, formulaic literature harmonises the tension and ambiguities that spring from the conflicting interests of different groups or values. Thirdly, formulas enable the readers to explore the fantasy between the permitted and the forbidden and to experience it in a controlled way, and finally, literary formulas allow the culture to integrate changes and new elements into the structures of its stories.<sup>13</sup> Based on Cawelti's thesis, one may presume that the wide popularity of Arthur Conan Doyle's hero was based on the idea that Sherlock Holmes, and detective fiction in general, brought a sense of stability for the Victorian middle class that was preoccupied with its newly established hegemonic position in society, and the belief that everything could be explained and controlled in society that was going through a rapid process of modernisation. By making a hero to detect any deviation and transgression through his practically omnipotent deductive<sup>14</sup> skills, Sherlock Holmes adventures reject the values and actions that are not permitted and reaffirm the prevalent values and morality of the hegemonic group.

The concept of detective fiction, however, is difficult to define. Critics have not been unanimous in trying to define the detective story and how it differs from genres close to it, namely crime story, thriller, mystery, adventure story, spy story etc. Each critic seems to have his or her own definition. The only two preconditions for detective fiction everyone agrees on are that there should be a problem and that an amateur or professional detective should solve the problem through processes of deduction.<sup>15</sup> The majority of critical studies on the genre during the past few decades has employed the term 'crime fiction' to classify the genre and

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<sup>13</sup> Cawelti 35-36.

<sup>14</sup> Rzepka (2005, 16) notes that in many cases in detective fiction the detective's 'deduction' is in fact 'induction.' Inductive logic relies on the inferring of conclusion from empirical evidence, whereas deductive logic relies on inferring conclusions from indisputable premises or axioms. In detective fiction, however, these two forms of logic are rarely distinguished, and in this thesis I will follow this same practice.

<sup>15</sup> Julian Symons, *Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel: A History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972) 9.

detective fiction, the whodunit etc. as its sub-genres.<sup>16</sup> The widest definition is that all stories that deal with murder, crime or solving puzzles can be categorized as crime fiction. Stephen Knight, on the other hand, makes a clear difference between crime and detective fiction.<sup>17</sup> In crime fiction the focus is on the criminal; the reader already knows who has committed the crime and is allowed to follow the criminal's emotions.<sup>18</sup> In detective fiction, however, the solving of the crimes is important. In this thesis, by 'detective fiction' or 'detective story' I will be referring to Charles J. Rzepka's use of the term. Rzepka uses 'detective fiction' "to refer to any story that contains a major character undertaking the investigation of a mysterious crime or similar transgression."<sup>19</sup>

Julian Symons has identified an ideological strand in Victorian crime fiction that deals with detectives as protectors of society or as intellectual Supermen. This began with Edgar Allan Poe and was later developed by Wilkie Collins and Emile Gaboriau, and reached its apex in 1890s with Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes.<sup>20</sup> The honour of being the first detective story is often credited to Edgar Allan Poe's (1809-1849) "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", which was published in 1841.<sup>21</sup> Poe created a new literary genre and his detective Dupin became the template of the 'genius detective' for crime writers and detectives that have been created after him. The genius detective is invariably described as a reasoning and observing machine and a less brilliant friend or a colleague who acts as a foil and a narrator of the stories often accompanies him.<sup>22</sup> Knight calls Sherlock Holmes the detective apotheosis. Sherlock Holmes combines the features that had been slowly emerging through the nineteenth century: "a detective who is highly intelligent, essentially moral, somewhat elitist, all-knowing, disciplinary in knowledge and skills, energetic, eccentric, yet also in touch with the

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<sup>16</sup> John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2005) 1-2.

<sup>17</sup> Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 146.

<sup>18</sup> Knight, *Crime Fiction 1800-2000* 125.

<sup>19</sup> Rzepka 12.

<sup>20</sup> Symons 238.

<sup>21</sup> See e.g. Scaggs 19; Symons 33.

<sup>22</sup> Scaggs 39.



ordinary people who populate the stories.”<sup>23</sup> Earlier the rogue, who was portrayed as “the sympathetic victim of a repressive legal system,” had been the central character in stories that dealt with crime, but as the middle class secured its dominant position in society, the detective became the central figure and consequently, a new genre developed. Ronald R. Thomas maintains that the change of the literary hero from a Romantic rogue to a detective protecting bourgeois values indicates a moment of social and political transition from the ‘age of revolution’ to the more conservative period of middle class ascendancy and controlled democratic reform.<sup>24</sup> However, the wide array of professions and the differences in their income and standard of life the middle classes were able to maintain, makes the concept of middle class difficult to define and to draw the clear distinction between middle class and other classes and between the subclasses within the middle class.

The development of the term ‘class’ was a consequence of the attempt to understand some of the major upheavals of the period 1780-1848, such as the radical ideas of the French Revolution, industrialisation, the rapid growth of population, the enclosure movement and as a result of these, urbanisation. In the old feudal society each person had had their allotted place and was related to every other by the duty appropriate to their rank, but in modern society the place in society was determined also by monetary connection.<sup>25</sup> Classes depend on the economic differences, inequalities in possession and in control of material resources between groupings of individuals. The Marxist theory equals class with economics: ownership and control of capital and property are viewed as the primary force behind the inequality between classes. One class, the bourgeoisie, owns the means of production while

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<sup>23</sup> Knight *Crime Fiction 1800-2000*, 55.

<sup>24</sup> Ronald R. Thomas, “Detection in the Victorian Novel,” *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*, ed. Deirdre David (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 172.

<sup>25</sup> Gary Day, *Class* (London: Routledge, 2001) 113-115.

the other class, the proletariat, owns only their labour force, which they were obliged to sell in order to survive.<sup>26</sup>

As an outcome of industrialisation and colonisation the status of the middle class became important. The expansion of urban areas, the growth in population, technological development, the increased scale of industry and trade, especially overseas trade, the exploitation of raw material and goods from the colonies and the expansion of the Empire created a huge demand for new professions and professionals that regulated and kept the wheels of society running. The nineteenth century middle class included in addition to the members employed in the professions of the old middle ranks, also industrialists and businessmen who operated in finance and in commerce; they were also among the wealthiest in the country. The middle class included also managers, civil servants, doctors, scientists, lawyers, teachers, architects, engineers, small entrepreneurs, shopkeepers, merchants, clerks, assistants, etc.<sup>27</sup> A very large number of Europeans emigrated to the colonies which offered a position for thousands of officers, civil servants, managers, doctors, teachers, missionaries, and other professionals that regulated and kept the wheels of the Empire running. In spite of the heterogeneity in the internal structure of Victorian middle classes, there developed a coherent middle class ideology that was to become hegemonic as the nineteenth century progressed.

Matthew Arnold, the nineteenth century English poet and cultural critic, had perceived that the aristocracy were gradually, but steadily ceasing to be the dominant class in England as the nineteenth century progressed.<sup>28</sup> There was a growing concern that a revolution not unlike the ones in America and France might take place also in England. Moreover, the lower classes, especially the newly formed working class that was utilized into accomplishing the

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<sup>26</sup> Day 6-7.

<sup>27</sup> W.D. Rubinstein, *Britain's Century: A Political and Social History 1815-1905* (London: Arnold, 1998) 284-292.

<sup>28</sup> Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983) 24.

Industrial Revolution, were very poor and living in horrible conditions and there was a constant fear that they too might revolt.<sup>29</sup> Therefore Arnold argued that the aristocracy must transfer their culture to the rising middle classes and that the working classes needed to be educated so that they will not be a threat to society and the ruling classes. Since the power of religion had diminished significantly in the nineteenth century and, although religion is an extremely effective form of ideological control, in an increasingly secular world, the Church could no longer control the large masses. There was an urgent need for something that would glue all the different layers of society together. Arnold demanded that English literature was to become the new opium for the masses. It had a triple function: it was to delight, to instruct, and to save the souls and heal the state. It should teach people solidarity between classes, national pride and moral values, in other words, communicate “the moral riches of bourgeois civilisation” to them.<sup>30</sup>

Marx suggests that the predominant ideas or ideologies common to the capitalist society are those of the ruling class. The ruling class or its intellectual representatives produce and spread them and they dominate the consciousness and actions of those classes outside the ruling class.<sup>31</sup> The concept of ideology is commonly used as a word to refer to systematic belief in general,<sup>32</sup> in other words, shared beliefs and values that are held in an unquestioning manner by a group or a culture. Terry Eagleton has offered several definitions and approaches to the concept of ideology. For example, in *Ideology: An Introduction* (1991) he lists 16 different definitions in the first two pages of the book. For example, he sees ideology as “a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class”, as ideas (true or false) that help to legitimate a dominant political power, as a “medium in which conscious social actors make sense of their world”, and as “socially necessary illusions”, as “a process whereby

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<sup>29</sup> Eagleton, *Literary Theory* 17, 19.

<sup>30</sup> Eagleton, *Literary Theory* 22-27.

<sup>31</sup> Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2004) 117.

<sup>32</sup> Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: an Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991) 5.

social life is converted to a natural reality”, in other words, ideologies present ideas and the prevailing conditions as something natural, inevitable and unchangeable.<sup>33</sup> Most of all, ideology is a way to legitimate the power of a dominant group or class:

A dominant power may legitimate itself by *promoting* beliefs and values congenial to it; *naturalizing* and *universalising* such beliefs so as to render them self-evident and apparently inevitable; *denigrating* ideas which might challenge it; *excluding* rival forms of thought, perhaps by some unspoken systematic logic; and *obscuring* social reality in ways convenient to itself.<sup>34</sup>

What Eagleton means by this, is that the constructed reality is passed as something natural and unquestionable. Eagleton stresses that ideology is a matter of discourse than of just language. He suggests that ideological discourse “concerns the actual uses of language between particular human subjects for the production of specific effects”; in other words, ideology is about “the question of who is saying what to whom for what purposes.”<sup>35</sup>

Why and how, then, did the bourgeoisie manage to gain and maintain their position as the ruling class? Antonio Gramsci formulated his theory of hegemony to explain why the communist revolutions by the ‘exploited’ classes did not occur where they were most expected to take place; in industrialized Western Europe.<sup>36</sup> He based his theory on the dominant ideology thesis proposed by Marx and Engels in *Communist Manifesto* (1848), which suggests that the class that is economically dominant will try to impose its own peculiar way of seeing the world as a whole.<sup>37</sup> Gramsci has identified this phenomenon as hegemony: he saw hegemony as a process of struggle, a constant attempt to maintain control over the subordinate classes. Hegemony is something that is actively created, maintained and reproduced by real individuals through a process of conscious intellectual reflection and

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<sup>33</sup> Eagleton, *Ideology* 1-2.

<sup>34</sup> Eagleton, *Ideology* 5-6, emphasis by Eagleton.

<sup>35</sup> Eagleton. *Ideology* 9.

<sup>36</sup> David Hawkes, *Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996) 119.

<sup>37</sup> Hawkes 117.

synthesis.<sup>38</sup> Gramsci normally used the concept to denote “a form of social and political ‘control’ which combines physical force or *coercion* with intellectual, moral and cultural persuasion or *consent*;<sup>39</sup> in other words, hegemony can be defined as a widely accepted system of culture, values, morals, ethics and social structure that hold a society together and create cohesive people. Instead of striving toward revolution that would serve the collective needs of the masses, the lower classes have absorbed the perspective and the ideologies of the ruling classes, in this case the middle classes, and therefore fail to revolt against the capitalist society.

Louis Althusser has described the process of establishing and maintaining the hegemony in a modern Capitalist society by presenting a theory on ‘State Apparatuses.’ Repressive state apparatuses (RSA) contain the government, administration, army, police, courts, and prisons etc. Institutions such as religion, education, family, law, politics, trade unions, media and culture are ideological state apparatuses (ISA).<sup>40</sup> RSAs belong to the public domain and function by violence, whereas the ISAs belong to the private domain and function by ideology.<sup>41</sup> The ruling class in principle hold state power and therefore has the RSAs at its disposal. Althusser states that because the ruling class holds the RSAs, it is also active in the ISAs because ultimately the dominant ideology is realized in the ISAs. Althusser notes that “no class can hold State power over a long period of time without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in State Ideological Apparatuses.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Paul Ransome, *Antonio Gramsci: A New Introduction* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992) 132.

<sup>39</sup> Ransome, 135, emphasis by Ransome.

<sup>40</sup> Louis Althusser. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984) 17.

<sup>41</sup> Althusser 18-19. Althusser (1984, 19) however notes, that state apparatuses do not function only by either violence or ideology. As an example he gives the army and the police who function secondarily by ideology to ensure their own cohesion and reproduction, and the church and the schools who function secondarily by repression by using punishment, expulsion and selection to discipline their members.

<sup>42</sup> Althusser 20. Althusser (1984, 21) continues by remarking that this not only makes the ISAs the stake, but also the site of class struggle, because firstly, the former ruling classes are able to retain a strong position in the ISAs for a long time, and secondly, because the ‘exploited’ classes finds means to express themselves, for instance through family, culture, education and in an increasingly way in the media, in the nineteenth century especially in newspapers and in popular journals and periodicals.

One of the most effective ways to advocate the ideology of hegemonic groups to the subordinated groups are indeed the ideological state apparatuses. In his discussion on Marxism in *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, Dominic Strinati brings up the emergence of the police and crime series on British television in the mid-1970s. He mentions that it has been argued that these series were part of a ‘law and order’ panic that aimed at re-establishing the hegemonic position of the dominant groups.<sup>43</sup> It can be hypothesised that the rise of the detective fiction in the nineteenth century Britain was a similar kind of attempt by the ruling class to establish its hegemonic position by criminalising certain deviations, transgressions and behaviour, and raising the detective as their hero. Detective story, and the novel in general, gave the Victorian middle class an excellent medium to express their anxieties and to negotiate with society where the boundaries of middle class and its values and ideology lie.

In chapter 2 I will be discussing the Victorian middle class ideology, in particular the ideological attitude to the Empire and domesticity. The insecurity Victorian middle class felt about their position can be seen in themes discussed in the third and fourth chapter of this thesis: chapter 3 will analyse how the colonial, often guilty or tainted, past is represented and in chapter 4 I try to trace down how women are depicted in Sherlock Holmes adventures. The first part of the chapter will deal with the theme proposed by Longhurst, women on the marriage market, but in addition, in the second part of the chapter I will take a look on some of the female characters that do not subscribe to the ideal of a perfect woman set by the Victorian middle class.

The Sherlock Holmes adventures discussed and analysed in this thesis are the adventures written during the nineteenth century; the two early novels *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of Four*, and the two first cycles of short stories published at *The Strand Magazine*

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<sup>43</sup> Strinati 150.

between 1889 and 1894. Although nearly all Holmes stories have a distinctly Victorian atmosphere on them, a great part of them were written during the twentieth century, the last short stories as late as the mid-1920s. Despite the fact that some of the later writing is situated at the nineteenth century and that the author has attempted to maintain the nostalgia of the world long gone, one may presume that Doyle was not immune to the changes and progress in the surrounding society and in the literary world, and reflections of these did influence his work. Since the focus of this thesis is on the Victorian era, the Holmes stories published during the twentieth century,<sup>44</sup> and especially those published after World War I, cannot be regarded as authentic examples of Victorian middle class values. However, although the main attention is paid to the nineteenth century Holmes stories, I will not exclude the twentieth century short stories entirely, and will refer to them if necessary. One must also keep in mind that even though the Victorian era is commonly thought to have ended on the death of Queen Victoria and the accession of King Edward VII in 1901, the dominant zeitgeist does not change overnight. Victorian ethos prevailed in society and in culture for long time after the era according to the later generations was over.

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<sup>44</sup> Gradually Arthur Conan Doyle grew tired of his creation, as it prevented him from writing historical novels, which were his passion. He killed Holmes in “The Adventure of the Final Problem,” published in 1893. Due to the pressure of the readers and the generous offers from the publishers, he wrote the novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1901, and finally resurrected Holmes in “The Adventure of the Empty House” in 1903, where it was revealed that Holmes had not really died, he had only faked his death.

## 2. Victorian Values

In this chapter of my thesis I will first discuss the Victorian middle-class ideology and, in relation to the two central themes of my thesis, the imperial attitude and the woman question, I will closely examine imperialism, the British imperial ideology, and the cult of domesticity that was elevated to the highly estimated position especially among the Victorian middle class. After that I will turn my attention to Sherlock Holmes and the genre of detective fiction. After discussing the genre and its relation to the social context, I will close the chapter by analysing how the middle class ideology manifests itself in Sherlock Holmes adventures and the methods Holmes uses in his detection to categorise and thus define people.

### 2.1 Victorian Middle-class Ideology

The expansion and the hegemonic position the middle class had gained in society, gave the middle class a sense of self-consciousness and helped to create a common identity and ideology. Raynor defines the basis of the Victorian middle class values as the belief in individualism, i.e. the belief that individual freedom produces a better society, and rationality, i.e. careful planning, maximizing of security and controlled behaviour.<sup>45</sup> Individualism is a consequence of the break-up of feudalism and the growth of free market. The transition from feudalism to capitalism dissolved the social ties between individuals. Instead of collectivism, people were now viewed as autonomous agents that may pursue their own interests independently from the others.<sup>46</sup> The Victorian middle class values aimed at maintaining the status they had achieved. There was a constant fear of the lower classes, socialism, anarchy and radicalism that would threaten their position. According to Raynor, keeping distance between themselves and the lower classes meant respectability for the Victorian middle

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<sup>45</sup> John Raynor, *The Middle Class* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1969) 86.

<sup>46</sup> Day 142.



classes.<sup>47</sup> Respectability meant that one should possess highly puritanical and moralistic set of values, such as industry, thrift, sobriety, discipline, restraint, honesty, modesty and courtesy.<sup>48</sup> The middle classes took the Protestant Ethic as their ideal. Hard work and the wealth earned from it became a moral virtue. Wealth was seen as God's reward for labour as well as a sign that a person was destined to heaven and not to hell.<sup>49</sup>

But in reality the life of the middle class was often typified by vulgar extravagance, conspicuous consumption and private opulence, and individuality for the Victorian middle class meant self-righteousness and indifference toward other people in the pursuit of property and success.<sup>50</sup> Walvin explains that the inconsistency with the promoted values and the harsh reality arises from the fact that the values the Victorians promoted reflected not the world as they saw it, but the world they would have liked to see. As a result of rapid industrialisation, population growth and urbanisation, the Victorians faced numerous serious problems for which they were unprepared and unable to find answers. As a reaction to these problems, the Victorian middle class felt that they should advocate certain values which "offered solutions or escapes, strength where they saw weakness, virtue where they saw vice, and progress where they saw despair,"<sup>51</sup> that is, they felt that it was their responsibility to moralise the values of earlier times and to develop and promote their values to the other classes.

Other typical values and features of Victorian middle class life were prudery, family and the cult of domesticity, obedience to betters and charitable works.<sup>52</sup> Among the middle classes, and in particular among women, philanthropy became a way of life towards the end of the nineteenth century. Charity and education was mainly directed at the poor, but also a great deal of charitable work was directed toward 'civilising' the native peoples under the

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<sup>47</sup> Raynor 89.

<sup>48</sup> Day 143.

<sup>49</sup> Day 5.

<sup>50</sup> Raynor 87-88.

<sup>51</sup> James Walvin, *Victorian Values: A Companion to the Granada Television Series* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1987) 138.

<sup>52</sup> Walvin 120-124, 137.

British rule.<sup>53</sup> One should keep in mind that there is scarcely no pretence that the education of the lower classes was chiefly conducted for their own benefit: Matthew Arnold demanded that the lower classes should be educated so that they would not be any threat to the bourgeois society and the ruling classes.<sup>54</sup> Even though the middle class gradually succeeded in turning their values hegemonic and admired in the nineteenth century Britain, financial reality and the circumstances of domestic and communal life made it impossible for the vast majority of the population to emulate the middle class lifestyle and ideals.<sup>55</sup> The only value to unite the all the layers of society was patriotism, the attachment to the monarchy and the pride in Britain's imperial pre-eminence.<sup>56</sup>

Edward Said has interpreted the term 'imperialism' to mean the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory, and 'colonialism' to mean the consequence of imperialism, referring to the implanting of settlements on distant territory. Both imperialism and colonialism are supported and driven by the ideological formation that certain territories and people require and beseech to be dominated and subjugated.<sup>57</sup> In English historian J.A. Hobson's view, colonialism derived from the attempt to find new markets for investment, because the capacity for production expanded greatly beyond that, which could profitably be sold in the home markets. Since the purchasing power of the population is limited, there is a constant striving both to find new markets in which to sell and new ways of cheapening production by finding cheaper raw materials and labour power. This is what Hobson terms 'imperialism.'<sup>58</sup> Great Britain was engaged in large-scale colonial control from the fifteenth century onwards. With the help of technological breakthroughs and improvements in medicine, communication, transportation

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<sup>53</sup> Walvin 99-100.

<sup>54</sup> Eagleton, *Literary Theory* 24-25.

<sup>55</sup> Walvin 129-130.

<sup>56</sup> Walvin 113.

<sup>57</sup> Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994) 9.

<sup>58</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993) 539-540.

and armaments, the British Empire expanded rapidly, especially between 1880s and the World War I, when Great Britain together with France, Germany and other European nations participated in ‘Scramble for Africa’, the partition of the African continent into colonies.<sup>59</sup> By the turn of the century the British Empire included India, colonies in Africa, the Middle and Far East, the Caribbean and the so-called white colonies, i.e. Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa. Said also mentions that although USA had gained independence after the revolution in 1777, the former American possessions were still regarded as part of the British Empire by many Britons.<sup>60</sup>

Britain managed to secure the most valuable parts of Africa<sup>61</sup> and with the exploitation of the resources, raw materials and the low-cost workforce of the colonial territories that were used to fuel the economic development and industrialisation, Great Britain became the leading nation of the late-nineteenth century. In addition to the economic motive, colonial possessions also added to the political influence and power of the parent country in global politics and provided sites for military bases and finally, one of the motives was the civilising mission: most Westerners saw colonialism as a way to help the native peoples to upgrade from their ‘primitive’ conditions to the ‘civilised’ European level, by bringing Christianity to the heathens.<sup>62</sup> All in all, imperialism strengthened the nation state and led to the growing sense of nationality and nationalism by spreading metropolitan ideas and institutions abroad.<sup>63</sup> Not only did it contribute to the creation of the distinct sense of ‘Britishness’ but also to solidifying of the profound belief in the supremacy and difference of the British culture,<sup>64</sup> which taught the British to identify coloured skin with inferiority, strangeness, and allegedly repellent religious and cultural practices.

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<sup>59</sup> P.J. Cain, and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (Harlow: Longman, 2002) 327-329.

<sup>60</sup> Said *Culture*, 73.

<sup>61</sup> Cain and Hopkins 336.

<sup>62</sup> Giddens 529-530.

<sup>63</sup> Cain and Hopkins 663.

<sup>64</sup> Cain and Hopkins (2002, 669-670) suggest that the ideas of ‘Britain’ and ‘Britishness’ are connected to the idea of ‘Empire’ and imperialism. The idea of ‘Britishness’ emerged in the eighteenth century as a result of long struggle with France and from the encounters with strange people and cultures in distant countries.

Arthur Conan Doyle was a strong supporter of Crown and the Empire and he believed firmly in the value of hard work and self-made opportunities.<sup>65</sup> His fiction was deeply shaped by his imperial values and it would make him one of the great Victorian apologists defending the interests of the British Empire.<sup>66</sup> Doyle also received a knighthood for his patriotic service in 1902.<sup>67</sup> His journeys as a surgeon on a Greenland whaler that sailed to the Arctic, and on a passenger that sailed to West Africa left their mark on Doyle and rooted a strong sense of adventure and imperialism in him.<sup>68</sup> In 1900 Doyle himself went to the Boer War and worked as a doctor in a field hospital at the front. After returning home from the Boer War, he wrote a history entitled *The Great Boer War*, and as a response to foreign criticism of the English conducts in the war, a book entitled *The War in South Africa*. In 1914, at the outbreak of World War I, he penned a patriotic pamphlet, *To Arms!*<sup>69</sup> Doyle spent the entire war offering reassurance to the public and praise for the British government and the fighting forces. He also utilised the fame and popularity of Sherlock Holmes in his campaign: in 1917 he wrote a Holmes adventure named "His Last Bow: The War Service of Sherlock Holmes" to boost the sinking morale of Britain.<sup>70</sup>

Patrick Brantlinger has proposed several elements that together create the ideology of British imperialism. According to him such elements are the advocacy of territorial expansion by military force; chauvinism based on loyalty to the existing Empire, the imperial chauvinism including the glorification of the military and the war; racial superiority of the white Europeans, the English surpassing the other Europeans; and the civilising mission of Britain, illuminating the "dark places" of the world by bringing the English culture and

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<sup>65</sup> Rzepka 120.

<sup>66</sup> Thompson 68.

<sup>67</sup> Daniel Stashower, *Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, 1999) 247.

<sup>68</sup> Stashower 34-40, 45-48.

<sup>69</sup> Thompson 68.

<sup>70</sup> Stashower 314.

civilisation to the primitive and savage pagans.<sup>71</sup> Even the most liberal colonists thought themselves superior to the indigenous peoples they encountered.<sup>72</sup> This may be credited to the rise of literacy and the 1880 Act, which obliged all British children between 5 and 10 to attend compulsory education.<sup>73</sup> The teaching programme in elementary schools attached great importance to the lessons of empire. It did not only teach facts of the empire but also urged to glory in the military and the war and in the superiority and the uniqueness of British society. Besides schools, popular songs and verses, the jingoistic music hall performances, children's books and comics, popular press and youth movements laid the foundations for patriotism and jingoism that was a noticeable feature of British life in the period of 1880-1914.<sup>74</sup>

The imperial ideology of white, male and in particular English supremacy can be seen in Doyle's detective fiction: Jon Thompson declares that "once individuals have been designated as cultural 'others' by virtue of being foreign, or simply lower class, or female, they are scarcely characterised at all or are only handled in the most stereotypical fashion" and that this characterisation contains "an assumption of inferiority."<sup>75</sup> Holmes and Watson, on the other hand, are nothing of that kind; both Holmes and Watson are loyal, true to themselves and their causes. They are patriotic defenders of the Empire and represent everything that was considered good, great and superior in the British Empire. Doyle made especially Watson, the narrator, a character that would be reliable and trustworthy in the eyes of the readers. Watson is a doctor, one of the most respected and trusted professions for the Victorian middle class.

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<sup>71</sup> Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988) 8.

<sup>72</sup> Brantlinger (1988, 39) notes that imperialist discourse is inseparable from racism. The rise of racism coincided with the early colonialism in the sixteenth century. Giddens (1993, 263-264) has offered three explanations for this. To begin with, Giddens suggests that an opposition between black and white as cultural symbols is deeply rooted in European culture. White has been long associated with purity and black with evil, which led the white colonisers to regard blacks and their heathen culture with disdain and fear. Secondly, the concept of race, as it was proposed by Count de Gobineau in the nineteenth century, held that the race included a number of inherited characteristics, such as intelligence, morality and willpower, in which the white were superior to the other races. Thirdly, and most importantly, slave trade and the exploitation of the colonies could not have existed if the wide majority of the Europeans did not regard non-white people as inferior or even as subhuman. Therefore the rulers actively supported racist beliefs.

<sup>73</sup> Walvin 84-85, 87.

<sup>74</sup> Walvin 93-94, 114-115.

<sup>75</sup> Thompson 69.

Most importantly, Watson is a veteran of the Afghan war, a patriotic defender of Crown who has sacrificed his health for the cause of the Empire.<sup>76</sup> The glorification of the military and war suggested by Brantlinger can be found in Doyle's writing. Short stories such as "The Crooked Man" and "The Blanched Soldier," a later adventure written in the 1920s, and Watson's portrayal of his career in the army give an exalted picture of honour attached by the Victorians to the military power of Britain and the subjugation of the colonies, and ignore the side of the colonised. The very first Sherlock Holmes story *A Study in Scarlet*, begins with the description of Watson's career as an assistant surgeon in the army. Watson had been attached to a regiment situated in India. His regiment was soon sent to Afghanistan, "deep in the enemy's country" where he was injured in a battle and was in danger of falling "into the hands of murderous Ghazis" (*Study in Scarlet*, 11).<sup>77</sup> After the injury, Watson is struck down by enteric fever, a "curse of our Indian possessions" (STUD, 11). The disease left Watson so weak that he had to resign from the army.

Whereas Watson has been literally defending the Empire on its frontier by nearly sacrificing his life and health for it, Holmes serves his country by protecting its citizens and its social order, i.e. the white English members of the middle classes and the social order they adhere to. He brings chaos to order, turns the inexplicable into comprehensible and reassures the middle classes of their position.<sup>78</sup> He also protects England from the perils the Empire poses on its imperial centre by detecting and neutralising the threats that have managed to penetrate it, as the analysis in chapter 3 will show.

Another distinctly Victorian middle class value that was to become hegemonic in the whole society was domesticity. During the Victorian age the cult of domesticity that was

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<sup>76</sup> Rzepka 123.

<sup>77</sup> From here on, when quoting from a Sherlock Holmes adventure, references will be made parenthetically by using four letter abbreviations of the stories. The list of abbreviations is included in the bibliography. Although the analysis of the thesis is based on the first 26 Holmes adventures, all of the adventures are not directly quoted, and therefore not included in the list of abbreviations.

<sup>78</sup> Longhurst 54-56.

attached to women rose to an exalted position in middle class. John Tosh defines domesticity to be, firstly, a pattern of residence or a web of obligations and secondly, a profound attachment, a state of mind and a physical orientation. Its defining attributes are privacy and comfort, separation between the public and private sphere and the merging of domestic space and family members into a single commanding concept, i.e. home.<sup>79</sup> The most important constituent in this cult of domesticity as a counterbalance to the alienating modern society was the image of a perfect woman and mother. The ideal ‘perfect lady’ of the Victorian age had to fulfil three requirements: she combined total sexual innocence, conspicuous consumption and the worship of the family hearth.<sup>80</sup> Her sole function was marriage and procreation. All her education was to bring out her ‘natural’ submission to authority, innate family affection and desire for motherhood. Effie Munro in “The Yellow Face” represents the ideal ‘perfect woman’ the Victorians admired: his husband Grant Munro tells that “my wife and I have loved each other as fondly, and lived as happily, as any two that ever were joined. We have not had a difference, not one, in thought, or word, or deed” (YELL, 322). Effie Munro has completely subjugated herself to her husband, but once there emerges something, which she refuses to tell her husband, he finds that “there is something in her thoughts of which I know as little as if she were the woman who brushes by me in the street. We are estranged” (YELL, 322).

The family hearth became “an island of purity and peace” in a society that was constantly going through a rapid change in the nineteenth century.<sup>81</sup> According to historian Eric Hobsbawm, bourgeois society rested on freedom, opportunity, the cash nexus and the pursuit of individual profit. But there is a contradiction here, since family as a collective unit

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<sup>79</sup> John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 4.

<sup>80</sup> Vicinus ix.

<sup>81</sup> Martha Vicinus, “Introduction: The Perfect Victorian Lady,” *Suffer and Be Still: The Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Martha Vicinus (London: Methuen, 1972) xiii.

based on reciprocity and strictly ascribed roles, denied all these principles.<sup>82</sup> During the nineteenth century men experienced work and public life as alienating. The rapid progress of modernisation and industrialisation, the dehumanisation and other ills it brought to the environment and society in general made life feel intolerable both physically and psychologically. Home was a place that provided rest and refreshment as well as emotional and psychological support that made the working life tolerable.<sup>83</sup> An example of the strict division between public and private, and work and leisure is found for instance in “The Man with the Twisted Lip.” In some cases women were kept so completely out of the public sphere, that they did not even know what their husbands were doing during the day and how he earned the family income. In the story, the husband lets his wife believe that he works in the City, but in reality he earns his living as a beggar.

Unlike middle-class men who were trained to stand on their own feet as a necessary foundation for manly independence,<sup>84</sup> middle-class women were confined to the domestic sphere: woman’s position was totally dependent on the social and economic position of her father or her husband.<sup>85</sup> The outward appearance of home was of particular importance to those who had risen only recently in the class hierarchy. Domestic circumstances were the most visible and reliable guide to a man’s level of income and his success in work and a mirror of his moral character. The middle class wife existed to flaunt her husband’s class status and success in his profession,<sup>86</sup> but also her chastity was of greatest importance: the moral authority as the keepers of respectability that was attached to them, gave women great prestige. Evangelic Christianity further supported these claims.<sup>87</sup> The women who broke the family circle, be they prostitutes, adulterers or divorcées, were considered to threaten the very

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<sup>82</sup> Hobsbawn’s ideas discussed in Tosh 6.

<sup>83</sup> Tosh 6.

<sup>84</sup> Tosh 4.

<sup>85</sup> Vicinus ix.

<sup>86</sup> Tosh 24.

<sup>87</sup> Tosh 5.



fabric of society.<sup>88</sup> This rather rigid ideal of a ‘perfect lady’ and domesticity has generated a rather stereotypical image of a leisured, ornamental, helpless and dependent female that has no other function than bearing children and being the symbol of her husband’s success.<sup>89</sup> These ideals were fully developed in the upper middle class and they became tenacious and all-pervasive definitions of femininity and good life without class distinctions, in particular among the members of the working class during the Victorian age,<sup>90</sup> despite the fact that the economic and social circumstances for large majority of the women were such that they could never fulfil this ideal.<sup>91</sup> The women, in particular middle-class women, had increasingly challenged their subordinate position, both socially and politically, during the nineteenth century. The National Society for Women’s Suffrage had been established already in 1867, but it was not until the last two decades of the century, when ‘New Women’ who first and foremost were middle-class women, reworked the earlier ideas on progress, morality, femininity, domesticity and development and demanded, among other things, changes in marriage laws, free access to contraception, reform in the treatment of victims of sexual assaults, equal rights in education and employment and the right to vote.<sup>92</sup> The issues discussed in chapter 4 will deal with this conflict between the old patriarchal order and the demands of the first-wave feminists of the late nineteenth century.

But in spite of the certain shared values, there were notable differences in wealth within the middle class. After 1830 middle class began to oppose itself more markedly to working class, and in addition to divide internally, into upper and lower sections according to profession, wealth and indications of status, such as dress, attitudes and behaviour.<sup>93</sup> The upper middle class led a life very close to the aristocracy and the gentry, whereas the lower

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<sup>88</sup> Vicinus xiv.

<sup>89</sup> Patricia Branca, *Silent Sisterhood: Middle-class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975) 5, 11.

<sup>90</sup> Tosh 4.

<sup>91</sup> Vicinus x.

<sup>92</sup> Angeliqne Richardson and Chris Willis, “Introduction,” *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. Angeliqne Richardson and Chris Willis (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 1-3, 28.

<sup>93</sup> Day 9.

middle class, who were often distinguished from the working class only by status, that is to say, not doing manual labour, was almost merging with the working class.<sup>94</sup> Most members of the middle class depended on their work and the salary they received from it, just like the working class. There was a constant sense of insecurity and a fear of impoverishment, losing their newly acquired wealth and status. Therefore the principal aim among the middle classes were the safe jobs that had tenure and a reasonable salary, such as civil service, teaching and the Anglican clergy.<sup>95</sup>

Doyle himself had experienced the insecurity and uncertain position of a young middle class professional man attempting to make ends meet.<sup>96</sup> In his writing, the hard-working entrepreneurial middle class and new middle class professions are depicted in a way that reveals Doyle's approving attitude. Victor Hatherley, the young struggling hydraulic engineer in "The Engineer's Thumb," Hall Pycroft, an unemployed clerk in "The Stockbroker's Clerk," Percy Treveylan, the young doctor in "The Resident Patient" and Percy Phelps, a civil servant working at the Foreign Office in "a situation of trust and honour" (NAVA, 411) have, unbeknownst to them, been exploited by criminals in their schemes. But unlike for example Jabez Wilson in "The Red-Headed League" or Henry Baker in "The Blue Carbuncle," who likewise are innocents that have become entangled in criminal activity, Hatherley, Pycroft, Treveylan and Phelps are described in an admiring way. The approving attitude of Doyle is particularly visible in the way he describes their behaviour, appearance and external signs of their body: Hatherley is depicted as masculine and as a man that endures the pain and loss of blood caused by the cutting of his thumb stoically, and Pycroft is "a well-built, fresh complexioned young fellow with a frank, honest face" that is "naturally full of cheeriness" (STOC, 332). Dr. Treveylan is "a pale, taper-faced man" whose "haggard expression and unhealthy hue told of a life which had sapped his strength and robbed of his

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<sup>94</sup> Rubinstein 291.

<sup>95</sup> Rubinstein 291-292.

<sup>96</sup> Stashower 58-63.

youth” (RESI, 388), but this is explained to be the result of his absolute dedication to his medical work, and Phelps has been so shocked after being suspected of misusing his position that he has suffered nine weeks of brain fever. Professional, educated middle middle-class men such as Hatherley, Pycroft, Treveylan and Phelps, the representatives of Doyle’s own social position, are all in all depicted as hard working, honest men, but one could presume that Doyle suggests that Wilson and Baker, impoverished members of the lower middle class, who are in a danger of assimilating with working class have ended up in trouble because of their own actions: Jabez Wilson allows himself to be duped because of his greed and Henry Baker has gone down in the world due to his penchant for drinking.

During the nineteenth century, middle class was a group that was constantly in a state of flux: new members were recruited from the lower classes, as the old members were elevated as members of upper classes.<sup>97</sup> Upper middle class achieved the acceptance from the aristocracy by making their wealth socially acceptable by acquiring land and country houses, making well-chosen marriages and receiving education at the right kinds of schools. In an increasing rate, members of the upper middle class were of genteel origins; younger sons of the gentry and genteel women who had married wealthy middle class men.<sup>98</sup> Although the middle class and the *nouveaux riches* emulated the upper class and their lifestyle through education, conspicuous consumption and arranged marriages with upper class members, still the members of old aristocracy are depicted as corrupted and immoral and acting in a way that is against the Victorian middle-class ideals and ideology. Several royal or aristocratic men are involved in extramarital affairs, they marry for money, such as for example Lord St. Simon in “The Noble Bachelor,” or they have, like Grimesby Roylott in “The Speckled Band” degenerated from a Victorian middle-class point of view into a lower level of civilisation. There is also a deep mistrust against the *nouveaux riches*, which will be discussed more

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<sup>97</sup> Raynor 3.

<sup>98</sup> Raynor 13.

closely in chapter 3. In the next subchapter I will turn my attention to detective fiction, Sherlock Holmes adventures and their relation to the Victorian middle class and its ideology.

## **2.2 Detective fiction, Sherlock Holmes and Ideology**

John G. Cawelti argues that popular formulas, such as detective story, the western or the romance, are cultural products that combine several specific conventions. He defines the concept of formula as “a means of generalizing the characteristics of a large group of individual works from certain combinations of cultural materials and archetypal story patterns.” If the formulaic stories are “collective fantasies shared by a large groups of people and of identifying differences in these fantasies from one culture or period to another” we may assume that they contain a great deal of information about the society that produces and consumes them.<sup>99</sup> According to Cawelti the cultural function of formulaic literature (or genre) is to “articulate a pattern of fantasy that is at least acceptable to if not preferred by the cultural groups who enjoy them.” When a group’s attitudes undergo some change, new formulas arise and the existing formulas evolve to satisfy the needs of that particular group.<sup>100</sup> Genre, according to John Frow, is a universal dimension of textuality. It is something that “creates effects of reality and truth, authority and plausibility which are central to the different ways the world is understood.”<sup>101</sup> Frow defines genre as a set of conventional and highly organised constraints on the production and interpretation of meaning. Although the function of the genre is to organise things into recognisable classes,<sup>102</sup> he does not see genre as a restriction but as something that shapes and guides interpretation and specifies which types of meaning are relevant and appropriate in a particular context and defines a set of expectations that guide

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<sup>99</sup> Cawelti 6-7.

<sup>100</sup> Cawelti 34.

<sup>101</sup> John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2006) 1-2.

<sup>102</sup> Frow 51.

the readers' engagement with texts.<sup>103</sup> The function of genre is to “mediate between a social situation and the text which realises certain features of this situation.”<sup>104</sup>

If ideology is about the practical communication between subjects situated in a historical and social context, then how does detective fiction and Sherlock Holmes concur with the interests of the Victorian middle class? Stephen Knight argues in *Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction* that crime fiction both creates an idea about controlling crime and at the same time realises and validates a whole view of the world that can be shared with other readers. Knight notes that the readers of Holmes adventures had faith in modern systems of scientific and rational enquiry, but they themselves felt that they lacked the means and powers to make sense of the new, rapidly changing world. The function of the genre, says Knight, was to assure the audience that they will find, if only in fictional form, the intellectual power that will control the seemingly chaotic and incomprehensible world and make it comprehensible and less troubling.<sup>105</sup> In other words, the literary character of detective was created as a mediator to control the disorder and assuage the anxieties of the respectable, London-based, middle-class audience of their position.

Also Cawelti sees a strong connection between detective story and the middle class.

He hypothesizes that the readers of classical detective fiction

shared a need for a temporary release from doubt and guilt, generated at least in part by the decline of traditional moral and spiritual authorities, and the rise of new social and intellectual movements that emphasized the hypocrisy and guilt of respectable middle-class society.<sup>106</sup>

Cawelti suggests that for those who were committed to the middle class values, but still were dissatisfied by the restrictions they imposed, detective fiction could offer a temporary release from doubt. Firstly, the basic principle that crime was a matter of individual motivation

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<sup>103</sup> Frow 101, 104.

<sup>104</sup> Frow 14.

<sup>105</sup> Knight, *Form and Ideology* 67.

<sup>106</sup> Cawelti 104.

reaffirmed the validity of the existing social order, and secondly, says Cawelti, “by reducing crime to a puzzle, or a game, and highly formalized set of literary conventions,” serious moral and social problems were transformed into entertainment. And thirdly Cawelti suggests that because in detective stories the murder often took place in a family or among close friends, it answered to the readers’ latent animosity to his nearest, which in turn resulted from strict and demanding upbringing.<sup>107</sup> As a consequence, something that potentially could disturb the ostensible harmony of the solid middle class life became something controllable that freed the reader from any sense of guilt of feeling latent animosity to his or her nearest and was no longer seen as a threat against social order or a social or moral problem. Cawelti considers Edgar Allan Poe and his Dupin stories as an interesting transitional figure, as Poe’s writing moved strongly toward the aestheticising of crime, but it was not until the late nineteenth century that the detective story gained enormous success when Arthur Conan Doyle fully elaborated the relation between crime and the middle-class family circle. Hence, Sherlock Holmes became the epitomised rational hero who resolved the urban disorder.

Holmes and his habits are described as “Bohemian” (ENGR, 230). The term was applied in the late nineteenth century to artistic temperaments, such as irregular habits and colourful personalities, love of beauty, a private sense of morality, arcane knowledge and original genius.<sup>108</sup> Holmes’s companion and narrator of the adventures, Dr. Watson, embodies the bourgeois morality and is the personification of the virtues of Victorian middle-class manhood: he is loyal, honest and brave. It is Watson that links the eccentric and the upper-class Holmes closely to the actual bourgeois world.<sup>109</sup> Julian Symons calls Doyle “a Victorian philistine” and wonders why such a man would create an egocentric drug-taking hero who has personal habits so unlike what the so called respectable people saw appropriate. Symons answers his own question by crediting this to the “stolid adherence to established order” of

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<sup>107</sup> Cawelti 105.

<sup>108</sup> Rzepka 47.

<sup>109</sup> Knight, *Form and Ideology* 84-85.

the Victorian era. Below these strict and even repressing demands there is constantly lurking “a passion for absolutes of belief and behaviour, the desire to wipe the slate clean of error and impurity through some saving supernatural grace.”<sup>110</sup>

T.J. Binyon has classified the fictive detectives in three main categories: the professional amateur, or the private detective; the amateur amateur, or the dilettante; and the professional, or the policeman.<sup>111</sup> Binyon however notes that sometimes it can be virtually impossible to distinguish the professional amateur and amateur amateur; as a consulting detective Holmes would fall into the category of professional amateur, but Longhurst emphasises the fact that Sherlock Holmes offers his service “for the love of his art than for the acquirement of wealth,”<sup>112</sup> which would make him the purely amateur amateur who is “not paid, but detects out of curiosity and the love of game.”<sup>113</sup> Longhurst argues that the heroic status of an amateur detective in Sherlock Holmes stories is derived from the “natural superiority of Englishness”, which is rooted in the English class system. Longhurst notes that professionalism and the official police force are still considered vulgar, although they in reality were the ones that protect the safety and interests of the middle classes.<sup>114</sup> “Sherlock Holmes, Esq.” (SCAN, 130) is a gentleman and outsider among the middle class: as an outsider he can act as a detective and delve into the private and domestic affairs of his middle-class clients. After the case is solved, he excludes himself from the unpleasant aftermath that ensue the resolution on the pretext of being an amateur, leaving the ‘vulgar’ professionals to deal with the consequences. Also his upper-class status allows him the abovementioned unconventional eccentricities that would not be considered acceptable among the respectable middle class. Dr. Watson, Holmes’s assistant and the narrator of the adventures, recounts that “working as he did rather for the love of his art than for the acquirement of wealth, he refused

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<sup>110</sup> Symons 69.

<sup>111</sup> T.J. Binyon, *‘Murder Will Out’: The Detective in Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) 6-7.

<sup>112</sup> Longhurst 56.

<sup>113</sup> Binyon 7.

<sup>114</sup> Longhurst 56.

to associate himself with any investigation which did not tend towards the unusual, and even fantastic” (SPEC, 214). Although as a consulting detective Holmes gains financial benefit from his work, it is still crucial that he is an amateur detective: that way also those middle-class members not wealthy enough to recompense his expenses can turn to him.

According to Longhurst, the eminence of Sherlock Holmes lies in that he provides a sense of security, power and reassurance not only for his clients but also for his readers. He is like “a final court of appeal when all else has failed,” lying outside the normal institutions of society.<sup>115</sup> His clients bring “their narratives of bizarre events and from which Holmes ‘selects’ the essential, sallying forth (predominantly) into a strangely sketchy and [...] ideologically mystified environment of the capital of the empire in order to render the inexplicable as commonplace,”<sup>116</sup> to put the point in another way, he organises the chaos of modern society into order. Pertti Alasuutari maintains that the main purpose of deduction in the nineteenth century detective fiction is not to identify the individuals, but to categorise them, which further enables the detective to make presumptions on what has, or might have taken place. This categorisation, especially in Sherlock Holmes adventures, takes mainly place by reading bodily signs, and is connected, for example, to the anthropometrical methods that were used to identify criminals during the nineteenth century.<sup>117</sup> Alasuutari quotes Walter Benjamin who in his essay “The Flaneur” tells that a literary genre called ‘physiology’ became extremely popular in the early nineteenth century Paris. Physiologies analysed and described different types of individuals and their main purpose was to assure the readers that everyone could deduce from the outward appearance and other external signs the profession, background, moral character or lifestyle of any stranger.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Longhurst 54.

<sup>116</sup> Longhurst 56.

<sup>117</sup> Pertti Alasuutari, *Erinomaista, rakas Watson: Johdatus yhteiskuntatutkimukseen* (Helsinki: Hanki ja Jää, 1996) 28.

<sup>118</sup> Alasuutari 26-27.



Much of the popularity of Holmes was based on his ability to determine who is who and to which category and class of society they belong. The reading of the physical signs of the body derives from Dr. Joseph Bell, who was Doyle's professor while he studied medicine at Edinburgh University. Bell did not only lend his methods to Sherlock Holmes, the detective also bore an obvious physical resemblance to his inspirator and shared many qualities with him.<sup>119</sup> Doyle summarises the teachings of Joseph Bell in *A Study in Scarlet*, where Holmes declares:

“by a man's finger-nails, by his coat-sleeve, by his boots, by his trouser-knees, by the callosities of his forefinger and thumb, by his expression, by his shirt-cuff - By each of these things a man's calling is plainly revealed. That all united should fail to enlighten the competent inquirer in any case is almost inconceivable.” (STUD, 17)

In other words, deduction, identification, categorisation, and characterisation in Holmes's detection relies, in the words of Rosemary Jann, “on the posited but seldom tested validity of indexical codes of body and behaviour that allow Holmes infallibly to deduce and predict actions from gesture and appearance.”<sup>120</sup> This stems from the social control exercised in modern disciplinary systems. Michel Foucault has argued that as power becomes more anonymous and invisible, the ones subject to this become more strongly individualised. They are controlled by subjecting all aspects of their identities to surveillance, observation and comparison against the norms of behaviour.<sup>121</sup> By observing even the smallest and the most insignificant details and placing them into the right context, Holmes imposes “the fixity and naturalness of the social ordering” and to protect it by “a continual reiteration of normalcy;” this is how, according to Jann, “everyone in the Holmes universe becomes Foucault's ‘calculable man.’”<sup>122</sup> Jann states that Doyle's use of this tactic suggests that the naturalising of class difference wins out his desire to submit the entire social body to a uniform degree of

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<sup>119</sup> Stashower 76-77.

<sup>120</sup> Jann 686.

<sup>121</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977) 193.

<sup>122</sup> Jann 686-687.

coding. She declares that Doyle seeks to define all others by their deviation from what was considered natural, i.e. male, British and bourgeois.<sup>123</sup>

The idea that outward appearance and external signs reveal the moral character, class, ethnicity or profession is heavily advocated in Sherlock Holmes adventures, especially when the object of characterisation is othering. For example, Jabez Wilson, who according to Longhurst is evidently a Jew,<sup>124</sup> is “an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous and slow” whose clothing is depicted as “baggy,” “not overclean” and “drab” (REDH, 133). Jabez Wilson falls victim to a hoax because of his greed and gullibility and Mary Sutherland, a rather simple lower middle class woman, is so desperate for other people’s companion other than that of her family, and finding a husband that she fails to see that her ‘fiancé’ is in fact her stepfather. Germans are “uncourteous to [their] verbs,” (SCAN, 119) a sin which, according to Holmes, Frenchmen or Russians would never commit. There is also a clear disapproval to the King’s attire in “A Scandal in Bohemia”. The King’s garment is “rich with a richness which would, in England, be looked upon as akin to bad taste;” his whole appearance is described as to give “the impression of barbaric opulence” (SCAN, 120). Another German, Colonel Lysander Stark, has conspicuous appearance: he is of “an exceeding thinness” and has his “whole face sharpened away into nose and chin, and the skin of his cheeks was drawn quite tense over his outstanding bones” (ENGR, 233). Stark’s appearance and strange behaviour gives “a feeling of repulsion and something akin to fear” (ENGR, 234).

The mistrust founded upon class is not limited solely on lower classes or foreigners. Especially the aristocrats that do not subscribe to middle-class values are treated with mistrust, which Knight sees as an interesting corroboration of the fact that the upper class was steadily becoming more bourgeois in their outlook as the middle classes solidified their

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<sup>123</sup> Jann 691-692.

<sup>124</sup> Longhurst 59.

hegemonic position.<sup>125</sup> John Clay, a grandson of a Royal Duke, has become a professional thief, Dr. Grimesby Roylott, the last survivor of one of the oldest Saxon families, has murdered one of his stepdaughter, and attempts to murder the other, and Sir George Burnwell, “one of the most dangerous men in England” (BERY, 268), has seduced the cousin of his friend and with her help tries to steal a precious jewellery that has been entrusted to her uncle. Impoverished aristocrat Lord St. Simon, who has married an American woman because of her wealth, has “something perhaps of petulance about the mouth” and his dress on “the verge of foppishness” (NOBL, 246).

The display of Holmes’s almost uncanny abilities in “the science of deduction” (STUD, 14) set a pattern for Holmes adventures. The stories often begin with a scene where Holmes, like a doctor diagnosing a patient, decodes from the external signs the personality, life and recent activities of the person with whom he is discussing. He can, for example, deduce from a pipe that the owner is “a muscular man, left-handed, with an excellent set of teeth, careless with his habits, and with no need to practise economy” (YELL, 321) and from a hat that the owner is highly intellectual, who “was fairly well-to-do within the last three years, although he has now fallen upon evil days” due to “some evil influence, probably drink” and that “his wife has ceased to love him” (BLUE, 203) without seeing the owners of the abovementioned objects. What is striking is that these interpretations seldom reveal the mystery of the story, they are only ways to demonstrate the nearly mystical abilities of Holmes and to astonish the object of his deduction and the reader. Knight observes that the actual methods of deduction are much more banal.<sup>126</sup> Holmes employs the common human knowledge in his deduction. The most famous example of this is given in “The Silver Blaze:”

“Is there any other point to which you would wish to draw my attention?  
 ‘To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time.’  
 ‘The dog did nothing in the night-time.’  
 ‘That was the curious incident,’ remarked Sherlock Holmes.” (SILV, 302-303)

<sup>125</sup> Knight, *Form and Ideology* 92.

<sup>126</sup> Knight, *Crime Fiction 1800-2000* 57.

Holmes realises that the reason for the watchdog not to bark has to be that the dog knew the person that stole the horse, and therefore the perpetrator has to be someone working at the stables. Knight emphasises that the essential power of Sherlock Holmes is that “his substantial disciplinary authority is in fact enacted in a publicly accessible way: the ultimate methods of solving a crime are usually as simple as any used by the mid-century detective foot-soldiers.”<sup>127</sup> Watson remarks of Holmes’s reasoning that “when I hear you give your reasons, [...] the thing always appears to me to be so ridiculously simple that I could easily do it myself” (SCAN, 118). Moreover, one should not overlook the fact that Holmes’s apparent wizardry relies on the fact that Doyle simply arranged the plots so that the detective either could guess correctly, or easily eliminate alternative hypotheses. In most of the cases, Doyle has already limited the range of possible interpretations of behaviour, making what is only possible seem inevitable.<sup>128</sup>

The modern reader considers murder as one of the preconditions needed for a story to be a detective story, but of the 26 Holmes adventures discussed in this thesis, only ten stories include a murder in their plot and in only six of these adventures murder or death is the reason why Holmes is initially asked to investigate the matter. In fact, some stories include a crime that is not a ‘crime’ at least in the legal sense, but rather a transgression from the conventions of society and their social class. Even Holmes himself acknowledges this to Watson:

“out of these cases which you have been so kind as to interest yourself in, a fair proportion do not treat of crime, in its legal sense, at all. The small matter in which I endeavoured to help the King of Bohemia, the singular experience of Miss Mary Sutherland, the problem connected with the man with the twisted lip, and the incident of the noble bachelor, were all matters which are outside the pale of law.” (COPP, 273)

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<sup>127</sup> Knight, *Crime Fiction 1800-2000* 57.

<sup>128</sup> Jann 685, 688.

The 'crimes' committed are only transgressions from the moral codes and respectable behaviour. Stephen Knight has observed that the doubt and fear of the middle class in Sherlock Holmes stories are directed at other members of the class and their potential failure to remain faithful to the shared morality: the transgressions and disturbances arise primarily from selfishness and a failure to respect the rights of others.<sup>129</sup> Those who have failed are not, with only few exceptions, professional criminals or members of 'dangerous classes' that genuinely threatened bourgeois England; they are respectable people who have gone wrong and turned aside from their proper roles.<sup>130</sup>

In the following chapters I will turn to Sherlock Holmes adventures to see how, on the one hand the Victorian middle class ideology in relation to the colonial past and the women is represented in Arthur Conan Doyle's writing, and on the other hand, how the adventures assist the Victorian middle class through othering to define what exactly is Victorian middle class, its ideology and what kind of persons are part of it.

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<sup>129</sup> Knight, *Form and Ideology* 89, 91-92.

<sup>130</sup> Knight, *Form and Ideology* 90.

### 3. The Empire and Tainted Past

In this chapter I will focus on investigating connections between imperialism, colonialism and the tainted past in Sherlock Holmes adventures. In the two novels and 24 short stories analysed in this thesis, with the exception of “The Resident Patient,” colonialism or living abroad are invariably connected to tainted or even criminal past. As the following analysis will show, acquiring wealth and/or a higher social position by criminal or ‘vulgar’ methods is not really accepted. The role of Sherlock Holmes is to detect any foreign, colonial or ‘uncivilised’ influence that have managed to penetrate the English soil. Besides the crimes or transgressions committed in the colonies, subchapter 3.2 will also chart out how the colonial past and foreign influence are closely connected to the fears of degeneration of the British ‘race.’ After that I will turn my attention to American past, which is connected to the female past and to mysterious and dangerous secret societies. It should, however, be noted that the terms ‘tainted’ or ‘criminal’ do not indicate that in all the cases the past is criminal in a legal sense. Instead, it refers to transgression against the moral codes and expectations of Victorian middle class, or sometimes, as “The Noble Bachelor” will show, the ‘tainted’ past can turn out to have an innocent explanation.

#### 3.1 Colonial Crimes

Derek Longhurst argues that colonies in Sherlock Holmes adventures are places where “deviant acts of betrayal” can take place.<sup>131</sup> This appears to be true in every Holmes adventure that includes a character that originates or has lived at some point of his or her life in the English colonies. Although the crimes or other transgressions usually take place in London or in its surrounding counties, the crime, the chaos, motives or causes derive in one way or another from the colonies or some other foreign, distant places. For instance, in “A Case of

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<sup>131</sup> Longhurst 63.

Identity,” the motive for James Windibank to delude his stepdaughter lies in the wealth she has inherited from New Zealand, in “The Blue Carbuncle” the theft of the notorious precious stone that originates from China is the cause of the ensuing incidents and in “The Man with the Twisted Lips” opium, the drug exported from China and one of the most important export commodities in British colonial trade, and a visit to an opium den instigates the incidents of that particular case. Further, several adventures include foreigners, crimes and transgressions that have taken place or otherwise have their origin in foreign countries, such as the king and his blackmailing former mistress in “A Scandal in Bohemia,” the German forgers in “The Engineer’s Thumb,” and what this chapter will concentrate on, the tainted or criminal past of the Englishmen that originate from or have lived in the British colonies. What Arthur Conan Doyle seems to suggest in the two first Sherlock Holmes novels and the first 24 short stories is that degeneration, regression and immorality derive from the colonies and the wrongdoers, offenders and the disorder that follow them have all arrived from all over the world to London, into “that great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are irresistibly drained” (STUD, 11), that was the centre of the leading nation of that time.

In the same way as the Victorians saw the colonies as a source of wealth for them and their nation, in Sherlock Holmes adventures the colonies are represented as resources that can be employed to boost and sustain the economy of England and gain profit to those who gain profit from them. But here lies the paradox: although is it from the Victorian English point of view acceptable to exploit the natural resources and natives of the colonised areas, as Longhurst asserts, in Doyle’s writing “criminality is attached to those who have artificially and unnaturally acquired the external prerequisites without the ‘real’, ‘natural’ and profoundly English social qualifications to belong.”<sup>132</sup> Especially the *nouveaux riches* are considered to be equal to criminals in the stories, which suggests that class movement is not really accepted.

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<sup>132</sup> Longhurst 63.

Trade and industry were held in some suspicion while the ownership of land was seen as the true measure of social position and the respectable status of gentleman. This led the middle-class industrialists and businessmen that had made their wealth through trade or colonial speculation to disguise the ‘vulgar’ source of their wealth by acquiring land and country estates<sup>133</sup> and retiring to lead the life of a leisured country gentleman.<sup>134</sup> The first two cycles of Holmes adventures feature several characters that have committed a crime or some other violation or transgression in the past. With the exception of “The Resident Patient,” in all the other stories the past is set in the colonies or in the former British colony of United States.

Both “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” and “The Gloria Scott” include a former criminal who has concealed his criminal past and assumed the position of a leisured gentleman in his old home country. The aspiration for social esteem had become an obsession among the middle class and those who had newly prospered: it was widely common to emulate the lifestyle of upper class by acquiring large and expensive houses, elegant horses and carriages, servants and imitating their forms of social life.<sup>135</sup> In “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” John Turner, a wealthy landowner who “made his money in Australia, and [who had] returned some years ago to the old country” (BOSC, 160) turns to be a former highwayman from Australia, back then known as Black Jack of Ballarat. Holmes finds out that he has murdered his tenant and neighbour Charles McCarthy, also an ex-Australian. On the outward appearance, their relationship had seemed like that of an affluent man supporting his poorer friend, but in reality, McCarthy had been blackmailing Turner for years. While they had lived in Australia, McCarthy had been a victim of one of Turner’s attacks. After he had moved back to England, he had recognised Turner and started to blackmail him. For twenty years McCartney blackmailed Turner to give him land, money and houses, otherwise he would have exposed him. Finally, when McCartney had demanded that Turner must give

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<sup>133</sup> Longhurst 58.

<sup>134</sup> Raynor 14.

<sup>135</sup> Branca 6.



his only daughter Alice to McCartney's son James, Turner had had enough and in a fit of rage killed McCartney. A similar kind of subplot is found in "The Gloria Scott," where the father of Holmes's friend turns out to be a former criminal that had been convicted to transportation to Australia. On the way there, he had participated in a bloody mutiny on a convict ship, and after escaping, had together with his surviving fellow mutineers assumed a new identity and "made [their] way to the diggings, where [...] they had no difficulty in losing their former identities" (GLOR, 353). They prospered, came back as rich colonials to England, hoping that their pasts would be forever buried. Trevor, the father of Holmes's friend, even became the Justice of Peace in his community. But a seaman, whose life they had saved during the mutiny, comes back to blackmail them.

"The Boscombe Valley Mystery" and "Gloria Scott" have as their motives blackmail and the criminal past connected to Australia, but two stories that are set India deal with guilty past of betraying one's friend and gaining advantage from the betrayal. Unlike Australia, which had only a small population of aborigines scattered around the vast Australian mainland, India was a colonised nation that had a large indigenous population with their own cultural backgrounds that were powerful and advanced to the degree that the Indians could offer resistance to the imperialist policies of Britain. In *The Sign of Four* and "The Crooked Man" the past is connected to the 1857 Mutiny in India, which has been labelled as Britain's most traumatic imperial encounter.<sup>136</sup> The Mutiny generated numerous novels, sensational eyewitness accounts, articles, histories, poems and plays, which according to Brantlinger, "display extreme forms of extropunitive projection, the racist pattern of blaming the victim expressed in terms of an absolute polarization of good and evil, innocence and guilt, justice and injustice, moral restraint and sexual depravity, civilization and barbarism."<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Keep and Randall 208.

<sup>137</sup> Brantlinger 199-200.

According to Brantlinger, the Victorian writing about the Indian Mutiny expresses in concentrated form the racist ideology that Edward Said calls Orientalism.<sup>138</sup> Said has termed the Western assumptions towards the East as Orientalism, which according to Said is "a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient."<sup>139</sup> Orientalism was, and still is, a convenient way of making certain generalizations and creating stereotypes of Middle and Far Eastern people. Orientalist discourse offers a "political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (the Orient, the East, 'them')." Orientals were described as "inveterate liars," "lethargic and suspicious," "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, different," in other words everything opposite to the "clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race" who were "rational, virtuous, mature, normal."<sup>140</sup> Since the colonised were in the eyes of the colonisers incapable of bringing themselves up to the level that the westerners considered civilisation, according to the imperialist ideology it was up to the inherently superior British to conquer, govern and civilise them. In the case of India, according to Said, the Mutiny of 1857 seemed to prove the necessity of British imperial control over the subcontinent and that the Indians deserved subjugation by a higher civilisation.<sup>141</sup>

In the novel *The Sign of Four* Holmes and Watson are after a precious Agra treasure. Their client, Mary Morstan, is said to be the heiress of that treasure together with the sons of a brother officer of her father, but as Holmes and Watson discover during the adventure, the treasure was originally stolen from an Indian rajah's agent at the time of the Indian Mutiny by Jonathan Small, an English ex-soldier, and three Sikh soldiers. Small and the three Sikh soldiers were imprisoned and sent to a penal colony in the Andaman Islands, where Small and

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<sup>138</sup> Brantlinger 199.

<sup>139</sup> Said, *Orientalism* 202.

<sup>140</sup> Said, *Orientalism* 39-40, 43.

<sup>141</sup> Said, *Culture* 147.

his accomplices ally themselves with Captain Morstan and Major Sholto and promise them a share of the treasure if they help them to escape. Sholto goes to Agra to collect the treasure, but instead of returning back to the Andaman Islands, he betrays the rest and flees back to England with the treasure. Morstan follows him, but is found dead. Eventually Small manages to escape the prison island with the help of his friend, Tonga, an aborigine of Andaman Islands, and returns with him to England to find Sholto and the treasure. Sholto dies before Small can wreak revenge on him and Small decides to wait until Sholto's sons manage to locate the hidden treasure.

Jon Thompson has connected Doyle's representation of Tonga and India in *The Sign of Four* as a part of way of conceiving the East as Said has described it, as a domain that requires the stabilizing influence of the West.<sup>142</sup> While "The Crooked Man," the other Holmes adventure connected to the Indian Mutiny, only mentions that "all Hell was loose in the country" (CROO, 385), *The Sign of Four* is a bit more explicit, giving a lengthy description of the Mutiny from the British point of view, thus accentuating the savage and barbaric view the Englishmen held of the colonised people. Neither of the stories mentions any of the atrocities the British troops did or question the justification of the British control over India. Jonathan Small recounts in lurid details how he found his employer's wife "all cut into ribbons and half-eaten by jackals and native dogs" while the killers were "dancing and howling" (SIGN, 104) around the burned houses. The Indian mutineers are described as "two hundred thousand black devils let loose" and Agra was full of "fanatics and fierce devil worshippers of all sorts" (SIGN, 104).

Another example of accentuated otherness and inferiority is found in the treatment of Tonga, the native companion of Jonathan Small. Every time Watson mentions him, he is described in a manner that underlines his savagery and primitiveness. Tonga is described as

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<sup>142</sup> Thompson 69.

“a little back man – the smallest I have ever seen – with a great, misshapen head and a shock of tangled, dishevelled hair” (SIGN, 99). He has a “bearded, hairy face, with cruel eyes and an expression of concentrated malevolence” (SIGN, 74), and he is “a savage, distorted creature” and an “unhallowed dwarf with [...] hideous face” “so deeply marked with all bestiality and cruelty” that it is “enough to give a man a sleepless night” (SIGN, 99). A gazetteer read by Holmes portrays the aborigines of the Andaman Islands as “fierce, morose and intractable people”, who are “naturally hideous, having large, misshapen heads, small, fierce eyes and distorted features” and who after killing their victims conclude the massacre by “a cannibal feast” (SIGN, 91).

Although un-English barbarism has managed to penetrate England in the form of Tonga, Agra treasure and consequences they brought with them, it is detected and controlled by Holmes through his extraordinary physical and mental prowess. What Thompson means is that “in this way Holmes is able to domesticate the fear of the orient as represented by the Indian Mutiny at the same time that he is able to justify English imperialism in India.”<sup>143</sup> In addition, unlike in *The Moonstone*, a 1868 novel by Wilkie Collins and to which *The Sign of Four* heavily owes to in its plot, where the Indian diamond eventually is returned to the Hindu temple where a British officer stole it, the original owner does not receive his property back. The narrative takes for granted that Mary Morstan together with Thaddeus and Bartholomew Sholto are the legitimate owners of the treasure and at no point does the narrative suggest that the rightful owner of the treasure would be the Indian rajah, from whom the treasure was originally stolen. The novel suggests that it is justified for the westerners to subjugate the colonised countries and their peoples and that the white middle-class Englishmen should be allowed to steal their fortunes. However, the novel’s conclusion offers a kind of impartial decision to that question: in the end, no one gains possession of the treasure. The disorder that

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<sup>143</sup> Thompson 72.

entered Britain in the form of the treasure and Tonga is detected and conquered by Holmes. Britain and its civilised social order are saved and restored when Holmes and Watson kill Tonga and the fate of the treasure is to sink into the waters of the Thames together with Tonga.

All in all, the colonies in general are represented as places from which the coloniser can gain some advantage, and in one way or another money and wealth are connected to them. The advantage gained from the colonies does not always have to be directly financial. For example, in “The Crooked Man” a soldier wins a girl by betraying her fiancé to the enemy. Over the years, his wife plays an important part in his career by helping him to advance from sergeant to colonel in military hierarchy. “The Crooked Man” together with “Boscombe Valley Mystery” and *The Sign of Four* shows that the colonies are also places that can also corrupt a representative of a ‘civilised’ culture, that is, a white Englishman. In addition, it should be noted that the Empire is not solely the source of all the evil that threatens England and its citizens, it can also be a haven and a place of escape from the harsh experiences they have had to go through in England. In “The Copper Beeches”, for instance, Miss Rucastle, the girl whose father kept her locked in an uninhabited wing of his house to prevent her from marrying, and her fiancé flee England for Mauritius, and in “Gloria Scott”, Victor Trevor emigrates to the Himalayas to escape the disgrace that might fall upon him if the truth of his father’s criminal past were to become public.

The next subchapter will continue on the theme of tainted, colonial past, but from another point of view: I will take a look on how the fears of degeneration of the British ‘race’ through the foreign influence of colonies are represented in Sherlock Holmes adventures.

### 3.2 Fears of Degeneration

As suggested in the previous subchapter, the Englishmen saw London as the undisputed centre of the Empire, and even the whole world, where, as Dr. Watson puts it, “that great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are irresistibly drained” (STUD, 11). In addition, the discussion above suggested that colonies are places where deviant, even criminal acts take place. In this subchapter the aim is to analyse the tainted, colonial past in relation to the late nineteenth century beliefs and worries over the British superiority, and to see how the function of Sherlock Holmes is to detect any exotic and even barbaric influence that might threaten the purity and inviolability of the British society and the English ‘race.’ Interesting, however, is that the person most noticeably depicted as having degenerated through the influence of foreign, ‘primitive’ cultures, is not a representative of middle class, but an aristocrat.

Timothy L. Carens suggests that during the Victorian period, “imperial ideology functioned as a repressive mechanism that strategically estranged certain impulses and behaviors by projecting them onto the ‘lower races’ inhabiting colonial locales.”<sup>144</sup> Patrick Brantlinger states that imperialism both as an ideology and political faith functioned as a partial substitute for declining Christianity and for declining faith in Britain’s future.<sup>145</sup> There was a growing concern about the degeneration of the British ‘race’ at home. For much of the nineteenth century urban areas were synonymous with dirt, disease, overcrowding, smells, and noise and this led to serious problems with housing, education, feeding, hygiene, sanitary conditions, health care and controlling the masses. As the vast urbanisation continued, the levels of e.g. infant mortality, tuberculosis and cholera epidemics rose due to poor hygiene, health care, nutrition and housing and working conditions, not only among the poverty-

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<sup>144</sup> Timothy L. Carens, *Outlandish English Subjects in the Victorian Domestic Novel* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 2-3.

<sup>145</sup> Brantlinger 228.

stricken lower classes, but even among the upper and middle classes.<sup>146</sup> Despite the advances in medicine and health care, in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign the unquestionable truth was that the majority of the population, regardless of class, suffered from a whole host of illnesses and infirmities. This caused concern among the social observers: the world's greatest industrial and imperial power was seriously weakened at its domestic heartlands.<sup>147</sup> The eugenics movement and the popularisation of its findings suggested that the British 'race' faced a process of racial degeneration; the poverty-stricken and ill-nourished urban masses passed their physical deficiencies to their offspring.<sup>148</sup> Imperialism and jingoism found a base in particular among the suburban middle and lower middle class. The firm belief in British superiority combined with Darwinian concepts of evolutionary struggle and 'survivor of the fittest,' and the incorporation of certain aspects of nostalgic rural and pastoral ideals<sup>149</sup> forged a new aggressive national consciousness that masked the internal social and economic differences and incongruities.<sup>150</sup>

The nineteenth century Evangelic Christianity and evolutionary anthropology maintained strong theoretical views about the common origin of mankind and thus disrupted some of the assumptions about the superiority and difference of the Englishmen in relation to the colonial subjects. They were considered to be members of the same human family as the English, although degraded and distant.<sup>151</sup> Both religious and evolutionary discourses explained the English superiority over the 'primitives' as a result of the historical progress from a period of unity to a period in which England had gradually differentiated itself from colonial others. The Evangelic clergy emphasised the significance of spiritual enlightenment, i.e. Christianity, and in particular the Protestant Reformation that had "enabled the nation to

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<sup>146</sup> Walvin 25-29.

<sup>147</sup> Walvin 33-34.

<sup>148</sup> Walvin 117-119.

<sup>149</sup> More on this in Paul Rich, "The Quest for Englishness," *Victorian Values: Personalities and Perspectives in Nineteenth Century Society*, ed. Gordon Marsden (London: Longman, 1990) 211-225.

<sup>150</sup> Rich 221.

<sup>151</sup> Carens 22.

attain a position of relative spiritual purity,” whereas evolutionary anthropologists of the nineteenth century believed that all humans shared a common origin and possessed same mental faculties, but were on the different stage of the process of human development, the West and in particular the English outpacing the colonial cultures due to cultural sophistication.<sup>152</sup>

But the Victorian assertion of the supremacy and difference of the English in relation to the colonial subjects was constantly shadowed by the distressing apprehension that colonial otherness was not nearly other enough. This fear was further intensified by the acknowledgement by both the Church and the evolutionary anthropologists that the English had once been in a same position as the colonial ‘primitives’ they abhorred and that there still existed traces of this connection. Carens explains how Evangelic and evolutionary theorists in a similar vein to Freud and his discussion on the ‘uncanny’ suggested that the strange primitive ‘other’ still abides within the modern self. Especially the Evangelic Christians believed that if one were given freer rein in tropical climates, the person would turn his back to Englishness and instead start to harbour the degenerate propensities.<sup>153</sup>

The fears of British civilisation reverting into barbarism or savagery and thus weakening Britain’s imperial hegemony were a recurrent theme in the late-nineteenth century British imperial Gothic literature.<sup>154</sup> Doyle addressed these fears in “The Speckled Band” which, compared to the other Holmes adventures, is very Gothic in its atmosphere. Grimesby Roylott is an aristocrat and the last member of one of the oldest Saxon families, who one time were among the richest in England, but now have lost nearly all of their land and wealth. Roylott studied to become a doctor and went out to India. While living in India, he killed his butler in a fit of fury and was imprisoned for years. After returning to England, his character had changed. Roylott withdrew himself to his old family seat, cutting of any contacts from his

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<sup>152</sup> Carens 28-30.

<sup>153</sup> Carens 31.

<sup>154</sup> Brantlinger 229-230.



neighbours and former friends and preventing his stepdaughters from taking part in the social life. Instead, he began to “indulge in ferocious quarrels” (SPEC, 216), causing scandals and much distress to his family. His only friends are the wandering gipsies, who are allowed to camp on his land, and with whom he sometimes wanders away for weeks. He has a passion for exotic Indian animals, that are allowed to wander freely over his grounds, and that are feared almost as much by the villagers as their master. Roylott is described as “a man of immense strength” (SPEC, 216), who leaves a mark on his stepdaughter’s wrist of his grip. His costume is “a peculiar mixture of the professional and of the agricultural”, and he has “a large face, seared with a thousand wrinkles, burned yellow with the sun, and marked with every passion”, and “deep-set, bile-shot eyes, and [...] high thin fleshless nose [that] gave him somewhat the resemblance to a fierce old bird of prey” (SPEC, 220).

But as Hodgson notes, the greatest threat is not in that he is a brute, but in that he is a doctor.<sup>155</sup> Holmes comments Roylott by stating, “when a doctor does go wrong, he is the first of criminals. He has nerve and he has knowledge” (SPEC, 226). Dr Grimesby Roylott is in fact the only villainous doctor in Holmes canon.<sup>156</sup> Doctor was one of the most typical new Victorian middle class professions and for the Victorian middle class doctors were the sign of respectability, so it is rather surprising to see a villainous doctor. By making a doctor to be the villain of the adventure, Doyle is provoking the fears of the middle class that everything is not as it seems, that anyone could be deviant. What is interesting in Roylott, is that he is an aristocrat who has attempted to incorporate himself in the middle class by assuming the most typical middle class profession. The fact that he fails in it can be seen as an indication of the mistrust the middle class felt for the old aristocracy.

Besides the murder of his stepdaughter and the attempted murder of the other stepdaughter, Dr Grimesby Roylott is guilty of three serious transgressions in the class-

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<sup>155</sup> John A. Hodgson, “The Recoil of ‘The Speckled Band:’ Detective Story and Detective Discourse,” *Poetics Today* 13.2 (1992): 316.

<sup>156</sup> Hodgson 311.

conscious society. Firstly, he has voluntarily stepped down in the class hierarchy of the Victorian society: he was born a member of an old aristocratic family, but chose to earn his livelihood in a typically middle-class profession, in medicine. Although his motives lie in the extreme poverty of his family, and to survive, he was forced to work, he has still committed a cardinal sin in the eyes of the newly formed middle class that constantly were worried about maintaining their position in society.

Secondly, and one may speculate, as a consequence of his earlier 'crime,' Roylott has betrayed Britain, the Empire and 'Britishness.' "The Speckled Band" suggests that Dr. Grimesby Roylott has acquired a character that he did not have prior to his stay in India. Unlike Henry Wood in "The Crooked Man" who has managed to maintain his 'Britishness' and the values attached to it and to his position as an officer despite the hardships he has endured living among the natives, Roylott has become subsumed within the Orient, the other, and as a result of his adoption of the alien and inferior culture, he has brought madness, disorder and violence into the grounds of his ancestral home and into the nearby village. As an attempt to explain the change of his character, his stepdaughter Helen Stoner mentions that his family has had a history of "violence of temper approaching to mania" and that his condition has "been intensified by his long residence in the tropics" (SPEC, 216). From the evolutionary anthropologic point of view, Roylott has been contaminated by India, his unconscious primitiveness and deviance has surfaced and he has degenerated to an earlier stage of human development and shed his western civilisation.

Thirdly, the profit he has gained from the colonies is the income of his wife and his stepdaughters. The widow Roylott had married in India had a considerable sum of money at her disposal. With this annual income Roylott has managed to maintain an adequate lifestyle, but the money would go to the daughters in the event of their marriages. Therefore he has attempted to prevent his stepdaughters from taking part in social life and from fulfilling the

sole function the conservative Victorian society saw for women: marriage. When the sisters despite his attempts managed to find suitors, he resorted to murder. The evil doctor who has betrayed both his original and adopted class and ‘Britishness’ has to be punished by death; his own serpent that he used in the murder and attempted murder of his stepdaughters kills him.

Besides Roylott, there are other characters in the Holmes canon that are suggested to have been contaminated by the Empire. As mentioned in the previous chapter, John Turner in “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” had turned from an honest working man to a highwayman while living in Australia and Colonel Barclay in “The Crooked Man” in the midst of the Indian Mutiny betrayed his rival in love to the enemy so that he would be able to pursue her hand in marriage. Major Sholto and his sons have been thoroughly orientalised in *The Sign of Four*. By stealing the Agra treasure and taking it to England, Sholto enables the foreign and primitive to enter England. He also took a large collection of valuable exotic curiosities and a staff of native servants with him. With these souvenirs his sons have created an exotic and extravagant atmosphere in their homes. Watson remarks of the servant that lets them in that “there was something strangely incongruous in this Oriental figured in the commonplace doorway of a third-rate suburban dwelling-house” (SIGN, 71). The room where Thaddeus Sholto receives his guests is a room which

“[looks] as out-of-place as a diamond of the first water in the setting of brass. The richest and glossiest of curtains and tapestries draped the walls, looped back here and there to expose some richly-mounted painting or oriental vase. The carpet was of amber and black, so soft and so thick that foot sank pleasantly into it, as into a bed of moss. Two great tiger-skins thrown athwart it increased the suggestion of Eastern luxury, as did a huge hookah which stood upon a mat in the corner. A lamp in the fashion of a silver dove was hung from an almost invisible golden wire in the centre of the room. As it burned it filled the air with a subtle and aromatic odour.” (SIGN, 72)

The repercussion of foreign influences is further accentuated in the eccentricity of Major Sholto’s sons. In the later Holmes adventures, such as “The Empty House,” where Sherlock Holmes resurrects himself from death, Colonel Sebastian Moran is an officer that has made an

honourable career in India, but at some point started to go wrong, becoming accomplice to Professor Moriarty, Holmes's adversary. Moriarty, although an Irishman, a representative of another colonised country by Great Britain, is described to be "a man of good birth and excellent education," with "a most brilliant career before him," but with "a criminal ran in his blood, which [...] increased and rendered infinitely more dangerous by his extraordinary mental powers" (FINA, 436). In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Stapleton, originating from South America, appears to be a pleasant naturalist and a former schoolmaster, but in fact is the scheming villain of the novel. Roylott, Moran and Stapleton are products of the colonies; they are dangerous and contaminated and wreak havoc in their surroundings. Unlike Roylott, or the eccentric Sholtos, Moran and Stapleton can pass as normal English gentlemen, but in reality their nature has degenerated to bestial.

However, unlike for example, Joseph Conrad in "Heart of Darkness" (1902), Doyle does not seem to offer any concrete criticism against colonialism itself. He acknowledges that the Empire may have a regressive influence on persons who have lived in the colonies, but as for example in the case of Grimesby Roylott, this is credited to the hereditary condition, which, as it may be assumed, is a consequence of his aristocratic background. What Doyle suggests is that the evil and the chaos are not innate qualities in the members of the bourgeois England, but instead, something that come from the outside. To put it in another way, the middle-class Englishmen are represented as innately good who have been degenerated by the outside influence. Similarly as in "Heart of Darkness," degeneration is linked to the fact that one is removed from one's natural social context where the surrounding society observes and administers one's behaviour and furthermore, punishes accordingly if one fails to adhere to the codes of behaviour.

In the next subchapter I will discuss the guilty or tainted past that is located in America.

### 3.3 American Past

Although the USA had gained independence already in 1777, it still was considered by many to be a part of the British Empire. This may be explained by the fact that several thousands Britons emigrated to every year to America and that the hegemonic culture in the USA was Anglo-Saxon. In Sherlock Holmes adventures, the past in America is associated with mysterious secret societies, women and the possibility of miscegenation. The secret societies are seen as 'states within a state' and equalled, for example, with German and Italian revolutionist movements. Women are either innocent girls or they have something to hide from their past.

In *A Study in Scarlet* (1888), the very first Sherlock Holmes adventure Arthur Conan Doyle wrote, Sherlock Holmes investigates a murder that has its origin in the Mormon society of Utah. In the novel, young American woman called Lucy Ferrier has been forced into a polygamous marriage against her will after her father has been killed by a Mormon secret society. She has been engaged to Jefferson Hope, who is not a Mormon, which in the eyes of the Mormons is a violation against their rules. The motive for the forced marriage is purely an economical one: the Mormons want Lucy solely because of her father's property. Lucy dies within a month of the marriage and Jefferson Hope goes in a quest for revenge after the men who murdered Lucy's father John Ferrier and in the end caused her premature death. Over the year he pursues them from United States to Russia and Europe, until he finally ensnares them in London, where he kills the men.

The ending of the novel raises the question whether Doyle actually condemns the actions of Jefferson Hope. The morality of the Victorian era demanded, and still demands, that those who have contravened the law should be brought to justice and convicted, but Jefferson Hope dies before the trial. Mormonism was associated with barbarism and violence, and in the novel, the Mormons are represented as savages who terrorise the community with

fear and violence and who force women into, from the Victorian middle-class point of view, immoral polygamous marriages. There are also references to white slavery in the novel; it is suggested that the Mormons murdered immigrants and raided their camps to fill “the harems of the Elders” (STUD, 45-46).

Lydia Alix Fillingham maintains that the subjects discussed in *A Study in Scarlet* were those that occupied the minds of the middle class reader, but Doyle felt comfortable to deal with them by projecting them onto a Mormon background. Firstly, she argues that the utter foreignness and familiarity makes Mormonism crucial to *A Study in Scarlet*.<sup>157</sup> To begin with, polygamy was a taboo, but many of the polygamous wives and husbands had emigrated from England, and secondly, the religion seemed bizarre and even heathen, but it still was not non-Christian. In addition, Mormonism was associated with barbarism and violence, but since, as noted above, many of the Mormons originated from England, also the pioneering spirit of Anglo-Saxon virtue was linked to the religion: “[t]he savage man, and the savage beast, hunger, thirst, fatigue, and disease – every impediment which Nature could place in the way – had all been overcome with Anglo-Saxon tenacity” (STUD, 42). According to Fillingham, this meant that the Mormons did not only represent a distanced other for the English; she argues that “the liminal position of Mormonism means that their otherness always contains much sameness,”<sup>158</sup> in other words, the civilised, cultured, middle-class Englishmen were not that far from the barbarism and violence associated with the Mormons in the story.

Secondly, the Victorian middle class made a clear difference between the private and public sphere; private sphere, or home, was held as being a man’s possession or domain<sup>159</sup> but the Mormon Church denies this separation. Instead, the Mormon Church actively intrudes the lives and even the homes of the members of the church in the middle of the night. The elders

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<sup>157</sup> Lydia Alix Fillingham, “‘The Colourless Skein of Life:’ Threats to the Private Sphere in Conan Doyle’s *A Study in Scarlet*,” *ELH*, 56.3 (1989): 674.

<sup>158</sup> Fillingham 674.

<sup>159</sup> Tosh 1.

of the church give John Ferrier thirty days to decide whom his daughter should marry. No should be able to enter his house, but each morning he finds a number marking how many days there is left somewhere inside his home. The Ferriers are not the only ones that are being persecuted; the entire community is described to be living under constant fear. Anyone who violates or is even suspected of violating the rules of the church or the commands of the elders cannot escape from “the Sacred Council of Four” (STUD, 46) who are the leaders of the Mormons, or “The Danite Band, or the Avenging Angels,” (STUD, 46) who carry out the revenge that has been passed on those who have broken the rules. Fillingham argues that a state within a state is great threat to the larger entity and that the demand of “unanimity of the voice [...] makes the ideology of the state within a state so powerful and threatening to the larger society.”<sup>160</sup> What Fillingham means with this is that when an individual is attached to a group that has its own rules and values that are significantly different from those of the larger group, in this case the dominant Victorian middle class, and that are not controlled and monitored by the central authorities, it threatens the very fabric of society. The idea of that public sphere can intrude the private, as it does in the case of John Ferrier, implies that the legitimate state might also act this way. Fillingham argues that if a smaller group has such a great influence over its members, as the Mormons do, they may make the idea of potential revolution credible.<sup>161</sup>

Mormons and the Mormon state within a state and German and Italian socialists and secret societies seeking revolutionary changes are markedly connected in *A Study in Scarlet*. The novel mentions that “[n]ot the Inquisition of Seville, nor the German Vehmgericht, nor the Secret Societies of Italy, were ever able to put a more formidable machinery in motion than that which cast a cloud over the state of Utah” (STUD, 45). Jefferson Hope deliberately tries to misdirect the police by writing “RACHE” (STUD, 22), the German word for

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<sup>160</sup> Fillingham 677, 679.

<sup>161</sup> Fillingham 681.

‘revenge,’ in his blood to the wall so that they would assume that German secret societies were behind the murder. The fictional newspaper accounts on the murder connect the crime with foreign immigrants, German Socialists, Italian secret societies, sensational murder cases and poisonings, Darwinism and other influential social theories of the era, and demand that foreigners and all foreign influence should be closely surveyed.

Similarly as in *A Study in Scarlet*, the feud inside an American organisation is brought from United States to England in “The Five Orange Pips.” Ku Klux Klan, the organisation whose rules a member has broken, punishes the wrongdoer with death, and in the same way as Jefferson Hope pursued the ones that had destroyed his bride and her father, Colonel Openshaw cannot escape the ones he has betrayed. Colonel Openshaw had been a founding member of Ku Klux Klan in America, but upon breaking his ties with the organisation and his return to England, he had taken the registers and diaries of KKK with him as he emigrated back to his old home country. This led to the collapse of Ku Klux Klan and if the papers were to become public, they might “implicate some of the first men in the South” (FIVE, 183). In “The Five Orange Pips”, the past invades the private sphere and becomes a threat to Openshaw’s family life in the present and to the completely innocent family members. The betrayal of Colonel Openshaw leads to his death, but also the innocent John Openshaw and his likewise innocent father are murdered because the Colonel had flouted the codes of the order. Doyle later returned to the theme of American past connected with secret societies in the last Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Valley of Fear* (1915), where the remaining members of a Pennsylvanian secret society the Scowlers have sent an assassin to take revenge on a former American detective who played a pivotal part in bringing down the organisation.

Besides the past being connected to secret societies, America is associated with young women, their marriages and their past. Moreover, the American crime or transgressions are not always violent or even criminal in the legal sense. In “The Noble Bachelor” Miss Hatty



Doran, an only child of a newly rich Californian millionaire is marrying an impoverished English aristocrat, Lord St Simon, but immediately after their wedding ceremony the bride disappears. The incident has its origins in a Rocky Mountains gold-prospecting camps where Hatty Doran had lived with her father before they had become rich. She had been engaged to a poor gold-digger called Francis Hay Moulton, but when Mr. Doran struck gold, he tried to break his daughter's engagement. The couple married secretly and Moulton went off to seek fortune, so that Mr. Doran would accept him as his daughter's husband. Moulton was believed to have died when Apache Indians had attacked a miners' camp, but after being kept as a prisoner for several years, he managed to escape and arrived just in time to save his wife from a trade-off organised by her father and future husband, where in exchange for a higher social status, a *nouveau riche* American business man marries his daughter to a penniless English lord.

"The Yellow Face" presents an interesting fissure in the otherwise coherent Victorian middle class ideology that Doyle presents in his writing: the story contains a surprisingly liberal view of miscegenation in the light of the fears of degeneration of English 'race' and accepts the fact that a white middle-class woman has been married to a black man, considering that a sexual relationship with a white, middle-class English woman and a black man was a taboo subject.

"The Yellow Face" is a remarkable story in two senses. Firstly, it demonstrates that also Holmes can be wrong in his deductions. The adventure begins when a young man named Grant Munro comes to consult Holmes in his domestic matters. He has found out that his wife secretly visits the nearby cottage. The behaviour of the inhabitants of the cottage seems peculiar and Munro himself spots a mysterious yellow face in one of the windows. The face was of "livid, dead yellow" and it had something "unnatural and inhuman" about it (YELL, 323). Based on these facts, Holmes surmises that the yellow face belongs to Effie Munro's

first husband who has not died as she insists, who must have “contracted some loathsome disease and become a leper or an imbecile” (YELL, 328), and has now moved to the house and is now blackmailing her.

The second remarkable feature is Doyle’s treatment of interracial marriage and miscegenation. Effie Munro tries to hide from her husband that her first husband had been a black man from Atlanta and that she had given birth to a black-skinned daughter. She had left her daughter in USA, because the girl’s health had been weak, but eventually could not be separated from her any longer, and has her sent secretly to England. Although Effie Munro asserts that she “never once while he lived did I for one instant regret” her marriage to a black man, and “dark or fair, [Lucy] is my own dear little girlie, and her mother’s pet” (YELL, 329), her actions seem to suggest otherwise. She treats her child, the living trace of her tainted past and of her first unacceptable marriage, like the leper Holmes imagined the first husband to be. She tries to pass the child off as white by disguising her with a mask and long white gloves, “so that even those who might see her at the window should not gossip about there being a black child in the neighbourhood” (YELL, 330) and by trying to hide from her husband any connection that she has with the inhabitants of the cottage. With her first marriage to a black man in the southern USA she had had to “cut myself off from my race in order to wed him” (YELL, 329) Effie Munro fears most that she might lose her new husband, a wealthy white middle-class merchant and the position in society that she has received through her second marriage.

Ronald R. Thomas has suggested that perhaps Holmes has identified the situation correctly after all: Holmes “perfectly recapitulates the blindness of the culture he represents by seeing what the culture sees behind racial difference.” What Thomas means by this is that by associating physiological signs of African descent with illness and inhumanness, the

British imperial ambitions in Africa and in the East could be pursued with full force.<sup>162</sup> Although in the nineteenth century there had been a tacit acceptance for interracial sex between white men and coloured women in many British colonies, interracial marriage and specifically interracial sex between white women and coloured men were considered utterly reprehensible and a taboo subject.<sup>163</sup> The women ‘drawn’ to men of colour were seen as either passive victims that had fallen as prey to the licentious aliens or as sexually immoral and unscrupulous women that were likened to prostitutes. In addition, miscegenation was considered to have ‘disastrous’ consequences: the child was deemed to inherit the worst features of both parents.<sup>164</sup> In this light, “The Yellow Face” comes across as an anomaly. The ‘worst feature’ the girl has inherited is the “coal-black” skin: Effie Munro explains that “[i]t was our misfortune that our only child took after his people rather than mine. It is often so in such matches and little Lucy is darker than ever her father was” (YELL, 329). As a consequence of an ‘abominable’ relationship between a white middle-class Anglo-Saxon woman with a former black slave, the skin of their child is even darker than that of her father, although in reality such an occurrence would be abnormal.

The deceased husband of Effie Munro adds another exemplar to admirable American characters. He is described as “a nobler man ever walked the earth,” “strikingly handsome and intelligent,” despite that he bears “unmistakable signs upon his features of his African descent” (YELL, 329). John Hebron had also been an educated man; he is told to have been “a lawyer with a good practice” (YELL, 322) and in addition a wealthy man. All in all, he is treated and depicted in a similar manner as any other white Christian middle-class male in Doyle’s writing, and even after it is revealed that John Hebron was black, there is no indication that he or the black girl would be treated as any less human by Munro:

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<sup>162</sup> Ronald R. Thomas, “The Fingerprint of the Foreigner: Colonizing the Criminal Body in 1890s Detective Fiction and Criminal Anthropology,” *ELH*, 6.3 (1994): 678.

<sup>163</sup> Lucy Bland, “White Women and Men of Colour: Miscegenation Fears in Britain after the Great War,” *Gender & History* 17.1 (2005): 31.

<sup>164</sup> Bland 33.

“It was a long two minutes before Grant Munro broke the silence, and when his answer came it was one of which I love to think. He lifted the little child, kissed her, and then, still carrying her, he held his other hand out to his wife and turned towards the door.

‘We can talk it over more comfortable at home,’ said he. ‘I am not a very good man, Effie, but I think that I am a better one than you have given me credit for being.’ “ (YELL, 330)

Watson comments the decision of Grant Munro as “one of which I love to think” (YELL, 330). Although Munro accepts his position as a stepfather and the conclusion of the story indicates that the little black child is welcomed as a member of the family, one can presume that the child will continue to be the constant reminder of Effie Munro’s “tainted” past and to be a peculiarity in the quiet middle-class suburb in the outskirts of London.

In the next chapter I will continue on the theme of women, but discussion will take place from another point of view. Subchapter 3.3 aimed among other things at charting women in relation to their tainted past, or the past that included a female character as a central motive in it, but in chapter 4 I will firstly analyse the position of women and after that, I will take a closer look on some female characters that do not subscribe to the ideal the Victorian middle class had of women.

## 4. Women in Sherlock Holmes Adventures

In this chapter I will first take a look on the position of women in the Sherlock Holmes adventures: how women and the question of marriage are closely linked together and how women are seen as private property owned by men. I will closely analyse three adventures, “A Case of Identity,” “The Speckled Band” “The Copper Beeches,” which all have a similar central theme in them: a male parent attempting to stop the marriage of a daughter. In addition, I will also discuss other adventures where women are either coaxed or forced to a marriage that would benefit their guardians or other authoritative male figures. In other words, what I try to do is to consider how Arthur Conan Doyle deals with the patriarchal representatives of the ‘old’ order. After that, I will examine what the image of a ‘perfect woman’ for the Victorian middle class was, and then take a closer look on some of the women in Sherlock Holmes adventures that deviate from this ideal.

### 4.1 The Economics of Marriage and the Position of Women

Attacks on private property were criminalized by the rise of the middle class into hegemonic position. As women were also viewed as private property of their fathers or their husbands, and objects that can be exploited according to their exchange value within marital markets, Longhurst argues that this ultimately justified “patriarchal structures of power and the moral virtues of ‘innocent’ marriage.”<sup>165</sup> When examining the stories that concern women and marriage, one notices that in practically every one of them not only is the motivation centred on money and wealth, but also that women are treated as private property that can be sold and bought by men. The idea of woman as property becomes most clear in *A Study in Scarlet*, where the Mormon wives are equalled to animals by calling them “heifers” (STUD, 46). In the novel Lucy Ferrier is forced to choose between two men, of which one has seven wives

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<sup>165</sup> Longhurst 53.

and the other four. Also “The Noble Bachelor” explicitly links marriage with trade and business: an impoverished aristocrat is saving his and his family’s financial situation by marrying a daughter of a Californian millionaire and in return is giving her and her father an access to the English upper class society.

Many of the adventures that have a female victim in them revolve around the theme of an older man attempting to prevent a young lady to have the right to her inheritance and thwarting her from marrying the man of her choice. The women in the stories would have a possibility to independence, at least financially, but are subjugated to the male authority of either their father or stepfather. A woman’s position was commonly considered to be dependent on the social and economic position of her father or her husband during the Victorian era,<sup>166</sup> but for instance in “A Case of Identity,” “The Speckled Band” and “The Copper Beeches” the case is other way around: in “The Speckled Band” the financial situation of Dr. Grimesby Roylott is almost entirely dependent on the income of his stepdaughters, and in “A Case of Identity” and “The Copper Beeches” the economical situation of the parents would worsen significantly, if they lost access to the daughter’s money.

The women, in particular the self-aware middle-class ‘New Women,’ had challenged their both socially and politically subordinate role in the nineteenth century Victorian Britain. Although Schaffer notes, that the term ‘New Woman’ was seen as “an exaggerated, parodic, grotesque version of feminism” by the contemporaries in the 1890s,<sup>167</sup> I would suggest that Arthur Conan Doyle is not against female independence and female inheritance, but instead supports their right to have a control over their own money, at least in the later adventures. In the first short story that deals with the theme, “A Case of Identity,” however, Holmes allows the gullible young lady to continue to be duped by her mother and stepfather. In the adventure

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<sup>166</sup> Vicinus ix.

<sup>167</sup> Talia Schaffer. “Nothing but Foolscap and Ink’: Inventing the New Woman,” *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. Angeliqne Richardson and Chris Willis (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 49.

a young woman by the name of Mary Sutherland asks Holmes to find out what has happened to her fiancée Mr. Hosmer Angel. Miss Sutherland is engaged to a Mr. Angel, but on their way to the wedding ceremony he disappears. “A Case of Identity” also reveals the preoccupation the lower middle class had with money and status. In the Victorian society the lower middle class was in constant danger of falling into poverty; often they were distinguished from the working classes only by status, i.e. not doing manual labour. Most of the members of the middle classes were dependent on their work and the salary they received from it, just like the working class. There was a constant sense of insecurity and a fear of impoverishment among the families that barely had raised themselves above the working class; they feared that they would lose their newly acquired wealth and status and merge into the lower classes.<sup>168</sup> Mary Sutherland has a possibility to female independence in the financial terms; she has a substantial annual income from the interest fund that has been set to her and, in addition, she also earns rather well from her work as a typewriter. She explains her financial situation immediately she has entered Holmes’s apartment: “I’m not rich, but still I have a hundred a year in my own right, besides the little that I make by the machine” (IDEN, 149). She also delivers the details of the exact amounts of how much worth her interest fund is and how much it yields annually and what her earnings from the typewriting job are.

Mary Sutherland’s stepfather James Windibank and his wife are so determined to maintain the status and the wealth they currently have that they planned a scheme so that Mary would never marry. Windibank, a white-collar worker who did not earn as much as he would have needed to achieve the lifestyle he desired, had married a wealthy widow fifteen years older than he. Holmes describes him as a

“man [who] married a woman very much older than himself for her money, [...] and he enjoyed the use of the money of the daughter as long as she lived with them. It was a considerable sum, for people in their position, and the loss of it would have made a serious difference.” (IDEN, 156)

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<sup>168</sup> Rubinstein 291.

Mary Sutherland has given all her annual income from the interest fund to her mother and stepfather. With the money of his wife and stepdaughter, he could lead the life of a middle-class gentleman. Mrs. Windibank seems not to have any guilty conscience of deceiving her daughter. At her first marriage Mrs. Windibank had been a wife of a plumber. Although the business had been lucrative, the profession of the late Mr. Sutherland had still been associated with manual labour of the working class. The widow had carried on with the plumbing business after his death. After their marriage, Windibank had made her sell the business for much lower price than what its actual worth was, in order to dispel any association of manual labour that might be attached to the family. Her marriage to James Windibank, who works as a clerk in the City, had solidified her status as a member of the middle middle classes. Besides selling the plumbing business, Windibank had also forbidden Mary Sutherland from attending any social gatherings the former colleagues and friends of his father had arranged. His explanation had been that “the folk were not fit for us to know” (IDEN, 149), but the real reason behind his prohibition had been that he feared that she would meet someone and marry.

“The Speckled Band” and “The Copper Beeches” include a situation equivalent to “A Case of Identity,” but in these adventures the methods for thwarting a marriage are much more radical and indeed even illegal. In “The Speckled Band” Helen Stoner comes to seek help from Holmes. Two years earlier, just before her wedding, Julia Stoner died in mysterious circumstances and now on the eve of Helen Stoner’s wedding, she is experiencing the same terrifying events as her sister did before her death. Holmes deduces that the stepfather of the girls, Dr. Grimesby Roylott, must be behind these events. While living in India, Dr. Roylott married a wealthy widow whose income brought a great relief to his strained economy. After her death, Roylott has managed to maintain last remnants of his illustrious family’s fortune



only because of the small income he receives from his late wife's funds. If the stepdaughters were to marry, the income would go to their husbands. Despite his attempts to keep Julia and Helen Stoner isolated from society in his ancestral home, both the stepdaughters eventually became engaged. Holmes and Watson find out that Roylott has murdered Julia and attempts to murder Helen by sending a poisonous swamp adder to the girls' bedroom through the hole in the wall. But through Holmes's intervention the plan fails: when the swamp adder is sent to kill Helen Stoner, Holmes attacks the snake sending it back to Roylott's room where it bites Roylott, and thus kills its owner.

"The Copper Beeches" includes a similar kind of plot, but in the story the helpless female that comes to Holmes is a governess, Violet Hunter, who wants to have Holmes's advice whether she should accept a position that has been offered to her. The vulnerable position of a woman without family and wealth in the nineteenth century comes explicit in the case of Violet Hunter. Those who failed to fulfil the sole function of a woman in the eyes of the Victorians, in other words, marriage, and who were not economically well off, were forced to seek work. It most often meant that they could not maintain the same social level they had been born to. The only 'respectable' employment for a genteel lady was working as a governess. M. Jeanne Peterson claims that the employment of a gentlewoman as a governess in a middle-class family served to reinforce and perpetuate certain Victorian values, since she was, together with servants, conspicuous consumption and leisured, ornamental wife, a testimony to the economic power and status of the Victorian middle-class father.<sup>169</sup>

But for a governess her situation was contradictory and incongruous. She had been brought up to be a leisured lady, but now she was forced to work for pay. This was further confirmed in the structure of a household: she was a lady and therefore not a servant, but she was an employee and therefore not of equal status with the wife and daughters of the house.

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<sup>169</sup> M. Jeanne Peterson, "The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society," *Suffer and Be Still: The Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Martha Vicinus (London: Methuen, 1972) 4-5.

In addition, she had been educated for a leisured gentility, but now she was hired to provide the children and young ladies of the family with the same kind of education that she had received. Peterson maintains that the employment of a governess became a prostitution of her education, of the values underlying it and of her family's intentions in providing it.

Furthermore, the function of governess as a status symbol of middle-class family perverted her own upbringing. She was educated to be an ornament to display, but as a governess she had sold herself to her employer's prestige.<sup>170</sup> Unbeknownst to Violet Hunter, and by taking advantage of her desperate situation, Jephro Rucastle has hired her to impersonate the daughter, Alice Rucastle, who, in a true Gothic fashion, is kept by her father and stepmother locked up in an empty wing of their Gothic country estate. The reason for this is that by marrying her fiancé, her father would no longer have access to the money she has inherited from her mother.

Jasmine Yong Hall has suggested that the Gothic elements and female clients play an important role "in establishing the rational detective as a powerful, patriarchal hero."<sup>171</sup> What she means is that Holmes is battling an older order's reactionary and regressive attempt to return to an era in which male control of property could not be questioned. Hall declares that Holmes, as "a representative of new, rational order, is required to step into the Gothic world and free these women from that oppression" by allowing them to own and inherit property and to choose their husbands independently.<sup>172</sup> However, in the non-Gothic story "A Case of Identity" Holmes can do nothing, because in the face of law, Windibank has done nothing illegal. Holmes even decides not to tell Miss Sutherland what has happened, but in "The Speckled Band" and "The Copper Beeches" Holmes transfers the oppressed daughters from their guardians to their chosen husbands.

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<sup>170</sup> Peterson 9-11.

<sup>171</sup> Hall 295.

<sup>172</sup> Hall 297.

Hall has also observed the physical power of the villains that affects their victims, also physically.<sup>173</sup> Both Roylott and Rucastle are large, massive men that have caused physical harm to the females under their control. Roylott is described as man who is “so tall [...] that his hat actually brushed the cross bar of the doorway, and his breadth seemed to span it across from side to side” (SPEC, 220). His face is “marked with every evil passion,” (SPEC, 220) and he has been in many violent brawls with the inhabitants of the nearby village. Living with Roylott has made Helen Stoner’s face “all drawn and grey, with restless, frightened eyes, like those of a hunted animal” (SPEC, 214) and her hair to turn grey. In addition, Roylott has abused her physically, by leaving “five little livid spots, the marks of four fingers and a thumb, [...] printed upon the white wrist” (SPEC, 219). Rucastle is “a prodigiously stout man with [...] a great heavy chin which rolled down in fold upon fold over his throat” (COPP, 274) who has tormented his daughter so long that she had had brain fever, been ill for weeks and eventually lost her hair. Violet Hunter has to sacrifice her hair as well as she has to obey every quirk and request her employers might have. Rucastle even threatens to throw her to the mastiff, if she ever again disobeyed his commands.

While the relation of father and daughter has been that of a dominant male and dominated female, Hall proposes that Holmes takes to role of dominant male and the Gothic villains are subjected to the role of dominated female. Hall bases her argument in “The Speckled Band” where she sees homoeroticism in Holmes and Roylott’s only encounter and in Holmes’s struggle to prevent Roylott from murdering his stepdaughter.<sup>174</sup> Helen Stoner’s eyes are described to be “those of some hunted animal” (SPEC, 214) while Roylott is said to resemble “a fierce old bird of prey” (SPEC, 220), but when Roylott storms into Holmes’s apartment to threaten Holmes not to involve himself in the case of his stepdaughter, his role, according to Hall, converts from the dominating father to the dominated female. Hall insists

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<sup>173</sup> Hall 297.

<sup>174</sup> Hall 299-300.

that Roylott attempts to feminise Holmes and his profession<sup>175</sup> by calling him “Holmes the meddler” and “Holmes the busybody,” but Holmes responds to Roylott’s threats and insults by humour and “chuckl[ing] heartily” and referring to Roylott as “this beauty” (SPEC, 221). Angered by Holmes’s scornful attitude, Roylott manifests his physical power by bending a poker from Holmes’s fireplace to prove that he is “a dangerous man to fall foul of” (SPEC, 221), but Holmes demonstrates that he is as powerful a man as Roylott by straightening the poker back. The final manifestation of Holmes’s supremacy over Roylott comes when Holmes forces the adder Roylott sent to kill Helen Stoner back to his room. Roylott confirms his role as dominated female under Holmes the dominant male when the adder bites him and he dies in the similar manner as he killed Julia Stoner and attempted to kill Helen Stoner. Another manifestation of Holmes’s physical supremacy can be found in “A Case of Identity,” where Holmes frightens Windibank to flee by threatening to flog him.

According to Hall, the women can detach themselves from their oppressed role by allying themselves to the new world of rationality represented by Holmes.<sup>176</sup> What she means by this is that Holmes liberates them from their confinement, be it either physical or psychological, and gives them a possibility to become subjects who can make free choices about their marriage and use of wealth, but I would suggest that Longhurst’s assertion that women are viewed as private, exploitative property of men<sup>177</sup> is also a well-grounded argument. Although Helen Stoner and Alice Rucastle are eventually allowed to marry the man of their choice and their persecutors can no longer exploit their money, they are in practice transferred from their guardians to their husbands. Holmes personally transfers Helen Stoner from his stepfather to her fiancé, and in the case of Mary Sutherland, he decides to let her continue to be in mercy of her mother and stepfather. What comes to Alice Rucastle, Holmes in fact does not participate in liberating her from her imprisonment: her fiancé has liberated

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<sup>175</sup> Hall 299.

<sup>176</sup> Hall 299.

<sup>177</sup> Longhurst 53.

her and escaped with her before Holmes and Watson manage to get there. Against Watson's wishes, Holmes does not take interest in Violet Hunter, and 'liberate' her from the vulnerable position of a governess like Watson 'liberated' Mary Morstan at the end of *The Sign of Four* by marrying her; she eventually becomes a headmistress of a school and continues in the state of spinsterhood.

In addition to thwarted marriages, there are several examples of fathers or other male authoritative figures trying to persuade girls into marrying the man of their choice. And in the same way, financial issues also play an important part in them. In "The Boscombe Valley Mystery," for instance, a blackmailer Charles McCartney has over the years blackmailed his victim John Turner to give him land, money and houses. Finally McCartney demands that Turner must give his only daughter to the blackmailer's son, so that McCartney can eventually get his hands into the money the girl will inherit. But in the end the masculine economic values are overthrown. Turner had killed his blackmailer in a fit of fury, but Holmes allows him to go free, and at the end of the story it is noted that "there is every prospect that the son and daughter may come to live happily together, in ignorance of the black cloud which rests upon their past" (BOSC, 174). In "The Beryl Coronet" the father wants his son and niece to marry so that the fortune would stay in the family, and in "The Noble Bachelor" a newly rich American father tries to prevent his daughter from marrying a poor gold digger and coaxes her to accept a proposal of an English lord.

"The Noble Bachelor" deals with financial difficulties aristocracy faced with the rise of middle classes into hegemonic position, and the modernisation of society and its political and legislative system. The change from an agricultural country to an industrial country and the introduction of income and inheritance taxes meant that many of the aristocratic families had run into financial problems. Many aristocrats were compelled to find work, but the salary only made it possible to sustain a career, and not the country houses and estates that needed

large amounts of money to keep them from falling into ruins. Many impoverished aristocrats openly went in search of a rich woman and a well-organised transatlantic marriage market was established: aristocrats with high status and low income offered a title for money for the daughters of the super-rich American magnates with high income and low status. In the period between 1870-1914 there were more than one hundred marriages by peers' sons to rich American heiresses.<sup>178</sup> Dollars became available for the purpose of refurbishing the crumbling stately homes and keeping up the façade of landed life, and for the rich American families, these arranged marriages gave the illusion that they were on a par with aristocratic European families.

In the adventure, Lord St Simon is the younger son of a ducal family that “has been compelled to sell his pictures within the last few years” (NOBL, 245). Since Lord St. Simon has no property of his own, he is marrying Hatty Doran, the only child of Aloysius Doran, the richest mine owner on the west coast of America, and a heiress with a six-figure dowry. A newspaper article read by Holmes states that

“there will soon be a call or protection in the marriage market, for the present free-trade principle appears to tell heavily against our home product. One by one the management of the noble houses of Great Britain is passing into the hands of our fair cousins from across the Atlantic.” (NOBL, 244)

Hatty Doran agrees to the marriage, because she believes that her real love, the man she has secretly married, has died. Nevertheless, also the bride would gain advantage from the marriage: the newspaper article continues by stating that “it is obvious that the Californian heiress is not the only gainer by an alliance which will enable her to make the easy and common transition from a Republican lady to a British peeress” (NOBL, 245).

Only in *A Study in Scarlet* and in “The Crooked Man” a marriage with criminal motivations becomes reality. “The Crooked Man” also indicates that the advantage gained can

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<sup>178</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) 394-399.

also be in other way than directly financial. In the adventure a girl has accepted the proposal of a man that her father considers more suitable, and also because she believes that her fiancé has died. In reality, the man she eventually marries has led her fiancé into the hands of the rebels. The advantage Colonel Barclay has received is a woman who has helped to ease the social friction he has encountered when over the years he has risen from a sergeant to the commander of a regiment.

*A Study in Scarlet* (1887) was the first story to feature Sherlock Holmes. At the time when Doyle wrote the first Holmes story the Mormons' "life of immortality" and especially the practise of polygamy had been very much in the news.<sup>179</sup> The subplot of *A Study in Scarlet* deals with events that took place twenty years earlier in Utah, USA. A wealthy farmer named John Ferrier who had joined the Mormon Church to save his and his adopted daughter's lives, is murdered and his daughter is forced to marry the son of a prominent Mormon family. John Ferrier sees the polygamous Mormon marriage "as a no marriage at all, but as a shame and a disgrace" (STUD, 45) and therefore has allowed Lucy to become engaged to Jefferson Hope, a non-Mormon, who according to Ferrier is "a Christian, which is more than these folk here, in spite o' all their praying and preaching" (STUD, 47). Lucy is wanted only because her father owns land that the Mormons want. John Ferrier is killed so that at the marriage, the land goes to Lucy's husband. However, those who have acted in dishonest ways eventually receive their retribution. Lucy Ferrier dies within a month of her wedding and her fiancé, Jefferson Hope, pursues the culprits for over twenty years, and in "The Crooked Man", Colonel Barclay dies due to a shock of seeing the man he betrayed years ago and whose bride he stole. In a similar way those authoritative fathers who have either attempted to prevent or coax a daughter into marriage, find themselves defeated in one way or another. Hatty Doran's father does not gain access into English upper class society, but

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<sup>179</sup> Stashower 81.

instead, a wealthy son-in-law whom his daughter really loves. Those fathers that have used wrongful methods, however, are punished for their actions; a venomous snake kills Roylott, and similarly as in “The Speckled Band,” the animal that was used as an aid in its owner’s crimes attacks Rucastle in “The Copper Beeches.” The gigantic mastiff, that was let loose on the grounds of the estate to keep anyone intruding or escaping the house, attacks its owner. However, Watson kills the dog before it kills Rucastle, leaving him badly mauled for the rest of his life. Windibank escapes punishment this time, but Holmes predicts that “that fellow will rise from crime to crime until he does something very bad, and ends on a gallows” (IDEN, 157).

To conclude, I would propose that Arthur Conan Doyle is against the old patriarchal order when it equals women as private property and marriage as financial transaction. The attempts to thwart or force a marriage either fail; or if the marriage grounded on ‘wrong’ motives in fact takes place, as it does for example in *A Study in Scarlet* or “The Crooked Man,” eventually some kind of punishment, in one form or another, will ensue. However, as I suggested, the women do not gain complete independence. They are in fact transferred from male to another; from their guardian to their future husbands.

The next chapter will focus on certain female characters in Sherlock Holmes adventures that deviate from the Victorian middle-class ideal of a ‘perfect woman.’

#### **4.2 Deviations from the Ideal of Perfect Woman**

During the Victorian era the education of upper and middle class women aimed at presenting them with the accomplishments that were regarded as necessary to become the ‘perfect lady.’ Since a woman’s whole function was limited to symbolising the virtue of her family, any deviation from it or even a suggestion that a woman had somehow jeopardised her and her family’s reputation could harm her position in society. Chaste behaviour, especially that of



women, was the foundation of the middle-class social system and relations of a family. 'Innocence,' 'pure-mindedness' and 'inherent purity' were an exalted state of consciousness and a woman's innate innocence protected her from the predatory male animal.<sup>180</sup> While the upbringing of women aimed at keeping women unaware of their sexual impulses by the proper surveillance of mothers and chaperones and sublimating their desires into religion, men were urged to master themselves and to sublimate to work and the cult of athleticism. Women were entirely themselves responsible for their purity, whether they had been seduced or themselves seductive and co-operative. In addition, women had to bear the burden of the public disapproval, guilt and penalty alone for the loss of the purity.<sup>181</sup> The worst sin a woman could commit was a married woman to commit adultery.<sup>182</sup> The Victorians classified women into two polar extremes; they were either sexless angels or sensuously oversexed whores. Any other mode of sexual surrender than in marriage was identified with prostitution. But whether a woman was married or not, her known sexual behaviour classified her either as a respectable member of the social system of the family or a person who had fallen below the line of respectability.<sup>183</sup>

As Jill Conway notes, Victorians believed that freeing women from their passivity and opening areas of social activity, which would place them in competition with men, would be dangerous. The 'natural' laws determined the inferior position of women. The traditional Victorians held that men were more suitable to public activity, because male intelligence, courage and independence were far greater than female and that men were more capable of expending energy in sustained bursts of physical and cerebral energy. Women were superior to men in affection and sympathetic imagination; they were patient because of their passivity

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<sup>180</sup> Peter T. Comitos, "Innocent Femina Sensualis in Unconscious Conflict," *Suffer and Be Still: The Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Martha Vicinus (London: Methuen, 1972) 156-157.

<sup>181</sup> Comitos 162-165.

<sup>182</sup> Vicinus xiv.

<sup>183</sup> Comitos 167.

and the need to store energy.<sup>184</sup> Richardson and Willis mention that the census of 1851 laid bare the fact that there were 400 000 surplus women in Great Britain. It eventually became impossible to confine such a great number of ‘unproductive’ women without husbands or children into the private sphere, and as a matter of fact, during the second half of the nineteenth century the number of women in the workforce almost doubled.<sup>185</sup> The women, especially the middle-class ‘New Women,’ actively sought their way from being the ‘Angels in the House’ to the public sphere of society.

Longhurst argues that in Doyle’s writing women are rendered as essentially passive, as the object of action, while gender difference is constituted in nature,<sup>186</sup> but not all women are depicted as passive damsels in distress in the adventures. “A Scandal in Bohemia,” the very first Sherlock Holmes adventure written in short story format, introduces Irene Adler, former opera singer and a “well-known adventuress” (SCAN, 121), who previously has been the mistress of the King of Bohemia. The king is about to marry the daughter of the King of Scandinavia, but Irene Adler feels that she has been “cruelly wronged” (SCAN, 130) and blackmails the king by threatening to expose the affair by sending photograph to the king’s fiancée. The photograph shows the king and Irene Adler together and is an irrefutable evidence of their affair. The exposure of the affair would be a great embarrassment for the king and it would also jeopardise the forthcoming marriage; therefore the king hires Holmes to steal the photograph from her. Holmes goes dressed in a disguise to gather information about Irene Adler, but ends up finding himself as a witness to the marriage of Irene Adler and an English lawyer named Godfrey Norton.

In the story Sherlock Holmes allows his views of women to blind him from realising that a woman is manipulating him. He tells Watson “[i]t is a capital mistake to theorize before

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<sup>184</sup> Jill Conway, “Stereotypes of Femininity in a Theory of Sexual Evolution,” *Suffer and Be Still: The Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Martha Vicinus (London: Methuen, 1972) 146-147.

<sup>185</sup> Richardson and Willis 4-5.

<sup>186</sup> Longhurst 65.

one has data. Insensibly, one begins to twist facts to suit his theories, instead of theories to suit facts” (SCAN, 119) but does not follow his own advice during the case. Doyle has been criticised for stereotyping women; for example, Jann notes that Doyle suggests that women in general, together with the lower classes, have less control over their emotions.<sup>187</sup> For instance, when Holmes and Watson see Mary Sutherland “peep[ing] up in a nervous, hesitating fashion at [their] windows, while her body oscillated backwards and forwards and her fingers fidgetted with her glove buttons,” Holmes notes that “oscillation upon the pavement always means an *affaire de cœur*” (IDEN, 148). Of Irene Adler Holmes declares that “women are naturally secretive, and they like to do their own secreting” (SCAN, 127). Therefore, it is clear to Holmes that Irene Adler has hidden the much-sought photograph somewhere in her household. Another assumption of women is that “when a woman thinks that her house is on fire, her instinct is at once to rush to the thing which she values most. [...] A married woman grabs at her baby – an unmarried woman reaches for her jewel box” (SCAN, 128). The most precious thing for Irene Adler is the photograph of her and the king. Holmes has surmised correctly, and Irene Adler reveals the hiding place of the photograph to Holmes when she presumes that her house is on fire. But Holmes does not take into account the fact that Irene Adler might realise she has been deceived. When Holmes and the king return next morning to Irene Adler’s house to retrieve the photo, they find that she has left the country with her husband. Adler had guessed immediately who Holmes was, after she had inadvertently revealed to Holmes where the photograph was hidden.

Lawrence Frank goes as far as to call Irene Adler a woman who “incarnates all that can be seen as monstrous in any woman who defies convention.”<sup>188</sup> She is an adventuress, who has been living as a king’s mistress and who now is blackmailing him; in the light of Victorian view on women, she clearly is categorised as a whore. Pascale Krumm has argued

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<sup>187</sup> Jann 697.

<sup>188</sup> Frank 54.

that Irene Adler represents alienation and otherness in three categories. Firstly, she challenges gender roles, by dressing a man: Adler explains that “[m]ale costume is nothing new to me. I often take the advantage of the freedom which it gives” (SCAN, 130). A woman could not walk through the streets of London in the middle of the night without causing attention, but disguised as a man, Irene Adler can follow Holmes and Watson to Baker Street. She even has courage to address Holmes, but although Holmes admits that he recognises her voice, even he cannot see through her disguise. Secondly, she is a foreigner and an alien: she is told to have been “born in New Jersey in the year 1858” (SCAN, 122) and she has lived in many different countries over the years. And lastly, her alien status is further accentuated by her last name, Adler, which in German means eagle. In other words, Krumm suggests that Irene Adler is “not only associated with a different nation but a different species.”<sup>189</sup>

Lawrence Frank connects “A Scandal in Bohemia” to the controversial issues regarding the rights of women in the late nineteenth century Britain, such as divorce laws, the rights of married women to control their property, and the contagious diseases acts that was connected to the controlling of prostitution. As Frank notes, “each controversy involved a denial of the status of women as genuine legal subjects with corresponding rights of their own.” Frank goes on to call Irene Adler “a sign over against which women readers may define themselves in their prescribed normality.”<sup>190</sup> She is, as Krumm suggested, an alien and an ‘other’ on three different levels, but, by her marriage Irene Adler turns from “dubious and questionable” (SCAN, 117) adventuress and embittered former mistress the king portrayed her to be to a wife of an English lawyer, and is not anymore a threat, says Holmes: “if the lady loves her husband, she does not love your Majesty. If she does not love your Majesty, there is not reason why she should interfere with your Majesty’s plan” (SCAN, 129).

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<sup>189</sup> Pascale Krumm, “‘A Scandal in Bohemia’ and Sherlock Holmes’s Ultimate Mystery Solved,” *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 39.2 (1996): 194-195.

<sup>190</sup> Frank 54.

In Sherlock Holmes adventures mainly male aristocrats are involved in sexual liaisons. The King of Bohemia had Irene Adler as his mistress and Lord St. Simon has been involved with Flora Millar, a former danseuse. The social status and reputation of the women, however, is not such that the men could marry them, and when they find suitable wives, the former mistresses threaten to cause harm. Irene Adler attempts to blackmail the King of Bohemia and Flora Millar storms into the wedding reception, causing disturbance. However, Arthur Conan Doyle rarely used a woman as a villain. Usually women are portrayed as victims of a crime or mere bystanders. In fact, only in “A Scandal in Bohemia” a woman, Irene Adler, is the main villain of the story, although the ending of the adventure questions this assumption. In “The Cardboard Box,” “The Beryl Coronet” and “The Musgrave Ritual” a woman has committed crime or some other transgression, although the main perpetrator in these adventures is a man. The Victorian public was not ready to accept the thought of woman participating in a violent crime. The idea of women as passive actors reflects the Victorian view on women and the belief that women, as a result of being emotional, were incapable of violent action or creating ingenious plots to challenge Holmes.<sup>191</sup> James Hysell emphasises the fact that when Doyle portrays a woman as a criminal, it is in ways that would have been acceptable for the Victorian mind. A degenerate aristocrat has seduced Mary Holder and induced her to help him steal precious jewellery from her uncle in “The Beryl Coronet”, in “A Scandal in Bohemia” Irene Adler considers that the King of Bohemia has “cruelly wronged” (SCAN, 130) her and that her intention was not blackmail but to keep the photograph “to safeguard [herself], and to preserve a weapon which will always secure [her] from any steps which he might take in the future” (SCAN, 130). “The Musgrave Ritual” is the one of the very few Holmes adventures to include a woman that is suspected of being a perpetrator of a violent act, although it is never confirmed. Rachel Howells is suspected of trapping her former lover

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<sup>191</sup> James Hysell, “Violent Crime in Victorian England: A Gender Analysis of Sherlock Holmes,” *Historia* 16 (2007): 241-242, 25 August 2007 <<http://www.eiu.edu/~historia/2007/Historia2007Hysell.pdf>>.

in cellar and leaving him to die there. The motive of her act is explained to be an outcome of “passionate Celtic woman’s soul”(MUSG, 363) in a fit of hysteria as a revenge to a man that had wronged her by breaking their engagement because of another woman. The possibility of a woman committing a murder is also insinuated in “The Greek Interpreter” where the Englishmen that had seduced a Greek girl, Sophy Kratides, to flee with him and his associate, are stabbed at mysterious circumstances in Budapest. They had kept the girl as a prisoner and killed his brother that had come to England to save her.

The only woman to have been part in an extramarital affair is Mary Browner in “The Cardboard Box.” An elderly unmarried woman, Sarah Cushing, has fallen in love with her brother-in-law, but when he turns her down, her love turns into hatred. Sarah Cushing turns her sister’s, Mary Browner’s, mind against her husband and encourages her to have an affair with another man. Eventually the situation worsens to the extent that the man murders his wife and her lover, cuts the ears of the victims and sends them to Sarah. Since the worst sin for a woman to commit was adultery, Mary Browner’s destiny is death, despite the fact that her vengeful sister cajoled her into the affair. Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that although a woman is the one who has initiated the tragic series of events that eventually led up to the murder, it is still a man that actually carries out the violent act. After realising what has happened, Sarah Cushing is shocked to the extent that she shows the sign of a ‘weaker’ sex by falling seriously ill with brain fever.

Only the royal and aristocratic men that have been involved in an illicit affair can continue their lives without receiving hardly any kind of punishment that would seriously mar their position in society; the ones that are middle-class men have to pay for their deviance either with death or with some other punishment. In “The Musgrave Ritual” the philandering butler is left to suffocate to death in cellar, in “The Cardboard Box” the husband kills his wife and her lover, in “The Greek Interpreter” the seducer and his friend that helped him to keep

the seduced girl and her brother as prisoners are killed, and in “The Silver Blaze” a horse kills John Straker, who has led double life for years by maintaining a mistress with extravagant taste. The punishment can also be a social kind; for example, in “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” James McCartney has secretly married a barmaid in Bristol. It later turns out that the barmaid was married to another man prior to their marriage, but still James McCartney has to endure a public humiliation: he is suspected of murdering his own father and has to go through a trial to become acquitted.

All in all, there is some ambivalence in Doyle’s portrayal of women. On one hand he seems to certain extent support female independence and the causes ‘New Women’ pursued, but nonetheless, on the other hand women in Sherlock Holmes adventures still are passive damsels in distress. In the analysed adventures, Irene Adler, an ‘other,’ is the only female character that is active and possesses some of the qualities the Victorians saw more suitable for men. But as the case of Irene Adler in “A Scandal in Bohemia” demonstrates, even Holmes, the representative of rationality and logic, holds some of the beliefs the patriarchal Victorians had of women. Arthur Conan Doyle is aware that women are not such passive creatures as they were held to be, but instead, can be as rational and active as men.

## 5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to examine how the underlying ideology of Victorian middle class is represented in Sherlock Holmes adventures, in particular, how it becomes evident in the representations of colonial past and the woman question. My analysis was built around the two first Sherlock Holmes novels, *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of Four*, and the 24 Sherlock Holmes short stories written during the nineteenth century. What I have tried to do is to show how the adventures attempt to draw a line between middle class and the others, or, to put it in another way, to define who is and what it is to be a member of the *fin-de-siècle* Victorian middle class. I argue that the themes in Sherlock Holmes adventures written between 1887 and 1894 revolved around tainted, colonial past and women, and that the adventures reject the values and actions that are not permitted and reaffirm the values, ideals and expectations the Victorian middle class had. As a theoretical frame I mainly relied on Marxist criticism.

First in the introduction and theory section I attempted to outline such concepts as ideology, middle class, imperialism and imperialist ideology, the position of women and domesticity, Victorian middle class and its rise to hegemonic position in the nineteenth century Britain. I also discussed detective fiction and the character of Sherlock Holmes and how they reflect the ideology of late Victorian middle class and the bourgeois society. Based on the definitions, I attempted to draw connections between the abovementioned concepts and Arthur Conan Doyle's writing.

Detective fiction addressed the anxieties of the middle class in a bourgeois, capitalistic society, and its development and the enormous popularity of Sherlock Holmes can be connected to these anxieties. The Industrial Revolution had brought enormous and rapid changes in society. The middle class had only recently gained the hegemonic position in England and remained constantly insecure about its newly acquired wealth and status in



society. Since the two recurrent themes in the early Sherlock Holmes adventures are tainted, colonial past and women and marriage, we may assume that they embody some of the problems and questions that occupied the minds of late nineteenth-century middle-class Englishmen. In the analysis section I found out that the two major themes encompassed several new issues: property and threats to it, imperialism and the consequences it possibly inflicted and gentrification, especially 'criminal' gentrification, women and their right to their own free will, and the question of where do the limits of what is considered to be appropriate female behaviour go. In chapter 3 I analysed colonialism and its connection to criminal or otherwise tainted past and in chapter 4 I examined women and marriage in Sherlock Holmes adventures, in particular how women are viewed as private property of men and, in addition, how certain women in Holmes adventures deviate from the ideal of a perfect woman.

In general, I found out that in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes adventures the persons that do not subscribe to the default assumption of normality, that is to say, white, male, Anglo-Saxon, respectable middle class, are treated either with contempt, suspicion, humour, or in stereotypical way, and represented as others. In his detection, Holmes relies heavily on reading the external signs of the body; he is like a doctor who is diagnosing his patients. By attaching criminality or otherness to aristocracy, lower classes and lower middle class that does not significantly differ from the working class, foreigners, and to certain types of behaviour or courses of action, Sherlock Holmes adventures help to define the middle class, who belong to it and what its values and ideals are. In other words, Sherlock Holmes's role is first and foremost to detect any deviant behaviour that might threaten the purity and integrity of Victorian middle class and to detect any degenerative influence that has managed to penetrate to it.

I noticed that in all adventures that included a character or characters that originated from or at some point of their life had lived either in the British colonies or in some other

foreign, distant place, the character had been either involved in criminal activity or in one way or another had transgressed against the normative conventions of English Victorian middle class. In Arthur Conan Doyle's writing England is presented as something safe, untainted, but when something foreign, strange or "other" is brought to England, it contaminates and brings danger that threatens the sanctity and safety of British bourgeois society and social order. The threat can be foreign persons, foreign secret societies, the tainted past that haunts the ones that at some point of their lives have lived in the colonies, wealth acquired from the colonies, exotic animals and paraphernalia, or drugs imported from the colonies.

I argue that Doyle suggests that the chaos and disorder that threaten the ostensible stability of middle class lives derives from outside England. The insistence that degeneration, regression and immorality are something that have been brought from the outside, and that the evil does not dwell in the members of the bourgeois England, brought a sense of certainty for the Victorian middle class in an increasingly fragmented society. This way, the middle class could ignore the possibility that England and the English are not the superior nation and 'race' they declare to be, and what is more, that criminality and immorality might be something that is inherent in every class and person, even in the Victorian middle class. However, one should not overlook the fact that at the same time as Conan Doyle implies that the Empire is the origin of germs that contaminate its heart, also the Englishmen that have no connection to the Empire, can be villainous.

The question of women's position and morals also draws the line between respectable middle class and the 'others.' Women, marriage and money are clearly connected in several adventures. A common feature to unite several adventures is that there is a father, stepfather or some other authoritative male figure who considers that it is his prerogative to buy, sell or force them to do as he wishes. Another recurrent feature connected to the authoritative male figure that treats women as commodity, is either a thwarted or forced marriage. Derek

Longhurst maintained that this justified the patriarchal structures of society, but I argue that in fact the Holmes adventures support to a certain extent women's right to have control over their lives and over their own property. Holmes as a representative of new rational order is battling against the old reactionary and regressive order where male authority could not be questioned. However, one should not overlook the fact that Longhurst's assertion is not completely invalid: the women are not completely liberated. Holmes transfers the women from one authoritative male figure to another, their husbands.

The treatment of women is connected to the woman question, the *fin-de-siècle* feminism and the rise of the self-aware 'New Woman.' There were fears among the conservative Victorians over what would happen if women were allowed freely to enter the public sphere, that is, to participate in the labour market. As a rule, with the exception of Irene Adler in "A Scandal in Bohemia," women are represented as passive damsels in distress, who need to be rescued by Holmes. Irene Adler, on the other hand, is represented as a woman against whom the British middle-class women may define what is allowed and acceptable and what is not. She represents what the middle-class men saw as abnormal or even monstrous. In general, those women that deviate from the pattern Victorian middle class had set for them, are mostly condemned. Sex outside marriage is not approved, even though the stories in this question reveal a hypocritical attitude: only when a person in question is a male aristocrat, their behaviour is tolerated, although not approved, whereas the sexual liaisons of women and middle or lower-class men are sanctioned. In the early Sherlock Holmes adventures there are very few women who are suspected of partaking in criminal activity, and it is only insinuated in few adventures that also women could be capable of committing violent acts.

The idea that emerges in Sherlock Holmes adventures is that the values and ideology of the middle class bourgeois are seen as normative, respectable Englishness and any disorder caused either by foreigners, the other social classes or from within the middle class itself

threatens it. By detecting and identifying the 'other,' the deviant, Doyle's literary hero Sherlock Holmes was a perfect Victorian gentleman who offered the readers assurance that everything in the chaotic and confusing society could be explained and that their ideals, ideology and traditional English values were still valid. Each time Sherlock Holmes solves a crime or some other similar situation that threatens the status and interests of the middle classes, social order is restored and the middle-class values are reaffirmed.

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The abbreviations of the stories quoted in this thesis:

STUD *A Study in Scarlet* (1887)  
 SIGN *The Sign of Four* (1890)  
 SCAN *A Scandal in Bohemia*  
 REDH *The Red-Headed League*  
 IDEN *A Case of Identity*  
 BOSCO *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*  
 FIVE *The Five Orange Pips*  
 BLUE *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*  
 SPEC *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*  
 ENGR *The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb*  
 NOBL *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor*  
 BERY *The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet*  
 COPP *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches*  
 SILV *The Adventure of Silver Blaze*  
 YELL *The Adventure of the Yellow Face*  
 STOC *The Adventure of the Stockbroker's Clerk*  
 GLOR *The Adventure of the "Gloria Scott"*  
 MUSC *The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual*  
 CROO *The Adventure of the Crooked Man*  
 RESI *The Adventure of the Resident Patient*  
 NAVA *The Adventure of the Naval Treaty*  
 FINA *The Adventure of the Final Problem*

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